

TRUTH AND CONVERSATION*

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If I state that [the statement that] *S* is true should we really agree that
I have stated that *S*? Only 'by implication'

John L. Austin, *Truth*

1. Introduction: what is the equivalence property and how to account for it?

In the course of an ordinary talk, a speaker accepting the sentence “*S*” is usually disposed to accept the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*”. He or she is also ready to accept the sentence “*S*” provided he or she has just accepted the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*”. In other words, making a statement by uttering the sentence “*S*” and making a statement by uttering the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” seem to be two conversationally equivalent attitudes – equivalent with respect to their cognitive content – and this equivalence is an important property of our use of the truth predicate. Let me call it the *equivalence property* and refer to it throughout the present paper by means of the abbreviation “EP”.

There are at least three different theoretical accounts of EP. The first one is provided by Frank P. Ramsey's redundancy theory of truth. According to this theory the same proposition is expressed in the utterance of a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” and in the utterance of the sentence “*S*” itself. Therefore, the speaker's disposition to accept the sentence “*S*” provided he or she has just accepted the sentence “It is true that *S*” is a sheer consequence of the fact that by stating

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that it is true that S he or she has simply stated that S (Ramsey 1964). The second account is developed by Paul Horwich (1990; 1998a; 1998b). In his minimal conception of truth he rejects the idea that sentences “ S ” and “It is true that S ” are synonyms. Horwich claims, instead, that the conversational equivalence of the acceptance of a sentence “ S ” and the acceptance of a sentence of the form “It is true that S ” is the property constituting the meaning of the truth predicate. Therefore EP as such requires no explanation, but provides a sufficient basis for explaining the overall use of the adjective “true”. The third account – or, more accurately, the family of accounts – starts with the general idea that EP is to be explained on the basis of some general principles establishing constitutive connections between the concept of truth and the concept of meaning. Although this idea represents only some inflationary accounts of truth, let me, for the sake of the present paper, use the term “inflationism” to label theories embracing it.

All the accounts mentioned above differ substantially in their views on the meaning of the truth predicate. From the viewpoint of the redundancy theory the predicate has no meaning at all, namely it expresses no propositional constituent. According to the minimal conception the predicate is meaningful, though it can be defined without any appeal to other concepts. In short, the concept of truth is pure. Inflationism, in turn, rejects both the nihilism present in the redundancy theory and the idea of purity embraced by minimalism.

In the present paper I develop an argument in favour of some version of inflationism. I claim that in order to explain EP we should assume that there is a constitutive connection between the concept of truth for statements and the concept of speaker meaning. The justification of my claim proceeds in two steps. Firstly, I formulate an inflationary account of EP in terms of conversational implicatures generated by the use of the truth predicate as well as by the act of making a statement. Secondly, I argue that the inflationary account provides a better explanation of the truth talk – namely a better account of the totality of utterances into which the truth predicate is deployed – than the redundancy theory on the one hand, and the minimal conception on the other. Nevertheless, before we go into details, let me start with a brief reconstruction of the minimal conception, the conception which seems to pose the most powerful challenge to inflationism about truth.

2. The minimal conception and its place in deflationism about truth.

In his *Truth* (1990) Paul Horwich proposes the minimal conception as a form of deflationism. In his next book titled *Meaning* (1998a) he develops a more general view of semantic deflationism which consists of the minimal conception of truth and the use theory of meaning.

These two accounts in question support each other. On the one hand, the minimal conception rejects the idea of defining the meaning of a sentence in terms of its truth condition. In this way it favours some alternative views that identify the meaning of a word with its use in a language. On the other hand, the use theory determines the general analytic pattern behind the construction of the minimal theory of truth as well as other semantic concepts. What makes these two accounts deflationary?

According to deflationism truth is not a property. In other words, there is nothing that true sentences or propositions have in common. Nevertheless, the deflationary rejection of truth can be construed at least in two ways. Firstly, it can be said that truth is not a property at all. In other words, the truth predicate contributes nothing to the proposition in the expression of which it occurs. This radical reading of the deflationary idea is at the centre of the redundancy theory. Secondly, on its more liberal reading the deflationary idea implies that truth is not a complex or naturalistic property, though it is a property in a weak sense which will be explained in due course.

Let me start with a short exposition of the use theory of meaning. The theory determines the factors that constitute meaning facts, namely the facts that expressions mean what they do. Facts of this kind are captured by sentences of the form “ $\langle\alpha\rangle$ means X ”. Using this schema – which Horwich calls the “capitalizing convention” – we can ascribe a meaning to every expression type we know. For example “dog” means DOG and “A dog barks” means A DOG BARKS, where “A DOG BARKS” names a proposition that a dog barks and “DOG” stands for a propositional constituent – or concept – that is an element of the proposition in question. Every token of the word “dog” means DOG, and every token of the sentence “A dog barks” means A DOG BARKS. What makes the account deflationary is the idea that we can be neutral about the ontological nature of propositions and concepts. Equipped with the capitalizing convention we can specify, for every known expression, what it means. It remains to be determined, however, what constitutes the fact, that a given expression means what it does, or, in other words, under what conditions we can state that two expression tokens mean the same. To answer these questions – and make his theory complete – Horwich resorts to the idea of regularities governing the use of a given word. Describing such a regularity we ought to avoid semantic or intentional concepts. For example, the observation that we use the term “dog” to denote dogs is not a good candidate for the theorem of the theory of meaning facts constitution. We should rather focus on the circumstances under which speakers are disposed to utter a given expression, and, in the next step, pick out the regularity that is explanatory basic, i.e., the regularity U that explains the overall deployment of the expression e – in short $U(e)$. Two expressions, e_1 and e_2 , mean the same if and only if $U(e_1) = U(e_2)$.

Such a sociofunctionalist account of meaning – the account in terms of socially grounded meaning regularities – supports, in an obvious way, a deflationary view on truth. A nice example of

the relationship between sociofunctionalism and deflationism is Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz's account of truth resulting from his theory of a linguistic communication as an activity governed by meaning directives (Ajdukiewicz 1934; see also Witek 2003). Both Ajdukiewicz and Horwich claim that what constitutes the meaning of our concept of truth is a speaker's disposition to accept the sentence "It is true that *S*" provided he or she has accepted the sentence "*S*", and *vice versa* (Ajdukiewicz 1995: 28; Horwich 1998b: 121). This regularity – which is, in fact, tantamount to EP – is an explanatory basic use property of the truth predicate. To state the property briefly, Horwich claims that every competent speaker who possesses the concept of truth is prepared to accept unconditionally instances of the equivalence schema:

(E) The proposition that *p* is true if and only if *p*.

His minimal theory is an infinite collection of propositions expressed by instances of the above schema. In other words, the propositions in question are axioms of the theory of truth. (In my view, Horwich describes EP in a somewhat artificial way. It is very unnatural to expect a normal speaker to accept, in the course of an ordinary talk, an instance of the equivalence schema. We expect, however, our interlocutor to be ready to accept the sentence of the form "It is true that *S*" provided he or she has accepted the sentence "*S*", and *vice versa*. Strictly speaking, we should say that Horwich offers an *explanation* rather than a *description* of EP.)

Following Horwich, we should make a clear distinction between the minimal *theory* and the minimal *conception* of truth. Whereas the former is nothing more than the infinite list of propositions expressed by instances of (E), the latter consists of a few claims regarding the adequacy of the minimal theory and its explanatory capacities.

Let me first say a few words on the conditions required for the minimal theory in order to be the adequate analysis of the ordinary concept of truth. First of all, the axioms of the minimal theory constitute an implicit definition of a new predicate, namely the so-called disquotational truth predicate. The theory in question can be also regarded as an adequate analysis of the ordinary phrase "is true", if the disquotational truth predicate and its ordinary counterpart are coextensive and functionally equivalent. According to the condition of functional equivalence we expect the disquotational truth predicate to perform all important conversational functions of the ordinary truth predicate. The condition, however, remains imprecise unless we specify which functions are important. For Horwich, as well as for the other proponents of the so-called disquotational conception, the ordinary phrase "is true" functions above all as a linguistic device for semantic ascent.

It is also worth noticing that the disquotational truth predicate is immanent. The point is that the speaker can predicate it only of sentences he or she understands. In other words, the speaker's ability to understand any sentence of the form "It is true that *S*" results from his or her abilities to understand the sentence "*S*" and to apply the equivalence schema. In order to prove the adequacy of the minimal theory, therefore, one has to demonstrate that every ordinary application of the phrase "is true" can be ultimately accounted for, in a course of analysis, as a case of the immanent use of the device for semantic ascent.

The immanent truth predicate expresses a property, namely a concept TRUE. This concept, however, has no deep or underlying structure, which can be captured by a general definition of the form "For each proposition *x*, *x* is true if and only if *x* has a property *P*". Therefore, the truth predicate has no general content. Equipped with the equivalence schema, nevertheless, we are able to determine its extension, namely the set of truths. In that sense the predicate defined by the minimal theory expresses a property – the property of belonging to the set of truths. In short, the proponents of minimalism about truth embraces the liberal reading of the deflationary thesis.

Now let me come to the claims regarding the explanatory capacities of the minimal theory. We can distinguish a positive explanatory demand and a negative one. According to the former, the axioms of the minimal theory should provide a sufficient basis for the explanation of the truth talk. According to the latter, the minimal theory is not intended to account for anything more. In particular, disquotational concepts of truth and truth conditions play no significant role in the adequate explanation of linguistic communication.

As Paul Horwich puts it, the predicate defined by means of the equivalence schema is conceptually basic. In other words, every other truth predicate – for example the predicate "is *true*" by means of which we speak of true utterances – can be defined in terms of the propositional truth predicate, provided we agree on some further schemas and principles. First of all, there is a theory of proposition-expression for utterances, which is identified by the schema:

The token of **p** expresses the proposition that *p*.

In accordance with the core idea of the use theory of meaning we can say that two utterances express the same proposition if and only if they are tokens of sentences with the same explanatory basic use properties. Next, we can take the following schema:

Utterance *u* expresses the proposition that $p \rightarrow (u \text{ is } \textit{true} \text{ if and only if the proposition that } p \text{ is true})$

as specifying the relationship between truth for propositions and truth for utterances. These two schemas together allow us to infer the schema:

The token of **p** is *true* if and only if the proposition that *p* is true,

which is – *via* the equivalence schema – tantamount to the schema:

(E-u) The token of **p** is *true* if and only if *p*.

The latter schema characterises the concept of truth for utterances or, in short, utterance truth.

Paul Horwich acknowledges (1990: 108; 1998b: 135), however, that the above course of explanation, though natural, is not compulsory. The demonstrated derivation proceeds in both directions. In other words, these two theories are equivalent *modulo* some further principles, and, hence, one could equally well start with the concept characterised by (E-u) to arrive at the concept of propositional truth. In the next part of my paper I will express my serious doubts regarding the minimal theory of truth for utterances.

3. The critical argument against semantic deflationism

The argument I am developing here is twofold. Firstly, I claim that instances of the equivalence schema do not provide an adequate analysis of the ordinary truth predicate. My contention is that their observed conversational validity – or, more adequately, the linguistic phenomenon I refer to by means of the abbreviation “EP” – is subject to a substantial explanation, and as such it cannot be treated as an explanatory basic fact about the ordinary concept of truth. In short, the proponents of the minimal conception seem to put the cart before the horse. Responding to my objection, however, they might say that even though I have proposed an alternative account of EP, it remains to be considered whether the account is better than the deflationary one. For this reason in the second step of my argument I will argue that the minimal theory fails to explain one special use of the truth predicate, whereas this use can easily be explicated on the basis of an assumption that there is a constitutive relationship between the concept of statement truth and the concept of speaker meaning.

Now, let me come to the details.

3.1. Instances of the equivalence schema do not define implicitly the concept of truth. EP is not cut out to define anything, because it is the result of some implicatures generated by the use of the truth predicate.

(a) John L. Austin on deflationism

I start my argument with an assumption that what we normally say to be true are statements. As John L. Austin defined it,

[a] statement is made and its making is an historic event, the utterance by a certain speaker or writer of certain words (a sentence) to an audience with reference to an historic situation, event or what not. (Austin 1964: 20)

The idea of a statement as a truth-bearer is at the centre of Austin's critique of the redundancy theory of truth. The theory was formulated and advocated by Frank P. Ramsey. This philosopher claimed that to say of a given statement that it is true is not to make any further statement at all. In other words, a sentence of the form "It is true that *S*" is, on every occasion it is used to make a statement, synonymous with the sentence "*S*" itself. Therefore, in the course of an ordinary conversation, a statement that it is true that *S* always entails the statement that *S* and the latter always entails the former. Austin's point is that there are no such entailments. He admits, however, that making a statement by uttering a sentence of the form "It is true that *S*" we usually mean or imply that we make the statement that *S*. But what explains the implication in question is not a theory of truth alone, but an account of making a statement.

The minimal conception differs from the redundancy theory in some essential aspects. As I have put it in the second part of this paper, Paul Horwich rejects the idea according to which accepting the sentence of the form "It is true that *S*" and accepting the sentence "*S*" alone we express the same proposition. He does not claim, in other words, that the word "true" is redundant. He admits, however, that accepting the truth of a given sentence is a trivial step beyond the acceptance of the sentence itself and that the triviality of this step is in a sense definitional of the

concept of truth (Horwich 1990: 60). In that way the minimal conception resembles the redundancy theory. In other words, both Ramsey and Horwich regard certain facts about the use of the truth predicate as facts about its meaning. As a result, they embrace the idea that, on every conversational occasion, one side of an instance of the equivalence scheme entails another and, moreover, that this entailment holds in virtue of the meaning of the truth predicate alone. And this is the idea criticised by Austin.

Arguing against the deflationary account of EP I am going to start with Austin's remarks regarding the use of the word "true". Let me quote two of them:

If I state that [the statement that *S*] is true, should we really agree that I have stated that *S*? Only 'by implication'. (Austin 1964: 26)

And 'by implication' [the statement that it is true that *S*] asserts something about the making of a statement which the statement that *S* certainly does not assert. (Austin 1964: 26, footnote 18)

According to the first remark, a speaker stating that it is true that *S* – or, more adequately, the speaker who makes a statement by uttering a sentence of the form "It is true that *S*" – commits himself or herself to the statement that *S*. The latter statement is implied, in a sense that I will explain in due course, by the act of making the former. At first sight this fact can be easily spelled out along deflationary lines. It can be said, namely, that the implication holds, either in virtue of the fact that by stating that it is true that *S* the speaker merely states that *S* or in virtue of the meaning of the word "true" alone. The second remark, nevertheless, seems to pose a more difficult challenge to the minimal conception. Austin points out that making a statement by saying that it is true that *S* the speaker implies something that he or she would not be regarded as communicating if he or she merely said that *S*. In short, the statement made by saying that it is true that *S* and the statement made in the utterance of the sentence "*S*" cannot be counted as two conversationally equivalent speech acts.

My claim is that both Austin's observations speak against the deflationary account of EP, irrespective of what version of it – redundancy or minimal – is under consideration. The point is that the implications mentioned by Austin are conversational relations, namely they hold between statements. What implies and what is implied in that sense is neither a sentence nor a proposition, but a statement – the "utterance by a certain speaker (...) of certain words (a sentence) to an audience with reference to an historic situation, event or what not" (Austin 1964: 20). Making a

statement is also an historic event that can be the subject of another statement to the effect, for instance, that the former is true. Moreover, a speaker making the latter can be, under certain conditions, regarded as conveying the former and, conversely, as communicating the latter provided he is making the former. The hearer, however, is justified in drawing such conclusions on what the speaker communicates only if certain conversational conditions are met. This assumption turns out to be adequate so often, that we can get the impression that it is always adequate – namely, that the conditions in question are met on every conversational occasion. This impression, however, is wrong. It is not a semantic rule guaranteed by the meaning we attach to the truth predicate that everybody accepting the sentence “It is true that *S*” is disposed to accept the sentence “*S*” and *vice versa*. It is, however, a very common pragmatic phenomenon, that calls for explanation. I am going to provide such an explanation, starting with a supposition that the implications observed by Austin are cases of implicatures conceived along the post-Gricean lines. I am going to defend the claim that, roughly speaking, EP can be best explained in terms of normal conversational implicatures connected with the use of the truth predicate as well as with the act of making a statement. Such an explanation, however, cannot be reconciled with deflationism, since it invokes the anti-deflationary idea to the effect that there is a constitutive connection between the concept of truth for statements and the concept of speaker meaning.

(b) Conversational implicature

Now let me say a word on the concept of implicature, which plays a crucial role in my argument. It was H. Paul Grice who introduced the concept to account for the fact that speakers, despite their often being inexplicit, usually succeed in communicating what they have in mind. He observed, namely, that on many occasions what is communicated in uttering a given sentence goes beyond what the sentence means or, in other words, beyond what is said in uttering the sentence. Speakers often cannot be taken to mean what they say or cannot be regarded as meaning *only* what they say. Suppose, for example, that a heavy rain falls continuously and prevents Tom from having a walk. Tom utters a sentence “Lovely weather we are having” sarcastically stating that the weather is awful. In other words, Tom cannot be taken to mean what he says. Consider, next, a situation into which a little boy utters a sentence “I am hungry, Mum!”. In this case we can take the boy to mean what he says. Nevertheless, he is not only *stating* that he is hungry, but also *asking* his mother to give him something to eat. Although the request is not explicit, it is implicated by the boy's act of stating that he is hungry. Finally, consider another example, namely the following short talk-

exchange:

A: Do you know where Paul is?

B: I saw a yellow station wagon outside Kate's house.

Literally construed, the sentence uttered by the speaker *A* is a yes-no question. Nevertheless, it is clear for the hearer *B* that what *A* wants to be told of is not whether he or she – the hearer – knows something or other. *A* simply wants to find out where Paul is. It is possible, however, that on some sophisticated occasion, *A* uttering a question of the form “Do you know where/what *X* is?” does express his or her interest in the state of *B*'s knowledge rather than in the state of *X*. Even though uttering the question “Do you know where/what *X* is?” we usually implicate that we are asking the question “Where/what *X* is?”, this implicature can be cancelled. Therefore, these two questions are neither identical nor equivalent.

Furthermore, the hearer *B* can be accused of bringing about a breakdown in the conversation, since he or she apparently avoids giving an answer and changes the subject. It is a misimpression, however. On the assumptions to the effect that both interlocutors are aware of the fact that Paul owns a very rare model of station wagon – which is, in fact, yellow – and *A* believes that *B* is aware of it as well as of the fact that *A* believes that *B* is aware of it, *B*'s answer is relevant and informative. In short, by making a statement that he or she saw a yellow station wagon outside Kate's house *B* implicates the statement – or supposition – that Paul is in Kate's house.

To account for such and similar implicatures Grice assumed that usually a speaker is observing – and a hearer is taking him or her to be observing – the general principle governing conversation, namely the *Cooperative Principle*:

(CP) Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose of the talk-exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice 1975: 45)

In particular, participants of every talk-exchange are expected to respect four conversational maxims (Grice 1975: 45-46; see also: Malinowski 2003: 122):

The *Maxim of Quantity*: Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange).

The *Maxim of Quality*: Try to make your contribution one that is true (namely, do not say what you believe to be false or for which you lack adequate evidence).

The *Maxim of Relation*: Be relevant (namely, relate your contribution to the purpose of the exchange).

The *Maxim of Manner*: Be perspicuous (namely, avoid ambiguity and obscurity, be brief and orderly).

In many cases, seemingly flouting one of these maxims, a speaker is not necessarily disobeying (CP) and, as a result, bringing about a breakdown in communication. What explains the speaker's obedience to (CP) is the supposition that saying that *p* he or she means that *q*. According to Grice's original theory, Tom uttering a sentence "Lovely weather we are having" makes as if to say that the weather is lovely, seemingly flouting the *Maxim of Quality*. In uttering this blatantly false sentence, however, he sarcastically communicates that the weather is awful. Tom simply cannot be taken to be *meaning* what he *says* or – using Grice's own phrase – to be meaning what he *makes as if to say*. (The problem is that Grice treated the act of saying as a kind of general illocutionary act and, as a result, precluded the possibility of saying something without meaning it. In order to account for cases of sarcasm and irony as well as metaphorical uses of language, he introduced the idea of *making as if to say*. Following Bach and Harnish, nevertheless, we can treat saying as a locutionary act and, thanks to this, allow for cases of saying something without meaning it. See chapter 4 of Bach 1994a for a discussion of this topic.) The boy stating that he is hungry and the speaker *B* making a statement on the yellow station wagon seem, in turn, to flout the *Maxim of Relation*. Contrary to appearances, nevertheless, they are relevant. By stating that he is hungry, the boy is asking for some food and, in that way, he is observing (CP). In similar vein the speaker *B* is not only reporting what he or she has just seen but, additionally, he or she is supposing where Paul could be.

The term "implicature" can be understood at least in two ways. Grice used it to pick out a broad class of all inexplicit speech acts. It turns out, however, that the class is not homogeneous. It comprises, among other things, cases of sarcasm and irony as well as indirect illocutionary acts. Following Bach and Harnish (1979, chapter 4) we can take the former to be nonliteral and direct speech acts, whereas the latter can be called "implicatures" in the narrow sense. In the case of a nonliteral and direct speech act – which is a variant of the so-called *implicature* (Bach 1994a) – the speaker says that *p* and, contrary to appearances, does not perform the illocutionary act *F* that *p* but performs the act *F'* that *q* instead. In the case of implicature (narrowly conceived) the speaker says that *p*, performs the illocutionary act *F* that *p* and performs the act *F'* that *q* in addition. For the sake of my argument, in what follows I will use the term "implicature" in its narrow sense, to pick out indirect illocutionary acts only.

Let me enumerate a few essential features of implicature. First of all, even when we restrict

its use to speaking of indirect speech acts, the term “implicature” remains ambiguous. For the sake of the present paper let me assume – following the post-Gricean tradition – that in its primary sense it names a pragmatic process by means of which the hearer arrives at the speech act the speaker performs inexplicitly. Derivatively, we can say that one speech act implicates another, and that the latter is an additional or indirect speech act or, in short, the implicature generated by the former. Secondly, the process of implicature involves reasoning (in most cases subconscious) on the part of the hearer (see Lycan 2000: 191-192 for the discussion of this point). In reasoning of this kind the hearer, being guided by the general presumption that the speaker observes (CP), exploits the conversational maxims as well as some additional assumptions and principles. This fact explains the third feature of implicature, namely its cancellability: if one or more of the assumptions involved in the process of implicature turned out to be false or unjustified, the hearer would be ready to withdraw his or her previous conclusions regarding the indirect speech act the speaker is performing. Fourthly, there is a kind of connection between the illocutionary force and propositional content of a direct speech act and the force and content of a corresponding indirect one. It is not the case, however, that either the indirect speech act simply inherits the illocutionary force of the direct one – take into account the boy stating that he is hungry – or that the content of the former is merely a conceptually strengthened version of the content of the latter – see the statement on the yellow station wagon. Nevertheless, it is in virtue of the meaning of the sentence “I am hungry, Mum” that the mother takes her son to be asking for something to eat.

(c) EP explained away

In my view, all these features can be adequately attributed to the pragmatic inferences from the statement made by saying that it is true that *S* to the statement that *S* and from the statement made in uttering the sentence “*S*” to the statement that it is true that *S*. Undoubtedly, making a statement in uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” the speaker usually commits himself or herself to the statement that *S* and, conversely, stating something by saying that *S* the speaker is usually expected to be prepared to state that it is true that *S*. In what follows I will show that the statement made in uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” usually implicates the statement that *S*, and that the statement made in saying that *S* normally implicates the statement that it is true that *S*. In short, the apparent conversational equivalence of these two statements can be explained in terms of implicatures connected with the use of the truth predicate. For this reason EP cannot be treated as a definitionally basic fact about the meaning of the word “true”. To justify my claim I

have to show, firstly, that – claim (i) – the statement that *S* can be plausibly treated as an indirect speech act performed in the utterance of a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” and that saying that *S* – saying it in making a statement – we indirectly state that it is true that *S*. Secondly – claim (ii) – I owe the readers at least a sketchy account of reasoning underlying these implicatures. In particular, I will identify maxims that are exploited by the hearer in order to determine the speaker's indirect speech act. Thirdly, I should prove that – claim (iii) – the conversational inference from the statement made by uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” to the statement that *S* – as well as the one from the statement made by uttering the sentence “*S*” to the statement that it is true that *S* – is cancellable. In order to do that I will describe a situation in which the speaker is making one of these statements whereas he or she is not ready to make the other. Fourthly, it should be also shown that – claim (iv) – the indirect speech act of stating that *S* stems, among other things, from the fact that the word “true” possesses such-and-such a meaning.

(i) According to claim (i), firstly, making a statement in uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” the speaker states indirectly that *S* and, secondly, making a statement in uttering a sentence “*S*” the speaker states indirectly that it is true that *S*. As for the first subclaim, it can be illustrated by analogy with the case of an utterance of a sentence of the form “Do you know what/where *X* is?”. According to a literal reading, this utterance is to be interpreted as a performance of the illocutionary act of posing a yes-no question. Strictly speaking, the question is whether the hearer knows something about *X*. In short, it concerns his or her knowledge of *X*, not *X* itself. Nevertheless, speaker *A* uttering the sentence of the form “Do you know what/where *X* is?” is normally taken to be asking what/where *X* is. Does the latter observation justify the view that these two sentences under scrutiny – namely “Do you know what/where *X* is?” and “What/where *X* is?” – are merely two different linguistic devices to perform one and the same illocutionary act? I do not think so. The phrase “do you know” is not redundant. Nor is it the case that its meaning is wholly constituted by the fact that the speaker uttering the sentence “Do you know what/where *X* is?” is normally disposed to ask what/where *X* is. There are many occasions on which speaker *A* uttering the sentence of the form “Do you know what/where *X* is?” is merely expressing his or her desire to find out whether the hearer knows something or other of *X*. In my view, the act of expressing this desire is a direct illocutionary act performed by *A*. However, normally it is not the only one. Uttering the sentence of the form “Do you know what/where *X* is?” the speaker *can be* – and normally *is* – expressing additionally another intention to the effect that he or she wants the hearer to tell what/where *X* is. What is more, this very intention may be the original motive behind the utterance under consideration, despite the fact that its expression constitutes the indirect speech act performed by *A*. The point is that in order to be more polite or cautious speakers may prefer

expressing their main intention indirectly.

In short, uttering the sentence of the form “Do you know what/where X is?” the speaker is usually performing two different illocutionary acts, the direct and the indirect, whereas the latter implicates the former. In similar vein it can be argued that the utterer of the sentence of the form “It is true that S ” normally simultaneously performs at least two speech acts. He or she directly states that it is true that S and indirectly performs an additional act of stating that S . It can be said, therefore, that the former statement implicates the latter. Making the former the speaker is expressing his belief that the statement that S is true, whereas making the latter he or she is expressing the belief that S . Although it is usually the intention to express the belief that S that motivates the utterance of the sentence “It is true that S ” in making a statement, this belief is expressed indirectly for some conversational reasons that I will identify in due course. At any rate, if the proposed account is adequate, the truth predicate is neither redundant nor is its meaning constituted by the apparent conversational equivalence of the statement made in uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that S ” and the statement made in uttering the sentence “ S ” alone. This equivalence, in fact, is a by-product of some implicatures connected with the use of the truth predicate as well as with the act of making any statement.

I do not want to say that the phrases “do you know” and “it is true that” function in altogether the same way. Nevertheless, they function analogously, though this analogy – being nothing over and above an analogy – has its limitations. Uttering the sentence of the form “Do you know where X is?” the speaker is usually indirectly asking where X is, though directly he or she is referring to the hearer's knowledge. Analogously, uttering the sentence of the form “It is true that S ” the speaker is normally indirectly stating that S , although he or she is directly referring to the statement that S rather than to the fact that S . In short, we very often refer indirectly to states of affairs to be found in the world by making direct references to our knowledge of the states or to our statements about them. There are, of course, some semantically and pragmatically crucial differences between the locution “do you know” and the phrase “it is true that”. For example the positive answer to the question “Do you know where X is?” does not help us to answer the question “Where X is?”, whereas the positive answer to the question “Is it true that S ?” seems to trivially entail the positive answer to the question “Whether S ?”. In my opinion, firstly, this triviality is illusory. Secondly, the difference under consideration is not crucial to the main point discussed here. Besides, I think, it explains why nobody regards the phrase “do you know” as redundant, while some philosophers are tempted to hold such a view on the truth predicate.

So far I have attempted to argue that making a statement that S can be *plausibly* counted as an indirect speech act performed by the speaker who makes a statement by uttering the sentence of

the form “It is true that *S*”. In short, the latter statement implicates the former. It remains to be examined, however, whether the statement made by saying that *S* implicates the statement that it is true that *S*. In other words, whether by making any statement we indirectly state that what we are currently saying is true. My hypothesis is that we do, though, to be honest, I have no good argument to support this. The only thing I can do now is to resort to an intuitive idea – the idea underlying, I think, Austin’s definition of truth – that it is a distinctive feature of statements that in making a statement the speaker normally indirectly states that the former statement is true.

(ii) Now let me come to claim (ii). Even though I often state that one speech act implicated another and, as a result, the latter act was an implicature generated by the former, I assume, following the post-Gricean tradition, that the term “implicature” in its primary meaning stands for a cognitive process – a kind of subconscious reasoning – by means of which the hearer arrives at the indirect speech act performed by the speaker. Performing such a reasoning the hearer exploits certain conversational maxims. Every maxim takes into account a different aspect of speech acts and specifies, for this particular aspect, how to observe the Cooperative Principle. For example the *Maxim of Quality* allows for the fact that statements, if they are made in order to uphold the linguistic cooperation, should be true and justified. In other words, the speaker’s duty is to avoid making statements that he or she regards as false or is unable to justify. Exploiting this maxim the hearer may come to the conclusion that the speaker, by making a given statement, expresses his or her conviction that the statement in question is true and justified. In other words, the speaker accepting a sentence “*S*” can plausibly be regarded as making two statements – the direct statement that *S* and the indirect statement that it is true that *S*.

What are, therefore, the maxims that are involved in the implicatures underlying EP? As for the implicature from the statement made in uttering a sentence “*S*” to the statement that it is true that *S*, the answer seems to be obvious. It is the *Maxim of Quality* that allows the hearer to conclude that the speaker saying that *S* – saying it in making a statement – is indirectly stating that it is true that *S*. Nevertheless, what about the second relevant implicature, namely the one from the statement that it is true that *S* to the statement that *S*? What is the maxim that the hearer exploits in order to conclude that the speaker making the former statement indirectly makes the latter? Notice, firstly, that the speaker uttering the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” in order to state that *S* flouts the *Maxim of Manner*. Nevertheless – contrary to what the deflationist claims – this speaker may do this intentionally in order to make his utterance more informative. In other words, he or she is obeying the *Maxim of Quantity*, according to which the speaker is expected to make his or her contribution as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange. Exploiting this maxim the hearer may come to the conclusion that the speaker uttering the sentence of the form “It is true that

S”, apart from directly stating that it is true that *S*, is making two further, indirect statements. The first one is that the statement that *S* either has just been made or is likely to be made. The second indirect statement is simply the statement that *S*. These two indirect illocutionary acts are implicated or – as John L. Austin (1964: 26) puts it – “implied” by the act of making a statement in uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*”.

To arrive at them, however, the hearer not only has to exploit the *Maxim of Quantity*. He or she has additionally to assume that the statement the speaker refers to – the statement which “has just been made or is likely to be made” – can be identified with the second indirect statement the speaker is taken to be making. The assumption, therefore, necessarily involved in the hearer's reasoning is that the speaker saying that it is true that *S* – saying it in making a statement – is ready to use the sentence “*S*” alone in making his own statement. In other words, it is assumed that if the speaker uttered the sentence “*S*”, this utterance would express nothing but the proposition that the sentence “*S*” contributes to the content of the speaker's current utterance of the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*”. If the assumption turned out to be inadequate, the hearer would be ready to withdraw his previous conclusion to the effect that the speaker, by saying that it is true that *S* in making a statement, has also stated that *S*. In short, the conclusion is cancellable.

(iii) Now, we can come to claim (iii), which plays the central role in my argument. In order to be cases of implicature, the conversational inferences from the statement made in uttering the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” to the statement that *S*, as well as from the statement made in uttering a sentence “*S*” to the statement that it is true that *S*, should be cancellable.

In my view, they are cancellable. Firstly, in some cases the speaker who uses a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” in making a statement is not ready to use the sentence “*S*” in making his or her own statement. Therefore, he or she does not perform the indirect illocutionary act of stating that *S*, despite his or her making a statement by saying that it is true that *S*. Secondly, sometimes the speaker using the sentence “*S*” in making a statement that *S* is not disposed to state that it is true that *S*. Let me go into details.

In order to justify the first subclaim, I would like to construct an example of a speech situation in which the speaker who utters a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” in making a statement is not ready to use the sentence “*S*” in making his or her own statement. What I have in mind is the situation described by Keith S. Donnellan in his paper “Reference and Definite Descriptions”, namely the situation of stating something true about an individual picked out by means of an inadequate description. As Donnellan puts it:

For the speaker stated something, in this example, about a particular person, and his statement, we

may suppose, was true. Nevertheless, we should not like to agree with his statement by using the sentence he used; we should not like to identify the true statement *via* the speaker's words. (Donnellan 1966: 300)

The example in question depicts a situation in which a speaker uttering a sentence of the form “The *F* is *G*” uses the definite description “the *F*” referentially and, moreover, the description is inadequate – the object the speaker refers to is not the *F*. Despite the fact that the referent does not fit the description, Donnellan concludes, the speaker has managed to state something true about it.

I agree with Donnellan's account of this example, but with one proviso. Although we are reluctant to use the sentence “The *F* is *G*” in making our own statement, we are ready – contrary to what Donnellan claims – to identify the speaker statement “*via* the speaker's words”. Before I spell out my reasons for claiming that, let me shortly explain the distinction between the referential and attributive use of definite descriptions.

Donnellan argues that a definite description can be used in either two ways. In its *attributive use* a definite description denotes the object that uniquely fits the description. In its *referential use* a definite description is a device for getting an audience to pick out the object to be spoken about, even if the description is incorrect. What is more, a phrase “the *F*” occurring in one and the same sentence “The *F* is *G*” may, on different occasions of its use, function either referentially or attributively. Therefore, uttering one and the same sentence “The *F* is *G*” on different occasions, a speaker can be described as making different statements.

Donnellan illustrates his distinction with a few examples. One of them is borrowed from a paper by Leonard Linsky (1963): Peter – for the sake of the argument, let me name the participants of the story – observes a young couple and says “Her husband is kind to her”. John, who knows that the man they see is not the lady's husband – but, for example, her fiancé or lover – can say “That's true. Nevertheless he is not her husband”. The point is that if Peter uses the description “her husband” attributively and, moreover, nobody fits the description, he fails to state something true or false. Nevertheless Peter manages to make a true statement provided he uses the description referentially.

Following Katarzyna Jaszczolt (1999) we can say that there are at least four possible theoretical accounts of the attributive/referential distinction, and it is difficult to say which one of them can be attributed to Donnellan. Firstly, it can be claimed that the distinction is semantic. In other words, definite descriptions are ambiguous. This option is critically examined by Saul A. Kripke in his paper “Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference” (1979). Secondly, we can assume that definite descriptions are unambiguous and the meaning of a sentence in which such a

description occurs should be analysed along the lines proposed by Bertrand Russell. The attributive/referential distinction is to be regarded, therefore, as a pragmatic phenomenon and explained in terms of speech act theory. This idea, suggested by Kripke, is elaborated by Kent Bach (1987). He claims that the speaker, who utters the sentence of the form “The *F* is *G*” and uses the description “the *F*” referentially, performs two illocutionary acts. This speaker, namely, makes directly a general statement equipped with the Russellian truth condition. Simultaneously he or she makes an indirect and singular statement, the content of which I will specify in due course. Thirdly, we can embrace the so-called underdetermined semantics and claim, that a sentence containing a definite description has no determined semantic representation and as such requires the pragmatic process of completion, a process that can result either in an attributive or referential reading of the relevant description token. Once again, this option can be worked out within the theoretical framework proposed by Kent Bach (1987; 1994a; 1994b). Fourthly, we can accept the so-called default semantics and claim that the referential reading of a definite description is a default one, whereas departures from the default semantic representation are accounted for in terms of communicative intentions. Such an option is formulated and defended by Katarzyna Jaszczolt in her paper “Default Semantics, Pragmatics, and Intentions” (1999).

I do not wish here to decide which of the accounts is more adequate. Nevertheless, I adopt, for the sake of the argument, the second option. The reason for this decision is methodological rather than substantive: throughout the present paper I simply employ the theoretical framework – namely the *Speech Act Schema* – proposed by Kent Bach and Robert M. Harnish in their *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts* (1979). In particular, I adopt their view that most of Gricean examples of implicature – though not all – can be explained away as cases of indirect speech acts (according to Bach and Harnish ironical, sarcastic and metaphorical uses of language – which are taken by Grice to be examples of implicature too – are non-literal and direct speech acts). Nevertheless, I am not interested here in the nature of the attributive/referential distinction. I think that even an intuitive understanding of the distinction suffices for the analysis of the phenomenon described by Donnellan, namely the possibility of stating something true about an individual referred to by means of an inadequate description.

Now let me focus on the statement made by Peter uttering the sentence “Her husband is kind to her”. It is assumed that the man to whom Peter refers is not the lady's husband. In fact, she is unmarried. Being aware of this John can say “That's true. Nevertheless, he is not her husband”. In my view, John is ready to make a statement by saying that the statement that her husband is kind to her is true, but he is not disposed to utter a sentence “Her husband is kind to her” in making his own

statement. According to Donnellan, John would be reluctant to make both statements. My claim is that the situation is, in fact, asymmetric. As part of making a statement made by uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that her husband is kind to her” John refers – in that particular case – to Peter's statement. He states indirectly, that the statement has just been made. Besides, in a sense he agrees with what Peter has stated. But does it imply that he states that her husband is kind to her? I do not think so!

In short, my claim is that John is ready to make a statement, on that particular occasion, by saying that it is true that her husband is kind to her, but in stating this he does not make an indirect statement to the effect that her husband is kind to her. In other words, the normal implicature from the statement made in saying that it is true that *S* to the statement that *S* should be cancelled here. This is my claim. Now let me spell out my reasons.

Following Bach and Harnish, I distinguish between the locutionary act of saying – namely the simple speech act of generating sounds that are linked together by grammatical conventions – and the illocutionary act of stating. The second relevant distinction is the one between the direct and indirect illocutionary act. Equipped with these distinctions we can say (allowing for indexicality and ambiguity) that Peter performs at least three speech acts, namely:

- (1) Peter says that her husband is kind to her;
- (2) Peter directly states that her husband is kind to her;
- (3) Peter indirectly states that the man over there is kind to her.

According to Bach, using the description “her husband” referentially, Peter makes in fact two statements (Bach 1987: 117n). The first one – the one reported in (2) – is direct. It is also a general statement, because its truth condition is to be spelled out in a way proposed by Russell in his theory of definite descriptions. Reporting this statement we can use the description “her husband”, taking into account that this description stands for the aspect according to which Peter communicates what individual he has in mind. The second statement – the one reported in (3) – is indirect. Reporting it we can use – as Bach puts it – a fall-back description, namely the description Peter would be ready to fall back on if he was reminded that the original description was inadequate. The fall-back description stands for the aspect under which Peter thinks about the intended referent, though it is not the aspect Peter exploits in the act of communicating his attitude.

Now we can account for the phenomenon recognized by Donnellan, namely the possibility

that a speaker can state something true about an individual despite the fact that he or she refers to it by means of an inadequate description. Peter's direct statement – the one reported in (2) – is false. Peter manages to state something true, however, because using the description “her husband” referentially he makes additionally the indirect statement reported in (3), and this statement turns out to be true.

Let me now spell out the speech acts performed by John in uttering the sentence “It is true that her husband is kind to her”:

- (1') John says that it is true that her husband is kind to her;
- (2') John directly states that it is true that her husband is kind to her;
- (3') John indirectly states that it is true that the man over there is kind to her;
- (4') John indirectly states that the statement that her husband is kind to her has been made;
- (5') John indirectly states that the statement that the man over there is kind to her has been made;
- (6') John indirectly states that the man over there is kind to her.

Nevertheless, it is not the case that:

- (7') John indirectly states that her husband is kind to her.

In my view, John uses the locution “that her husband is kind to her” referentially. Moreover, he is aware of the fact that it does not apply to the statement that has turned out to be true. When used referentially, however, the phrase in question can pick out the true statement that Peter has made. Taking this possibility into account, we can say that apart from making the direct statement – the one reported in (2') – he also makes four indirect statements. In order to report in (3') the first of them, we can use the fall-back description of the indirect statement Peter has made – namely the statement that has turned out to be true. In (4') and (5') we allow for the fact that John indirectly states that Peter has made two statements, the direct and the indirect one. (It should be noted, however, that according to Bach and Harnish more is required for indirection than entailment or presupposition. For the sake of simplicity, nevertheless, I assume that John indirectly states what is entailed or presupposed by his original statement). It is the latter, however, not the former, that John agrees with. That is why we can embrace report (6') while rejecting (7'). In short, by saying – in

making a statement – that it is true that her husband is kind to her, John does not want to state indirectly that her husband is kind to her. Therefore, the normal implicature connected with the statement made in uttering a sentence “It is true that *S*” is cancellable. John can block this implicature explicitly, uttering, for example, the text “It is true, that her husband is kind to her. But I wouldn't put it in these words”. Paraphrasing John L. Austin (1964) saying we can state that from John's perspective Peter's statement is true *in fact*, but not *in substance*.

It remains to be explained, however, why John, despite his being aware of the fact that the description “her husband” applies to nobody, uses it in making the statement that it is true that her husband is kind to her. It is conceded that John is reluctant to make his own statement by means of the sentence “Her husband is kind to her”. For the same reasons, it seems, he should avoid using the sentence “It is true that her husband is kind to her” in making a statement as well. In other words – one might say – John would utter a sentence “That [that man is kind to her] is true” rather than “It is true that her husband is kind to her”. Such an objection, however, ignores one important difference between the statement made in saying that *S* and the statement made in saying that it is true that *S*. In the case of the former statement, the sentence “*S*” occurs as part of the locution “that *S*”, which functions as a definite description. This locution is normally used to refer to the statement that *S* – the statement that normally “has just been made or is likely to be made”. In some cases, although I agree with such a statement, I can nevertheless object to the manner in which it has been expressed. In such a case I am not disposed to use the sentence “*S*” to *make* my own statement, but I can still use the sentence – as part of the locution “that *S*” – to *refer* to the relevant statement under consideration. And it is the presence of the truth predicate in my utterance that signals that even though I refer to the relevant statement by means of the locution “that *S*” and express my agreement with it, I do not – for some reasons – directly make the statement that *S*. In other words, I *metarepresent* the state of affairs under discussion by saying that it is true that *S* even though I am reluctant to *represent* it by means of the sentence “*S*”. The point is that the locution “that *S*”, apart from being used either attributively or referentially, can be also used – as Gareth Evans (1985: 21) puts it – *deferentially* towards our interlocutor or the audience. For example John, who states that it is true that her husband is kind to her, uses the locution “that her husband is kind to her” deferentially towards Peter. John is aware of the fact that this locution stands for a statement which, when made directly, cannot be counted as true. Nevertheless he decides to employ it, because he assumes that it is this locution – not the one of the form “that man is kind to her” – that is, at this particular stage of communication, the best device for getting Peter to pick out the statement that is currently being spoken about.

At any rate, the first part of claim (iii) is, I think, justified. What about its second part, namely the thesis that the pragmatic inference from the statement made in uttering a sentence “*S*” to the statement that it is true that *S* is cancellable and, as such, can be regarded as a case of implicature connected with the act of making a statement? It can be objected from the outset that if the speaker says that *S* and, at the same moment, is not ready to state that it is true that *S*, he or she fails to make any statement at all. To some extent this objection is adequate. If the speaker utters with conviction a sentence “*S*”, but does not believe that it is true that *S*, he or she fails to make a non-defective statement. Nevertheless, it can be the case that making a non-defective statement is not his or her intention at all. On the contrary, the speaker's primary intention may be to perform a direct, though insincere statement. When lying or joking, we do not believe in the truth of what we are saying, but we intend our hearers to believe that we do. People would not be so good at laying and cheating each other unless the statement that it is true that *S* was a normal implicature generated by the act of saying that *S* in making a statement. Moreover, the pragmatic inference from the latter to the former is cancellable, since we can block it explicitly with a remark “Of course, I am not serious”.

In short, I claim that the pragmatic inference from the statement made in saying that *S* to the statement that it is true that *S* is cancellable and, therefore, is a case of implicature construed as an indirect speech act. In order to support my opinion I assume that lying, joking and cheating are acts involving direct and literal, though insincere statements. What justifies this assumption is, I think, the fact that in order to be a successful lie or joke a given utterance has to be read as a statement.

Apart from lies, there are also further examples of insincerity. Let me consider a short dialogue (the core idea of which I borrow from Marek Tokarz; see his 1993: 216)

The pupil: Dublin is the capital of England, Professor Smith!

The professor: Yes, and Moscow is the capital of the United States!

There are, I think, at least two possible accounts of the dialogue.

Firstly, the professor's response can be explained away as a case of a direct and non-literal act. On this construal, the professor cannot be taken to state what he or she says. In other words, he or she uses the sentence “Moscow is the capital of the United States” non-literally in order to communicate, in a sarcastic way, that the pupil's statement is false. Therefore, the professor cannot be taken to implicate that it is true that Moscow is the capital of the United States, since he or she

does not even state that Moscow is the capital of the United States at all. If this is the adequate account of the professor's response, it does not illustrate my claim – namely the claim to the effect that uttering a sentence “*S*” in making a statement we indirectly state that it is true that *S*.

Secondly, we can assume that despite the sarcastic character of the professor's utterance, he or she can be regarded as making a statement that Moscow is the capital of the United States. The statement is, of course, plainly false and insincere. What is more, its author is aware of this fact and knows that his or her hearer is able to recognize the statement as false and insincere. The professor makes it directly in order to indirectly state that the pupil's answer is false. Moreover, the professor makes such a statement not in spite, but because of his or her being aware of the fact that this statement is plainly false. In short, in some special conversational circumstances the speaker can make a statement that *S* even though he or she is not disposed to state that it is true that *S*. Making such a statement, though in a sense defective, can be justified by the the speaker's primary intention to perform an indirect speech act. My claim is that the professor's response can be described as an act of making an insincere statement that Moscow is the capital of the United States. In this respect the utterance under consideration can be likened to lying rather than to direct and non-literal speech acts.

Taking into account various cases of insincere statements we can conclude that the normal conversational inference from any statement made in uttering a sentence “*S*” to the statement that it is true that *S* is cancellable and, as a result, can be treated as a case of implicature. Finally, let me end with a short comment on claim (iv).

(iv) Indeed, it is in virtue of the meaning of the truth predicate that the statement made in uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” normally implicates the statement that *S*. Nevertheless, it is not by virtue of this meaning alone. The speaker accepts a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*” and is normally taken to state that *S*. The hearer comes to such a conclusion by means of a certain reasoning, which involves several assumptions. It is assumed, for example, that if this speaker uttered also the sentence “*S*” alone, this utterance would express nothing but the proposition that the sentence “*S*” contributes to the content of the speaker's current utterance of the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*”. In other words, the hearer expects the speaker to attach the same meaning to two different tokens of the sentence “*S*”: the first token occurs within the utterance of the sentence of the form “It is true that *S*”, whereas the second one is used to make the direct statement that *S*. Therefore, these two speech acts under consideration, namely making the statement by saying that *S* and saying that it is true that *S* in making a statement, can be counted as two conversationally equivalent attitudes – equivalent with respect to their truth conditions – on the

proviso that these two relevant occurrences of the sentence “*S*” means the same. Therefore, contrary to the deflationary account of EP, there is a constitutive connection between the concept of truth for statements and the concept of speaker meaning. The connection can be described by means of the following schema:

If the statement *x* expresses the proposition that *p*, then (*x* is true if and only if *p*).

In short, truth is not a pure concept at all. Making a statement by saying that it is true that *S* I am also ready to make the statement that *S*, provided I attach the same meaning to sentence “*S*” independently of whether it is used to make the direct statement that *S* or is part of the locution “that *S*” employed in making the statement by uttering a sentence of the form “It is true that *S*”.

If all my claims from (i) to (iv) are tenable, EP is a pragmatic phenomenon that is subject to a substantial explanation and as such cannot be counted as a definitional semantic property of the truth predicate.

3.2. The minimal theory fails to explain some important uses of the truth predicate. In particular, it cannot cope with the phenomenon described by Keith S. Donnellan, namely the situation in which the speaker manages to state something true about an individual he or she refers to by means of an inadequate description.

The deflationary account of the truth talk starts with the claim that our grasp of the meaning of the truth predicate consists entirely in our disposition to accept all instances of the equivalence schema. These instances define implicitly the immanent truth predicate and provide a sufficient basis for the adequate account of the truth talk. In other words, every deployment of the truth predicate can be ultimately explained, in a course of analysis, as a case of its immanent use. My claim is that the deflationist puts the cart before the horse. In the previous chapter I have argued that EP cannot be counted as a definitional property of the concept of truth, because it is a conversational phenomenon that is subject to inflationary explanation. Besides, I have proposed

such an explanation, presenting EP as a result of some normal implicatures connected with the use of the truth predicate as well as with the act of making a statement.

The proponent of the minimal conception might say that so far I have merely provided an alternative, inflationary account of EP. It remains to be shown, however, whether this inflationary explanation is better than its deflationary rival. The deflationist could simply maintain that it is me, not he or she, who puts the cart before the horse. Contrary to the view I have just proposed – the proponent of minimal conception might say – an adequate explanation of the overall deployment of the truth predicate has to employ the claim that the meaning of this predicate is constituted solely by our disposition to accept the equivalences of the form “It is true that *S* if and only if *S*”.

In my view, however, it is inflationism, not deflationism, that offers a better explanation of the truth talk. The point is that semantic deflationism fails to account for the phenomenon identified by Donnellan, namely the situation in which the speaker succeeds in making a true statement about an individual picked out by means of an inadequate description. Inflationism, in turn, explains this phenomenon with ease.

Let me now examine the deflationary account of the phenomenon under consideration. Peter utters the sentence “Her husband is kind to her”. Despite the fact that the man to whom he refers is not the lady's husband – she is, in fact, unmarried – Peter managed to state something true about him. The point is that Peter uses the description “her husband” referentially. John, though aware of the fact that Peter mistakenly takes this man to be the lady's husband, can utter the sentence “That's true” or, provided he uses the locution “that her husband is kind to her” referentially and deferentially towards Peter, utter the sentence “It is true that her husband is kind to her”. In accordance with the central idea of the minimal conception we should spell out the latter utterance as a case of employing the immanent concept of utterance truth. This concept is implicitly defined by instances of the schema:

(E-u) The token of **p** is *true* if and only if *p*,

and is functionally equivalent to the concept of proposition truth, namely the concept expressed by the predicate defined by means of (E). The problem is that the immanent predicate “is *true*” primarily applies to our own, current utterances. The conceptually basic cases of its deployment are utterances of equivalences of the form “The immediately following instance of “*S*” is *true* if and only if *S*” or “*S* if and only if the immediately preceding utterance of “*S*” is *true*” (Horwich 1990: 105). If we want to use the predicate “is *true*” in making a statement about an utterance *u* which is not our own, we have to assume that the utterance under discussion expresses exactly the same proposition that is

expressed by our own utterance of a sentence “*p*” by means of which we articulate the truth condition of *u*. Making such an assumption we employ the following schema:

Utterance *u* expresses the proposition that $p \rightarrow (u \text{ is true if and only if } p)$

According to semantic deflationism, in turn, two linguistic forms express the same concept or proposition – or, in short, are intertranslatable – if their explanatory basic use regularities are identical.

Now, let me account for Donnellan's phenomenon along deflationary lines. From John's point of view two sentences he is ready to accept – namely “It is true that her husband is kind to her” and “The man over there is kind to her” – are, at this particular stage of the talk-exchange, conversationally equivalent. In other words, John is disposed to accept the equivalence “The utterance «Her husband is kind to her» is *true* if and only if the man over there is kind to her”. In order to state this, however, John has to assume that his utterance of the sentence “The man over there is kind to her” and Peter's utterance of the sentence “Her husband is kind to her” express the same proposition and, as a result, are intertranslatable. This assumption boils down to the claim that the explanatory basic regularity governing the deployment of the description “her husband” in Peter's idiolect can be identified with the regularity explaining the overall deployment of the description “the man over there” in John's idiolect. In my opinion this claim is untenable at least for two reasons.

Firstly, it is the case that John can use the description “her husband” deferentially towards Peter, namely to refer to the man over there. In a sense, John correlates his token of the phrase “the man over there” with Peter's token of the phrase “her husband”. This correlation, however, is made exclusively for the sake of the current talk-exchange and probably will not be invoked any more. In short, the correlation under scrutiny is tentative and as such cannot be counted as a case of translation.

Secondly, John arrives at this correlation by means of reasoning that involves some assumptions concerning Peter's beliefs and intentions. Taking these factors into account John comes to the conclusion that Peter refers to the individual *d* by means of the description “her husband”, whereas he refers to *d* by means of the description “the man over there”. In accordance with the main idea of the use theory of meaning we should point out that these two descriptions share at least one use property, namely they are both used to refer to *d*. Can we count this property as explanatory basic? I do not think so. The fact that Peter uses the description “her husband” to refer to *d* – or, more accurately, uses it if he possesses *d*-like sensations – does not explain his overall deployment

of this phrase. On the contrary, this very use of the description “her husband” to refer to *d* is subject to an explanation based on some assumptions concerning Peter's linguistic and contextual knowledge.

At any rate, semantic deflationism fails to account for the cognitive process which leads John to temporarily correlating his token of the phrase “the man over there” with Peter's token of the phrase “her husband”. It is also questionable whether the correlation can be counted as a case of translation. As a result, the immanent use of the predicate “is *true*” cannot be extended *modulo* translation, i.e. it cannot be used to attribute *truth* to utterances that are not our own. In short, semantic deflationism fails to account for the phenomenon described by Donnellan. This phenomenon, in turn, can be easily explained on inflationary grounds.

4. Conclusions: the confusion behind semantic deflationism

The minimal theory is expected to account for the overall deployment of the word “true”. It turns out, however, that it fails to meet this expectation. In other words, the minimal theory does not meet the explanatory demand posed by the minimal conception. I have proved that minimalism about truth does not provide an adequate explanation of the truth talk. In particular, it fails to explain Donnellan's phenomenon – namely a situation in which the speaker succeeds in making a true statement about an individual he or she refers to by means of an inadequate description. The conception in question also provides an inadequate account of EP, wrongly assuming that it is a meaning-constituting property of the truth predicate.

Let me end with a more general remark. In my opinion, the failure of semantic deflationism to explain both EP and Donnellan's phenomenon stems from the fact that it defines meaning and translation in terms of use. As Kent Bach (1987) puts it, semantics deals with properties of expression types, while pragmatics focuses on properties of expression tokens. EP is, above all, a pragmatic phenomenon, and as such cannot be treated as a property constitutive to the meaning of the truth predicate. Similarly, the correlation of John's token of the phrase “the man over there” with Peter's token of the phrase “her husband” also describes a pragmatic, not a semantic property of the two expression tokens.

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