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Eleni Kriempardis*
University of Cambridge

SHARED CONTENT AS SPEAKER MEANING[1]

Abstract
Cappelen and Lepore (2005; 2006; 2007) have recently emphasised the significance of a minimal notion of perfectly shared content for pragmatic theories. This paper argues for a similar notion, but assumes that a satisfactory defence cannot be achieved along the lines of the existing debate between Minimalism and Contextualism (e.g. Carston 2002, Recanati 2004). Rather, it is necessary to consistently distinguish two functional domains: the subjective processing domain and the interpersonal domain of communication, each with its own kind of utterance meaning. I will argue that it is the mutually recognised content of the speaker's overt commitment that should be identified as 'speaker meaning'. Diverging from the (post-) Gricean tradition, it is conventionally restricted (minimal), but genuinely pragmatic (speaker-dependent). Functional considerations show that it is, moreover, unnecessary to include further elements in 'speaker meaning'. The distinction between two notions of utterance meaning with very different characteristics allows us to integrate the assumption of perfect sharing, which explains people's trust in communication, and the subjectivity of the hearer's inferences into a coherent and powerful model.

Keywords
Speaker meaning, context-dependence, minimalism, communicative success.

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* Research Centre for English and Applied Linguistics,
University of Cambridge
9 West Road
Cambridge CB3 9DP, UK
e-mail: ek243@cam.ac.uk

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1. Introduction

> Language is the main channel in which human beings share the contents of their consciousness. (Pinker 2008)

The aim of this paper is to defend a minimal pragmatic notion of 'shared content', which is fundamental to linguistic communication because it can consistently be described as the content speaker and hearer (aim to) share. Cappelen and Lepore (2005, 2006, 2007) have recently emphasised the significance of a similar notion. Their ideas have not, however, been widely adopted in the pragmatic literature. Given the set-up of the debate between Cappelen and Lepore's Minimalism and Contextualism (e.g. Carston 2002, Recanati 2004), this appears to be due mainly to the particular scope Cappelen and Lepore assign to this notion. I will illustrate that the disagreement rather has its roots in a lack of discussion about the objects and goals of particular approaches, and a corresponding failure to identify which notion of utterance content particular claims relate to. This continues the debate that Grice's 'what-is-said' led to from a cognitivist point of view ('pragmatic intrusion' into semantic content; cf. Levinson 2000: 172ff, Carston 2002: 105ff, Saul 2002).

Cappelen and Lepore's work is highly important in raising the theoretical problem of integrating a notion of perfect sharing. For a successful defence of shared content, however, it is necessary to assign an equally well-defined status to those aspects of communication that do not involve perfect sharing. While Cappelen and Lepore's 'speech act content' would allow this, they explicitly dispute its theoretical value. Given that vague aspects of communication are as real as perfect sharing, this seems to weaken their own argument rather than strengthen it. Most importantly, in view of the established contextualist notion of 'communicated meaning', Cappelen and Lepore do not sufficiently illustrate the functional role that sets 'shared content' apart from notions accepted by other theories, in particular 'encoded meaning' and 'explicatures'.

To demonstrate the significance of 'shared content', it is essential to offer a thorough presentation of the *qualitative* features that make shared content an important object of investigation in its own right. In the present work, it has such a special status because it coincides with the notion of 'speaker meaning' that is necessary to explain communicative success and the resulting trust in communication. Its relation to contextualist notions will be modelled in some detail, which will result in a refined picture of the speaker's and the hearer's involvement in the constitution of utterance meaning. In addition, it is hoped that

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this perspective will help to identify misunderstandings between frameworks and facilitate the discussion of these central pragmatic issues across theoretical divides.

2. Communication as attempted content sharing

Let us consider whether an account of communication requires any notion of sharing at all. In principle, there are kinds of utterance meaning[2] that are primarily subjective (e.g. personal ideas speakers associate with their utterances), and then there are those that are primarily interpersonal (i.e. intended to be recognised by both partners). While the former will often influence communicative encounters, it is the latter that are involved in communication in the fundamental sense, where communicative acts are understood as attempts to share content. This understanding accords with everyday views, for example the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary's* (1993) definition of communication as "the transmission or exchange of information" and with a wide range of linguistic, philosophical and psychological approaches.

To be sure, it was Grice who famously incorporated

(i) S intends H to [entertain] ***p***

in his definition of non-natural *meaning* (Grice 1957, 1969, Strawson 1964: 446). Moreover, he included a condition specifying that this intention be overt:

(ii) S intends H to recognise (i).

However, the idea that (attempted) sharing is central to communication is not radical or theory-dependent. Note, for instance, that the centrality of sharing is independent of the question of *how* sharing is actually brought about, regarding which most pragmatic accounts would certainly quarrel with the code-based understanding found in the dictionary definition above. Importantly, the centrality of sharing—which is generally accepted—is to be distinguished from *the object* of sharing—which is sometimes a genuine or apparent topic of discussion. For example, Kenyon is clear that communicative "success no doubt consists in *something* being shared", but disputes that it necessarily involves a duplication of thoughts (Kenyon 2005: 146; emphasis in the original). If anything, such an argument underlines (rather than undermines) the need to investigate shared content.

[2] I use *utterance meaning* as a theory-neutral cover term for the content of utterances.

In fact, many current pragmatists would agree with Sperber and Wilson's view that thoughts mostly cannot be perfectly shared across individuals through communication. This is due to the regular absence of unique mappings between thoughts and sentences (cf. Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995: 288, n.8). I regard this as largely indisputable, too. What is interesting are the different ways in which theoretical accounts can deal with the impossibility of sharing thoughts. Those who have reason to adopt a *thought*-based account (e.g. inferential psychological work) can treat communication as a matter of increasing the *overlap* between people's thoughts (or potential thoughts), as expressed in the relevance-theoretic idea of 'enlarging mutual cognitive environments' (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 193). Another approach is to assume that communication does aim at *perfect sharing*, but that its objects are *distinct from thoughts*. In the first case, communication is regarded as "successful, that is, [...] good enough" if the hearer recovers "any one of a number of interpretations with very similar import [licensed by the ostensive stimulus]" (Carston 2000: 10). In the second case, communication is seen as successful if the hearer understands exactly what the speaker 'meant' (keeping in mind what has been said about thoughts).

It is often overlooked that both views equally rely on perfectly shared content, although the contrast between 'mere similarity' and 'perfect sharing' might suggest otherwise[3]. This is because similarity *is* partial identity. If one were to specify a range of similar interpretations that count as (close enough to) what the speaker intended to convey, they would all share some core content that makes them 'similar enough'. The aim of this paper is to delineate this shared content, which defines verbal communication since it determines what communicative success consists in at the most fundamental level.

3. Cappelen and Lepore's shared semantic content

The present proposal has a lot of assumptions in common with Cappelen and Lepore (2005; 2006). It is thus important to present their approach, as well as the central points of criticism that have been raised against it[4]. Cappelen and Lepore

[3] Cappelen and Lepore (2006: 1034ff) heavily criticise the 'similarity view', mainly on the basis of its apparent clash with same-saying, and do not mention the following argument.

[4] As this debate is characterised by profound difficulties, an improvement in the presentation of the points of contact, agreement, and disagreement between Cappelen and Lepore's and contextualist work would by itself make an important contribution.

Lodz Papers in Pragmatics 5.2 (2009): 161-190
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suggest there are two kinds of intuition about utterance meaning, which appear to conflict[5]. On the one hand, a sentence like

(1) Serena is depressed.[6]

can be used to express the same idea across contexts. Assuming that the reference of *Serena* is fixed, the content that is stable across contexts of utterance is 'Serena is depressed'. It can be understood also by someone who does not know about the context-specific ways in which Serena is depressed. On the other hand, what (1) can be used to say depends on the contexts in which it is uttered. What will vary is the meaning conveyed by the adjective *depressed* in particular contexts, which may relate to stronger or weaker, and more or less specific, kinds of depression.

Cappelen and Lepore (2005, 2006, 2007) call the framework they propose to capture these intuitions about both content stability and content variability "Semantic Minimalism" combined with "Speech Act Pluralism". They define the *semantic content* of a sentence S as "the content that all utterances of S share". However, this entity

> cannot be characterized *completely* independently of the context of utterance. Semantic Minimalism recognizes a small subset of expressions that interact with contexts of utterance in privileged ways; we call these the *genuinely context sensitive expressions* (Cappelen & Lepore 2005: 143; emphasis in the original).

Cappelen and Lepore do not rule out that there are other expressions that belong to the "Basic Set" of genuinely context-sensitive expressions. As it stands, however, their Basic Set comprises only personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, deictic adverbs and adjectives (e.g. *here*/*there*; *actual*), and tense markers (cf. 2005: 144ff). The semantic content is one of the propositions expressed by an utterance of the relevant sentence (cf. 2005: 144)[7]. It can be identified on the basis of disquotational reports, e.g.

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[5] Cappelen and Lepore (2006) discuss the above tension as an issue arising for "what is said (asserted, claimed, stated, etc.)." However, in order to discuss the central claims about sharing and non-sharing, it is preferable to relate their ideas to a neutral notion.

[6] Cappelen and Lepore (2006) use the example *Serena is really smart*. For the purpose of illustrating their general point in a way that is compatible with alternative classifications of lexical expressions, the example in (1) is better-suited.

[7] Although Cappelen and Lepore say they "need not take a stance on whether semantic content is a proposition" (2005: 3, n.3.), discussions and rejections of Minimalism frequently focus on the issue of *propositionality*. This orientation leads away from Cappelen and Lepore's main aims. At the same time, their work includes explicit (as above) and implicit references to propositions (e.g. indirect reports), which seem to call for a more extensive discussion on their part.

(2) *Mary said that* Serena is depressed.

In addition, an utterance expresses indefinitely many other propositions, not all of which are known even to the speaker. All of these propositions make up the *speech act content* of an utterance. According to the authors, as "there's no single way to put all of [them] together in order to come up with a unique description of what [someone] said" (2005: 192), only semantic content can be the subject of a systematic theory, not speech act content (cf. 2005: 190).

It is critical to the novelty of Cappelen and Lepore's semantic content that it does not correspond to any of the entities defended by contextualists. To use relevance-theoretic (= RT) terminology, an utterance of

(3) She is depressed

can convey the ***explicature*** (a context-dependent development of the encoded meaning of the sentence uttered)

(4a) Serena is depressed in the way she was last summer.

as well as the ***implicature*** (a fully context-dependent proposition)

(4b) Serena will not leave her house for two months.

(typically an utterance will convey a whole set of explicatures and implicatures). By contrast, Cappelen and Lepore's ***semantic content*** of (3) would be

(5) Serena is depressed.

It goes beyond the encoded meaning ('<FEMALE REFERENT> is depressed') by including values for certain context-sensitive expressions (here: *she*); yet it is more restricted than explicatures (and implicatures) by disallowing other kinds of pragmatic contribution. Cappelen and Lepore's ***speech act content***, on the other hand, is similar to the comprehensive contextualist utterance meaning illustrated by (4a) and (4b).

There are important problems with how Cappelen and Lepore have implemented their intuitions. They concern, in particular, the suitability of the reporting test, its basis (an imprecise idea of the functional role of 'semantic content') and its consequences (the ultra-narrow definition of context-sensitivity). However, my aim is to present in a favourable light those aspects of Cappelen and Lepore's approach that are of particular significance for the present discussion:

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(I) The fact that semantic content can be shared even across situations helps to explain why typical speakers and hearers, who are in the same situation of utterance, but not in exactly the same (cognitive) context, can share this content. Semantic content is thus central to communicative success, and—in this sense—necessary for the explanation of linguistic communication (cf. 2005: 123ff, 152; 2007)[8].

(II) Everyday linguistic practices (e.g., reporting, commenting on what others said) as well as 'non-linguistic' practices (coordinated action, intrapersonal deliberation, forming justified beliefs) indicate that perfect sharing is central to people's understanding of communication (cf. 2006: 1032ff).

(III) If one allows more than a well-defined restricted type of context-sensitivity within semantic content on the basis of context-shifting or incompleteness arguments, then by the same token one would have to allow for unrestricted context-dependence (cf. 2005: 5ff). Given the subjectivity of contexts, this would conflict with semantic content being shared (I).

The way Cappelen and Lepore present both their criticism of contextualism and their positive proposal gave rise to certain misunderstandings, especially about

(a.) the novelty of semantic content,
(b.) the adequacy of explicatures and implicatures,
(c.) the resolution of context-sensitivity, and
(d.) the requirement for restricted context-sensitivity,

which led to underestimating the significance of their proposal. As an understanding of these issues is critical also for my own account, I will give a first indication of how one might approach them with benefit following each paragraph (responses R.a.-R.d.).

Wedgwood (2006) attempts to assimilate Cappelen and Lepore's notions to notions defended by RT. If this were an accurate representation of the former, they would certainly be swallowed up by the latter, as RT would offer a more comprehensive theory. However, the central notion in Cappelen and Lepore (2005) is semantic content, which, contrary to Wedgwood's claim, is *not* "entirely

[8] I use my own paraphrases of what I take to be Cappelen and Lepore's claims if elaborated coherently, hoping to avoid ambiguities in their presentation.

equivalent to the notion of encoded meaning" (2006: 19). In contrast to encoded meaning, semantic content is clearly context-dependent.

> (R.a.) Cappelen and Lepore permit (and, in the absence of alternatives, require) the semantic values of context-sensitive expressions to be determined by the speaker's intentions (cf. 2005: 148ff) (see (5) above).

Cappelen and Lepore's speech act content does have a rough equivalent in RT, the conjunction of explicatures and implicatures. However, it would be misleading to stop at this recognition, as Wedgwood (2006) does. After all, Cappelen and Lepore believe this contextualist entity cannot be the subject of 'systematic theorising', which is why they advocate semantic content instead.

> (R.b.) Cappelen and Lepore's formulation is overly strong. It is sufficient to state that the contextualist entity is not of the right kind for the particular purpose of being a candidate for shared content (§4.1). It might well be an important object of investigation for other purposes (§4.1, §4.2).

The authors relate semantic content to sentences and emphasise its context-independence rather than its context-sensitivity (I). This might create the impression that semantic content is similar to encoded meaning. Similarly, it might partly be responsible for Wedgwood's claim that "[Cappelen and Lepore] argue that communication, as we know it [...] depends upon guaranteed content sharing" (2006: 18). However, Wedgwood's interpretation seems to rely on the idea that to defend minimal context-dependence is to argue for its automatic resolution by linguistic rules (as in 'Literalism', cf. Recanati 2004: 85), which is not something Cappelen and Lepore defend.

> (R.c.) This problem rests on a misinterpretation of the postulated role of shared content. In my view, the idea is not that it is *guaranteed* to be shared between speaker and hearer in every instance, but that it can be *perfectly* shared for a principled reason (§5.1).

As presented by Cappelen and Lepore, their warning of the 'slippery slope' of context-dependence (III) is one of the most difficult ideas to comprehend. It is intended as an attack on contextualism, fails in important ways, and yet has a significant point to make. Cappelen and Lepore repeatedly make claims like the following.

> If contextualism were true, content sharing would be a miracle (cf. 2005: 124).

> RT implies that content sharing is impossible (cf. 2007: 115).

Remember that Cappelen and Lepore do not question the ubiquity of context-dependence (see their speech act content). There is thus no clear sense in which they would want to imply that contextualism is not 'true'. On the contrary; it is because one agrees with contextualists that utterance interpretation is highly context-dependent, that one would raise the worry in (III).

> (R.d.) A more promising way of making Cappelen and Lepore's point would be simply to say that contextualist work lacks the notion that defines communicative success. Although Cappelen and Lepore's entire approach is built around this idea, it is not clearly articulated.

One issue that might have prevented them from pinpointing this more balanced view on contextualism is that they assumed it is necessary to reject 'similarity views' (cf. 2005: 125ff, 2006: 1033ff). As argued in §2, similarity and the content to which it applies (explicatures-plus-implicatures) are entirely compatible with Cappelen and Lepore's approach. What remains to be added is that this content cannot be the one that defines communicative success, because the fact that its speaker and hearer versions are merely similar means that what gets shared is a more minimal kind of content.

In this paper, an approach will be developed that illustrates that (adapted) contextualist notions and shared content are compatible and complementary in important ways. This will offer a way of giving due weight to Cappelen and Lepore's central concerns (I)-(III) without reproducing difficulties like (a.)-(d.) that might arise from theoretical biases.

4. Communication vs. interpretation

I now turn to my own proposal. Where illuminating, I will return to the debate in §3 to remark on further issues it has failed to clarify.

4.1. Utterance meaning(s) vs. interpretation

Large parts of pragmatic research take for granted that there is only one notion of utterance meaning to be elucidated, that is, that one and the same kind of utterance meaning combines the functions of being speaker-meant (to be shared) and being hearer-inferred, and possibly more (e.g. Carston 2006: 58ff; an important exception is Saul 2002). This is particularly prominent in the case of approaches that define speaker meaning by Gricean intentions (intentions that the hearer infer

it), but is not tied to such a definition[9]. In my view, the assumption that an account of communication can manage with a single notion of utterance meaning requires more explicit justification than is usually provided, and can be challenged in most cases. To explore this possibility, let us consider an important question, which is rarely asked, in a *theory-neutral* way:

> Do we have to assume that what a hearer understands by an utterance is a mirror-image of what a speaker communicatively means by it?

Note that this question relates to notions of utterance meaning, not to the possibility of miscommunication. Another way of putting it would be:

> If a hearer has *correctly and perfectly* understood what the speaker communicatively meant, is the content of his interpretation necessarily the same as the content the speaker communicatively meant?

It was accepted in §2 that speakers and hearers aim to share some content. Naturally, it would be incompatible with this communicative aim to postulate, at the level of definition, that the hearer's meaning is independent of the speaker's. The hearer's communicative role is to infer what the speaker means by his utterance, and communicative success is achieved if he does. However, this does not necessarily mean that what speakers communicatively mean and what hearers understand are two sides of the same coin, such that if the former is *sh* then, if communication is successful, the latter is equally *sh*. All that is required in view of communicative intentions is that, if the speaker communicatively means *sh*, then the hearer should infer at least *sh*. Beyond this, the scope of the hearer's meaning depends on how this notion is conceptualised. If one adopts a cognitivist/contextualist conception of the hearer's meaning, one cannot presuppose that it is restricted to the hearer's version of what the speaker communicatively means (i.e. wants to share). This is because the hearer's cognitive processing combines communicative and other functions[10].

Contextualist theories (e.g. Recanati 2004; Carston 2002, Wilson and Sperber 2004) offer powerful accounts of utterance interpretation. They investigate

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[9] It is rather a consequence of adopting a Gricean understanding of the *scope* of speaker meaning. Grice hoped to treat what-is-said merely as "a special case of meaning something by an utterance" (1969/1989: 101) and introduced implicating as something done by the speaker (cf. 1975: 43ff). It is hence common to take his speaker meaning to comprise both what-is-said and implicatures (cf. Levinson 2000: 13, Carston 2002: 112).

[10] The same is, of course, true for the speaker; and it would certainly be desirable to have a comprehensive psychological account of the speaker (possibly with yet a third notion of utterance meaning). However, for current purposes it is sufficient to contrast the content the speaker wants to share (what he communicatively means) and hearer meaning.

cognitive principles and processes (such as mental associations, effort-effect considerations, and mind-reading) to explain *how hearers assign context-dependent significance* to utterances. For example, RT describes the comprehension strategy the hearer implicitly adopts as follows:

(A) Consider interpretations in order of accessibility.
(B) Stop when the expected level of relevance is reached. (Carston 2002: 143)

The outcome of these processes constitutes one type of utterance meaning (**EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES**). For example, in a given context, the full significance of

(6) His boss signs the reports at 3pm.

for a hearer might include

(7a) Tim's boss signs the reports at 3pm[#]

(7b) You have to prepare the reports by 2.50pm[#]

(7c) Tim will leave around 3.15pm[#]

As an utterance achieves its full significance for an individual by interacting with his encyclopaedic knowledge and current interests and needs, this kind of utterance meaning is not restricted in any principled way (cf. the indeterminacy of implicatures, Grice 1975: 58). Rather, in practice, having reached a satisfactory outcome, its further elaboration is eventually cut off when the required processing effort is no longer matched by appropriate cognitive gains (e.g. Wilson and Sperber 2004: 609). It is important to bear in mind that (7a)-(7c) are merely rough and incomplete renderings of someone's actual inferences (cf. Carston 2002: 83), which is here indicated by [#]. As a result, for principled reasons, a hearer can hardly ever fully recover the speaker's version. This consequence is no reason for concern for RT because it subsumes the study of verbal communication under the study of ostensive communication (verbal and non-verbal) in general, which is characterised by a continuum "from vaguer to more precise effects" (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 55). However, it means that EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES cannot be the content that defines communicative success. Note, again, that the issue is not whether an overlap between the speaker's and hearer's utterance meanings might not be sufficient to count as communicative success. Rather, the aim is to identify the notion that coherently and consistently represents the content *which the overlap consists in*.

Differently from RT, the present approach assigns a distinct role to linguistic communication, especially its precise effects. More significantly, however, whatever one's perspective, it is not necessary to give up the idea that hearers can fully understand what speakers mean. All we have to do is to recognise another notion of utterance meaning which represents the content that *can* get perfectly shared. As large parts of pragmatic work take the perspective of the hearer (interpretation), it is exceedingly difficult to leave it, especially as it is also the natural perspective for anyone analysing ('interpreting') examples. However, it is critical for an account of communication to overcome this bias. It is perfectly possible that there is a coherent notion of utterance meaning which is *independent of processes of interpretation*. In fact, our aim of identifying the content which speaker and hearer share requires us to take such a perspective, since the speaker *qua speaker* is not engaged in utterance interpretation. We could continue referring to this kind of content simply as 'shared content'. However, this label would not do full justice to its role. Since we recognised that communication aims at sharing content, and since the content to be shared originates with the speaker, it is the central pragmatic notion and may be called **SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$**. In contrast to the standard view, in which speaker meaning and explicatures-plus-implicatures are the speaker's and hearer's versions of the same notion of utterance meaning, we now have to consider two distinct notions: SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ and EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES. What we can say so far is that the former will be more limited in scope.

To return to the debate between Cappelen and Lepore and contextualists, it is becoming evident to what degree it is based on neglecting the distinctions drawn above. The on-going debate is the result of a failure to

> recognise the need for several, comprehensive, notions of utterance meaning (especially, but not exclusively, on the contextualist side)

and consequently

> clearly distinguish the study of interpretation and the search for (other) notions of utterance content (on both sides).

Quite generally, Wedgwood's attempt to assimilate the two approaches (§3 a., b.) reveals a mistaken assumption that they have the same object of investigation (utterance interpretation). For the same reason, Carston regards Cappelen and Lepore's shared content as superfluous, as is evident in the following comment.

> Even if [Cappelen and Lepore's minimal content] were common across all contexts, it would not provide the right kind of shared content for most of the

> purposes to which they (and indeed all of us) would want to put such a notion. (Carston 2006: 52)

This statement seems to neglect that there are principled reasons why EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES cannot themselves be the entity that can be shared (and thus define communicative success) in anything but an artificial sample of cases. Contextualists broadly reject more minimal notions of utterance meaning because they do "not correspond to any stage in the process of understanding the utterance" (Recanati 2001: 89). However, this kind of processing argument is not an argument against SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, since there is no need for this notion to correspond to any stage or distinct entity during interpretation, *as long as it is part of* what is understood. It can be defined directly in terms of sharing (as the details of such a definition depend on further issues, it will be provided only in §5.1).

Furthermore, Wedgwood's point about the resolution of context-sensitivity (c.) is a worry that arises only from an interpretation point of view. The issue is raised also by Carston, who writes

> We are apparently required to abstract away from (i.e. forget about) what, by their own admission, are aspects of semantic content that are unstable across contexts. But what this amounts to, in the context of a discussion of shared content, is pretending that elements of semantic content are shared which are not. (2006: 53)

Recanati calls it "cheating" to "pretend that we can manage with a limited, narrow notion of context [...] while in fact we can only determine the speaker's intended referent [...] by resorting to pragmatic interpretation and relying on the *wide* context" (2004: 57; emphasis in the original). Cappelen and Lepore dismiss this criticism, correctly pointing out that it would be cheating to pretend that semantic content does not depend on the speaker, which they do not do (cf. 2005: 148ff). But they seem to underestimate the contrast between their work and contextualist work which this discussion is an indication of. They write, "[a]s far as we can tell, [Recanati's] objection is purely terminological" (2005: 147). The terminological point is whether to label content that is speaker-dependent 'semantic' or 'pragmatic'. The above conflict, however, is more substantial. The contextualist worry relates specifically to *the hearer's interpretation task*, whereas Cappelen and Lepore simply do not address how semantic content gets shared. Instead, they are concerned with the prior question of *identifying the notion* of semantic content. Naturally, this does not involve any claim that this kind of content is necessarily successfully recovered by hearers in particular cases.

Finally, the neglect of the critical distinction is evident also in Cappelen and Lepore's criticism of contextualist work (b., d.). The authors criticise that RT does

not explain how, in a successful case[11], the hearer's interpretation ends up being similar to what the speaker meant (cf. 2007: 128ff). First of all, what they do not mention is that RT assumes that it is the speaker who tries to achieve this by choosing as good an utterance form as is compatible with his abilities and goals (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986: 43; 1995: 268ff). It is for this reason ('asymmetrical coordination') that the link to the speaker which Cappelen and Lepore are looking for is not explicit in RT's comprehension procedure. In any case, Cappelen and Lepore (2007) criticise this procedure mainly on the basis of its subjectivity. Although the point underlying this intuition is highly important, this way of presenting it is problematic, since it is in the nature of a cognitive strategy that it will be applied in subjective ways[12]. If one clearly distinguishes shared content and interpretation, one will not be tempted to try and build (impossible) intersubjectivity into the interpretation mechanism. Rather, intersubjectivity is a requirement on the entity of shared content. If we use this criterion, we see that what disqualifies EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES as candidates for shared content is not their subjectivity (which they share with any context-dependent content) by itself, but in conjunction with their indeterminacy. Importantly, this is a problem a speaker (or hearer) cannot overcome by trying to achieve coordination, and in the sense that RT does not identify a determinate entity, it does not illustrate *what* speaker and hearer share. Contrary to what Cappelen and Lepore seem to imply, this does not affect RT's explanatory power with respect to *interpretation*.

4.2. Two notions of utterance meaning

SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ and EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES belong to two functionally distinct domains. First, there is the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* of content sharing, which employs linguistic representations and treats SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ (including its context-dependent elements, such as reference) as shared in the sense in which encoded meaning is shared, without being concerned about its actual cognitive realisations. This domain is inherently interpersonal; its function is to establish that some content is shared between speaker and hearer. As a first illustration (to be justified in §5), let us assume the SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ of

(6) His boss signs the reports at 3pm.

is

[11] This is my attempt at a paraphrase. Cappelen and Lepore actually say the procedure does not *guarantee* significant similarity, which compounds problem (c.).
[12] Hence the confusion between explaining communicative success and guaranteeing it (cf. previous footnote).

(8) [Tim's boss signs the reports at 3pm.]

The square brackets indicate that (8) is a comprehensive linguistic representation of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$.

Second, there is the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN* of cognitive processes and representations. This domain is inherently subjective, since it is tied in with an individual's cognition (in a stronger, definitional, sense). It is the domain of utterance interpretation, whose function is to infer the full significance of an utterance (EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES), e.g. (7a-c).

By their very nature, SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ and EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES differ in many respects; most importantly they differ with respect to determinacy, linguistic representability and mutuality. SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is characterised by these three interrelated requirements, while it is impossible for EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES to meet them. As a consequence, they constitute two distinct notions of utterance meaning: one is interpersonally oriented (but speaker-based); the other is hearer-based[13].

The new notion SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ introduces two significant improvements compared to the standard picture. Moreover, as will be shown, it does so while the explanatory power with respect to EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES remains as high as in the contextualist picture, and communicative cooperation is accounted for (§5.3).

- SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ provides a basis for explaining people's experience of communicative success, which is the foundation for their trust in communication.

- Distinguishing the two notions of utterance meaning (SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ and EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES) increases the functional coherence of a model of communication and interpretation considerably.

Most would agree that the *processes* of utterance interpretation are fundamentally subjective because they are intertwined with an individual's knowledge, beliefs and needs. In the new picture, however, utterance interpretation is egocentric also in its *function*. For example, if the hearer of (6) wonders how best to organise his office tasks, he might infer (7b) and (7c), without having to consider if the speaker had some related ideas in mind and what they were.

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[13] Naturally, anyone possessing the necessary cognitive skills, including the producer of the utterance and by-standers, can adopt an interpreting perspective, which resembles the hearer's, on any utterance.

RT, too, states that the hearer's inferencing is triggered automatically by a communicative stimulus; and the comprehension strategy it postulates does not explicitly refer to the speaker, if taken on its own, either in its processing (A) or in its goal (B) parts (see §4.1). However, RT assumes that this strategy "provides a reliable [...] means of *inferring a speaker's meaning*" (Carston 2002: 45, my emphasis; cf. Wilson and Sperber 2004: 613ff). In the present proposal, this assumption can be dropped with respect to EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES, which is made possible by the introduction of an alternative notion of speaker meaning (SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$). Having distinguished EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES and SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, we can see why the egocentric function of the former does not conflict with the interpersonal function of the latter. If SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is as restricted as is assumed here (8), while interpretation aims at deriving the full significance (7a-c), the egocentricity of utterance interpretation is straightforwardly explained: SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is too minimal for the purposes of the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN* (as contextualists would agree). The latter's aim is thus not primarily to infer SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, but to use it for one's own purposes[14]. This perspective has the benefit of avoiding the tension that arises from the fact that the speaker's meaning understood in contextualist terms (EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES) cannot actually be fully inferred, and allows us to recognise the full extent of the subjectivity of interpretation (cf. Keysar et al 1998, Keysar et al 2003 for psychological work on the persistence of egocentric processing in adulthood).

At the same time, the speaker's potential involvement in EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES can be explained as it is in the contextualist model. Where speakers intend to make hearers aware of these kinds of meaning, what they do is they try to influence their hearers' performance in the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN*. While this is particularly evident in manipulative discourse (cf. Oswald and Maillat 2008), the concept of manipulative intentions is generally valid and illuminating. For example, in a context in which speaker and hearer talk about the management of their company playing too much golf, the speaker of (6) might intend the hearer to infer

(7d) Tim's boss is off to play golf every afternoon.

[14] In a given case, a hearer may of course choose to align his goals with the speaker's perspective, which will result in a deeper level of sharing. Moreover, a certain degree of 'mind-reading' is often necessary even to successfully share SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$. The point above is, rather, that communication does not require that the function of a hearer's interpretation mechanism is specifically and only to infer what the speaker meant by his utterance, with implications that are significant for our understanding of communicative encounters and their difficulties.

The hearer can infer this content on the basis of a presumption of relevance which any utterance carries (e.g. Sperber and Wilson 1995: 270), his knowledge of the staff's duties, and his current interest in this topic, which will have led to a particularly high activation of assumptions related to the management and golf. These mechanisms are at play during utterance interpretation, whether the speaker intends the hearer to infer implicatures, and whether his intentions are recognisable, or not. These egocentric processes on the side of the hearer are what speakers who do not want to be accountable for inferences which their utterances permit exploit. As mentioned earlier, RT has been taking this perspective since its beginning, when it said that most of the work is done by the speaker, "so that all the hearer has to do is go ahead" (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 43). But if the hearer 'goes ahead' in this way, EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES need not be treated as the speaker's meaning.

One of the few approaches that reject the Gricean speaker-based analysis of implicatures in favour of a hearer-based analysis like above is Gauker's (e.g. 2003). He writes,

> [t]ypically, the hearer can infer the extra content from what the speaker literally says and the external circumstances [...] without thus considering what the speaker might have had in mind. (Gauker 2003: 128)

If only one notion of utterance meaning is recognised, this line of argument is difficult to accommodate for the following reason. Utterance meaning, seen as the content that gets communicated by the speaker, has to be characterised by a fundamental link to the speaker, while explicatures and implicatures are one functional entity (a set of valid inferences), which cannot be split into its component parts. Once the functional distinction between the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* and the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN* has been recognised, however, these requirements can be integrated with the idea that implicatures are essentially egocentric inferences. SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ fulfils the central communicative function of sharing content, while EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES are the personal utterance meaning which hearers derive on that basis[15].

5. Speaker meaning (shared)

As long as SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is characterised exclusively in terms of being the content that speaker and hearer come to share, it might seem non-motivated to treat it as a full-blown notion of utterance meaning and investigate its scope in

[15] This functional characterisation does not imply that the two types of content are processed in sequential order.

general terms (rather than regard it as the variable overlap between the speaker's and hearer's readings in particular cases). However, there are important functional arguments that establish SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, as it is understood in the present work, as the central communicative notion of utterance meaning, which I will address in the following. They centre around two concepts:

- the speaker's commitment (5.1-5.2), and
- the speaker's cooperation (5.3),

which determine the scope of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$. Once these considerations are taken into account, it is insubstantial for the notion of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ and its coherence that the overlap between the speaker's and hearer's cognitive representations might go beyond it in particular cases.

5.1. Mutuality, determinacy, and conventionality*

In §2, we described communication as an attempt to share content. All Gricean approaches incorporate some version of his 'communicative' intention with an embedded 'informative' intention. For example,

> S intends H to recognise that S intends H to take S's utterance as reason to think S has the expressed attitude ('Illocutionary intent', cf. Bach and Harnish 1979: 15ff)
>
> S intends to make it mutually manifest to H and S that S intends to make a particular set of assumptions manifest or more manifest to H ('Communicative intention', cf. Carston 2002: 376ff).

As Strawson argued, Grice ultimately failed to adequately capture the feature of overtness that distinguishes genuine communication from covert attempts to make something known (cf. 1964: 446ff). What is needed for the former is some criterion of mutual awareness of the speaker's communicative intention. This requirement for overtness makes it necessary to deal also with the mutuality of the informative content. Encoded meaning is 'overtly' shared in a given linguistic community by definition. It is considerably more difficult to determine what overtness can consist in in the case of context-dependent elements of utterance meaning. As language users cannot distinguish shared and non-shared implicit assumptions that need to be employed to arrive at particular readings, true mutuality mostly cannot be achieved (e.g. Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 15ff). Correspondingly, RT uses its concept of 'mutual manifestness' instead, which is significantly weaker. Something is mutually manifest if it can be inferred or perceived by those sharing a mutual cognitive environment (cf. 1986/1995: 38ff).

Lodz Papers in Pragmatics 5.2 (2009): 161-190
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Mutual manifestness is an important concept for an inferential account. However, parallel to the distinctions drawn earlier (§4), it should be addressed whether there is not in fact a level at which (an account of) communication requires another perspective on this problem. The *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* is a level that presumes that communicative participants can experience successful sharing. Where this happens, they *treat* the shared content, for example

(8) [Tim's boss signs the reports at 3pm.]

as mutually understood, despite the fact that they cannot strictly establish that it is understood by both of them. The task for the theorist, therefore, is to identify the kind of content that allows communicative participants to make this assumption, and thus to experience sharing.

Not only do they treat shared content as mutually understood, they treat it as a correct representation of the facts. By making utterances, speakers therefore change the relationship between themselves and their hearers by establishing their commitment to the validity[16] of some content as common knowledge (e.g. Pinker 2007: 419ff). Hearers will use their knowledge of the speaker's commitment in their future behaviour and speakers can be held accountable for the commitment they have expressed. In my view, it is because utterances effect interpersonal responsibilities of this kind that one can expect there to be a mutually recognised way of appreciating what it is the speaker expressed commitment to. Because of the problems discussed (linguistic underdeterminacy, context-sensitivity, lack of true mutuality of implicit assumptions), this will not consist in a procedure for matching utterances and their context-dependent meanings. The suggested position is thus not to be confused with "[trying] to describe a failsafe mechanism which, when properly applied and not disrupted by noise, would guarantee successful communication" (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 17). Rather, as outlined earlier, the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* is not concerned with processes of interpretation, but with the entity of shared content. Correspondingly, what we are looking for is a mutually recognised, interpretation-process independent, criterion that specifies which kind of content (relative to an utterance) qualifies as content a speaker overtly expresses commitment to. We can narrow down the search further if we assume that the social situation, characterised by a hearer holding a speaker to his commitment, requires this content to be determinate. There is an objective criterion, delineating a determinate kind of content relative to an utterance[17], namely the conventional scope of an utterance type.

[16] *Validity* is to be preferred to *truth* to avoid unnecessary conclusions about the propositionality (or not) of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$.
[17] It does not *determine* the content, see below.

The present discussion is confined to literal uses. However, it cannot be emphasised enough that, if the arguments developed in §5.1 and §5.3 are taken seriously, then SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ will be restricted in mutually known ways, even if this means that there are cases in which SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ conflicts with intuitions about what is meant[18]. Intuitions often relate to EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES; the analysis of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, by contrast, should be guided by the criterion of mutuality.

Making an utterance, a speaker establishes a rather specific commitment, namely his commitment to each of the constituents of the utterance type, including context-dependent values for context-sensitive expressions, and not to any others. For example, a speaker who tells someone on the phone

(9) He is ill.

cannot claim not to have had any particular referent in mind. Due to the speaker-dependence of the content of (9), one necessarily has to allow for the possibilities of misunderstanding and of a speaker lying about whom he had meant. What is critical is that this kind of context-sensitivity does not mean one is free to postulate *other* context-dependent elements within an interpersonal notion of utterance meaning on the basis that utterance meaning is never objective anyway. If presented explicitly with (10),

(10) [Charles is ill.]

a competent speaker of English has to accept that it is a candidate for what the speaker of (9) might have expressed commitment to. On the other hand, neither speaker nor hearer can claim the speaker expressed commitment to

(11a) Charles is so ill that he can't speak on the phone.

and/or

(11b) You cannot talk to him.

Like Cappelen and Lepore, I assume that this difference is reflected in the notion of shared content that is fundamental to linguistic communication. I take a stronger view than Cappelen and Lepore, in that I regard this as a consequence specifically of the fact that the speaker's utterance establishes his commitment to

[18] This leaves open the possibility that non-literal uses have a mutually known component (which leaves its trace within SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$) and a subjective component (which does not).

the validity of some content. These features define a genuine pragmatic notion. In fact, this content, for example (10), is the *only* content which the speaker overtly wants to share with the hearer. These characteristics justify treating it as SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$.

Although the resulting restriction on the scope of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ seems to match (at least one kind of) our everyday judgements, the predominant notion of utterance meaning includes not only implicatures (11b), but also pragmatic developments at the level of explicatures (11a), to the extent that they are necessary as inferential warrants for implicatures. In comparison, the speaker's commitment is rarely discussed. Cappelen and Lepore list holding people responsible among the non-linguistic practices that rely on shared content (cf. 2006: 1033). Liedtke assigns a central role to the speaker's overt accountability, and denies the speech-act character of implicatures on this basis (cf. 1995: 42ff). The most prominent defenders of the role of commitment for speech acts, and for representation, continue to be the speech act theorists Alston (e.g. 2000) and Searle (e.g. 1989, 2007).

Before I can give a definition of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, we need to address the idea of conventionality*. A particularly influential work on conventions is Lewis (1969), who understood them as regularities in the behaviour of a population whose members use their mutual knowledge of their conformity to the regularities to solve recurrent coordination problems. Alston (2000) and Searle (1969) investigated the rule-character of illocutionary acts. For present purposes, I will draw on Levinson's characterisation of "conventional" as "inherent [to an expression] (cf. the Saussurean notion of the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign)" as opposed to derivable "by general principles of inference taking contextual factors into account" (1983: 14, n.12). A linguistic convention can thus be regarded as an arbitrary pairing of an expression and its content, which people share because they are members of the same linguistic community.

While this characterisation is useful, it does not illustrate the conventional influence on utterance meaning comprehensively. The quote above, like the semantics/pragmatics distinction used in RT (and elsewhere), is based on the processing distinction between decoding and inferencing (cf. Carston 2006). However, in the context of sharing we are interested in how far the conventions shared by members of a linguistic community extend. And for many expressions, they go beyond the pairing between expression and content. This is because some expressions are context-sensitive, in a very specific sense, by linguistic convention. At least pronouns undoubtedly belong to this group (hence Cappelen and Lepore's "Basic Set"). Quite independently of addressing the hearers' interpretation task, it has to be recognised that conventionally context-sensitive expressions lead to context-dependent entities, like (10), that are entirely conventional in *scope*,

although their context-dependent *meanings* are not determined by convention alone. Critically for sharing content, as Cappelen and Lepore say

> When such an expression occurs in a sentence S, all competent speakers know that they need to know something about the context of utterance in order to grasp [the shared content] (2005: 143).

This distinguishes conventional (shared) context-sensitivity from all other kinds of context-dependence. In the present context, I will therefore understand a *linguistic convention** as an arbitrary pairing of a linguistic expression with its content and—where applicable—its specified kind of context-sensitivity, which people share because they are members of the same linguistic community. I use the asterisk to indicate this reading, whereby meaning can be represented by conventional means without being determined (or understood) by convention alone.

More comprehensively, the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* of communication can now be characterised as follows:

I. An audience becomes a hearer iff the speaker signals the audience's intended hearer-status and the audience accept it.

II. The speaker expresses his commitment to the validity of some particular content (e.g., *sh*) iff, in front of his hearer, he uses a linguistic expression which is conventionally* accepted as a representation of *sh*.

I. (SPEAKER'S AND HEARER'S COMMUNICATIVE INTENTIONS) and II. ($\text{SPEAKERMEANING}_{SH}$) are necessary and sufficient conditions for linguistic communication. The hearer-role includes accepting the conventions of the language used as well as accepting the speaker's values for conventionally context-sensitive expressions as part of *sh*.

It will be noted that the speaker's overt commitment directly provides a definition of $\text{SPEAKERMEANING}_{SH}$. This alternative to Gricean definitions (as above) does not deny that speakers have informative intentions, but it adjusts the representation of their status. A speaker who chooses a hearer (as in I.), for example by looking at him, accepts his own speaker-role. The speaker-role involves producing an utterance, while the production of an utterance in such a situation counts as expressing one's commitment (as in II.), which will in turn be directed at some particular content. An individual who chooses to be a speaker thus has an intention to convey some content in the sense that he knows he cannot fulfil his speaker-role without eventually producing an utterance and letting his hearer know what it is he is committed to. But this 'informative intention' is a generalised intention to share information, which arises in connection with the speaker's being

happy to communicate with a particular person (I.). I. is a pre-condition for communicative utterances. Once I. is fulfilled, addressing a hearer by an utterance simply 'counts as' establishing SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ (similar to Searle 1969: 34ff).

The SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ of a literal utterance is thus constituted by the conventional content of the utterance type and the speaker's values for conventionally context-sensitive elements. Its determinacy is an objective basis for restricting the speaker's commitment; it also has an important role in making the hearer aware of context-sensitive expressions that require resolution (§5.2). Contrary to what critics may have assumed about Cappelen and Lepore's (2005) semantic content, the restricted, conventional, scope of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is thus defended not as a theoretical end in itself, but because it is the only candidate that offers the binding scope-determinacy that this notion requires.

Unlike Cappelen and Lepore, I do not assume that conventional context-sensitivity is limited to the grammaticalised context-sensitivity of their Basic Set. The investigation of the scope of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ for particular utterance types is, therefore, a sizeable empirical issue, which I cannot address here. However, the significance of the arguments for shared content, in either proposal, is independent of this empirical question.

5.2. Context-sensitivity and representability

In the present approach, the function of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is not to convey the content *sh*, but to establish the speaker's commitment to *sh* in the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN*. Interpretation, which is a feature of the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN*, is no major concern. Nevertheless, it is an important question how the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* deals with context-sensitivity, e.g. reference in

(9) He is ill.

Significantly, the detachment from processing issues is evident in the fact that the speaker typically does not worry about the hearer's interpretation of context-sensitive elements of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ (see Keysar et al 1998, Keysar 2007 for experimental results showing that speakers choose expressions egocentrically). This contrasts sharply with the level of 'responsibility' that is frequently assigned to the speaker in the (post-) Gricean view (e.g. Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 43; Bach 1992), which is related to the different status attributed to informative intentions. Where speakers have particular informative intentions, they try to find suitable means for fulfilling them. In the present approach, this characterisation relates primarily to implicatures, more specifically the sub-group of speaker-intended implicatures (see §4.2). All that is required of the speaker with respect to

SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, by contrast, is that he does not knowingly mislead his hearer about his values for context-sensitive expressions, as this would conflict with his speaker role.

As long as this condition is met, the participants simply assume that the content gets shared. This attitude is justified since SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ has the particular features of determinacy and mutually recognised context-sensitivity. These allow speaker and hearer to share responsibility. It would be futile to require one of them to monitor the situation in the sense of identifying instances of communication as successful, because they would have no way of establishing this on their own. What they can do, however, is ask each other in those cases in which they notice a *problem*. This explains why communicative participants assume that SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is (perfectly) shared: it is either made explicit or (assumed by both to be) known without having been made explicit. Moreover, it shows that linguistic representability is essential to the functioning of this domain, while it is insignificant that most expressions actually underdetermine what they represent. Rather, language users respond to perceived underdeterminacy (e.g., if the hearer cannot identify a referent) by producing alternative representations, as though it were possible to eliminate underdeterminacy. This attitude is critical for establishing the speaker's commitment as mutual knowledge.

The pair of distinctions I have introduced (*INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* vs *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN*; SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ vs EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES) parallels Searle's treatment of the content of literal speech acts on the one hand and his notion of the "Background" of meaning on the other. According to Searle's "Principle of Expressibility", it is always in principle possible for speakers to say exactly what they mean (cf. 1969: 17, 19ff). He is also one of the most prominent defenders of the idea that linguistic meaning "only has application [...] against a background of assumptions and practices that are not representable as a part of meaning" (Searle 1980: 221; 1979: 117ff). Searle has often been criticised for the apparent tension between these two ideas, which he denied from the beginning (cf. 1979: 134), as well as for the idea of Expressibility itself (e.g., Carston 2002: 32ff, 69ff; Recanati 2003). The distinction between the two domains which the present approach defends offers one way of showing why one would expect both representability of speaker meaning and inexpressibility of cognitive representations. Importantly, to argue for the representability of speaker meaning is not to argue for the possibility of expressing (all) thoughts by linguistic means. On the contrary, SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ is typically more restricted in scope than thoughts. The point is rather that, for the reasons discussed earlier, this is simply as far as the interpersonal notion of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ can go.

This content mostly cannot be expressed by an eternal sentence, which is evident in analyses too. For example, the name *Charles* in (10) remains underdetermining. For this reason I use the term *representability* rather than

Lodz Papers in Pragmatics 5.2 (2009): 161-190
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expressibility. The representability of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ needs to be defended because it is a concept which the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* employs. It is best understood as superficial linguistic representability. It represents what everyone who knows all relevant context-dependent values recognises as the SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ of an utterance, without aiming to reflect how it might be realised by an individual mind.

5.3. Cooperation

So far, I have argued that the speaker's restricted overt commitment means it would be inappropriate to include context-dependent constituents that are not based on conventionalised context-sensitivity as part of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$. I will now introduce another critical functional consideration to show that it is, moreover, unnecessary to include such constituents (e.g. enrichments, implicatures).

The distinction between the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* and the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN* reflects a functional distinction that delimits the role that SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ has to play. Let us consider whether a speaker who merely expresses his commitment to SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ can be a cooperative speaker (cf. Grice 1975). Most definitely, the answer is positive. By providing him with the valid information of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, the speaker enables the hearer to infer the full significance in accordance with his own goals (as in Gauker's (2003) analysis, §4.2). For example, as a reply to his question

(12) Will Serena be going on the trip to France?

the SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ of the speaker's utterance

(13) She is depressed.

allows the hearer to infer

(14a) Serena won't be going on the trip to France.

At first, it may seem as though this analysis neglects that the speaker must have 'meant' something like *Serena's depression is so grave that she can't even go to her favourite country*; and that, if the speaker had 'meant' that a trip with friends would do her good, the hearer would have inferred that

(14b) Serena will be going on the trip to France.

However, none of this additional information is conveyed from the speaker to the hearer. All that the speaker provides for the hearer, in either case, is the SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$

(15) [Serena is depressed.]

All other assumptions/enrichments which the hearer uses (and inferences he draws) are assumptions he has access to in his own cognitive processing anyway. This being the case, there is no need to regard them as part of what the speaker communicates. Nor would it serve any purpose to claim that they are an implicit part of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ as a precaution for cases in which the hearer does not have access to them, because they would remain inaccessible.

This means, whatever the hearer's knowledge is, the speaker's cooperation consists in expressing his SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ by conventional* means. Although the speaker, in the context, certainly makes some background assumptions more accessible to the hearer than they were before, this is something the speaker does by establishing his SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$[19]. The hearer, on his part, makes use of this SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ in his *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN*.

6. Conclusion

Compared to the traditional view, this approach offers a considerable gain in functional coherence. The *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* of communication aims at establishing mutually recognised commitments, while the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN* aims at deriving egocentric cognitive effects. The corresponding distinction between determinate SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ and the indeterminate full significance of an utterance (EXPLICATURES-PLUS-IMPLICATURES) allows us to integrate perfect sharing and non-sharing in a principled way. In my opinion, attempts to use the same notion of utterance meaning for both purposes fail to be coherent, because what is required of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ cannot be fulfilled by the full significance and vice versa. Because SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ gives language users a criterion for experiencing sharing, while it also enables hearers to derive the full significance in accordance with their needs, it is the notion that explains people's trust in communication.

Another advantage is that the resulting picture is considerably more fine-grained than vague discussions about the ease and difficulty of communication (e.g. Wedgwood 2006: 14ff) suggest. The function-based scope difference between

[19] Notice that the speaker's answers to follow-up questions about potential implicatures/possible inferences always establish new conventional* SPEAKERMEANINGS$_{SH}$.

SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ and the hearer's utterance meaning predicts systematic effects that go beyond 'misunderstandings'. It highlights the magnitude of the mind-reading task involved in achieving an overlap beyond SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$ in a way in which a model that recognises only one notion of utterance meaning does not.

It is useful to consider this proposal from a historical perspective. Contextualism represents a view many would call the 'modern' view. Taking the perspective of interpretation, it deals with a cognitivist notion of utterance meaning that is intrinsically indeterminate and subjective. Since contextualism accepts a degree of context-dependence that was previously understudied and underestimated, it emphasises that vague effects are part and parcel of communication. Contextualists typically reject the idea that it is important (or even possible) to investigate perfect sharing for two related reasons. First, they fear that, in the context of *utterance* meaning, searching for what is perfectly shared indicates a return to the simple 'encoding/decoding' view (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 9ff) of communication, which contextualism set out to prove wrong. As shown above, this need not be the case. The entity of shared content has to be clearly distinguished from questions about how hearers identify it. It can have a context-independent (conventional, mutually known) scope, although its meaning is speaker-dependent and requires more than just decoding to be understood. Second, contextualists feel that the investigation of perfect sharing represents a step backwards, in as far as cognitivist work has established that communication is so complex that we should not expect it to be perfect. Such a description would misrepresent the orientation of a proposal like the present one. Far from rejecting the 'modern' view, it takes the ubiquity of context-dependence in interpretation as a given, and attempts to move beyond it. It is because we recognise that certain difficulties (like indeterminacy combined with subjectivity) are intrinsic to the communicative-interpretative situation as a whole that it becomes necessary to investigate which notion defines communicative success. Where this view diverges from the 'modern' view, and represents something like a 'post-cognitivist' perspective, is by showing that the central communicative notion of utterance meaning cannot be a cognitivist one.

Cappelen and Lepore base their work on such a 'post-cognitivist' view when they make the important observation that the assumption that "[a] theory of semantic content is adequate just in case it accounts for all or most of the intuitions speakers have about speech act content" is "mistaken" (2005: 53). They do not, however, develop shared content into a distinct notion of utterance meaning because they believe "[t]he crucial step is to relinquish [...] Speech Act Monism" and assume that "any utterance can be used to express a whole bunch of propositions" (2006: 1047). This idea, which many contextualists would accept, is only the point of departure for an argument for shared content. It is the functional

distinction between the *INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN* and the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN* that is required to understand and to integrate sharing (communication, in the narrow sense) and non-sharing (interpretation). This is nicely illustrated by the fact that the most powerful argument for the limited scope of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, the cooperation argument (§5.3), is based on recognising the power of the *SUBJECTIVE PROCESSING DOMAIN*. SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$, which is speaker-dependent in content, but conventional in scope, has exactly the right features to fulfil the central communicative function of sharing useful information; it is unnecessary (and ultimately incoherent) to expect it to include more. Hearers can derive all other inferences one would want to account for (including inferences about the speaker's intentions and beliefs, where they occur) just as well without their being part of SPEAKERMEANING$_{SH}$.

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About the author

Eleni Kriempardis obtained an MA in English Linguistics from the University of Munich (LMU) and an MPhil in English and Applied Linguistics from the University of Cambridge, UK, where she is currently writing up her PhD thesis on *Speaker Meaning*. Her research interests include pragmatic theory, philosophy of language, cognitive and social psychology.