

## 23 Deflationism as Alethic Fictionalism via a SPIF Account of Truth-Talk

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The aim of this chapter is to explain, motivate, and provide the central details of a specific version of what has come to be called *alethic fictionalism*—namely, a fictionalist account of truth (or, more accurately, of truth-talk, that fragment of discourse that involves the truth-predicate and other alethic-locutions<sup>1</sup>). Our particular brand of alethic fictionalism is sometimes described as a “pretense theory of truth,” and a catchphrase for our view is “truth is a pretense.”<sup>2</sup> But a more precise label for the view that we will present is “semantic pretense-involving fictionalism about truth-talk.”<sup>3</sup> Our endorsement of this view (for short, our *SPIF* account) stems from our belief that deflationism is the right approach to take on the topic of truth. This already shifts the focus away from any property of truth, since deflationism “about truth” (or, as we will call this view, *T-deflationism*) is best understood as an approach to analyzing truth-talk. We arrive specifically at our *SPIF* account of truth-talk because we also think that versions of *T-deflationism* should be understood as a kind of fictionalism (which, again, puts the focus on discourse, rather than metaphysics) and because we maintain that a *SPIF* account is the best variety of fictionalism to apply specifically to truth-talk. We will explain some of our reasons for holding these beliefs below, laying out the basics of our *SPIF* account of truth-talk and highlighting the merits of endorsing our particular account of that talk.

### 1 T-Deflationism and Representational Aides

To motivate understanding *T-deflationism* as a kind of fictionalism about truth-talk, we begin with a general thesis that has been employed to motivate fictionalism about certain other fragments of discourse, that of *expressive indispensability*, namely:

(EI) We need to enlist certain aspects of X-talk, as a means for expressing certain claims that we could not otherwise express.<sup>4</sup>

In the case specifically of truth-talk, we can see (EI) in effect in our widely acknowledged need to enlist the truth-predicate, which *appears* to commit us to a property of

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truth, as a means for expressing certain claims (to be discussed below) that we otherwise could not—or, at least, could not so easily—express.

The impetus for moving to a fictionalist account of truth-talk begins with the T-deflationist's thought that what we are trying to say through our use of truth-talk has nothing to do with any property of truth per se and, in fact, but for certain *expressive limitations*, could be expressed without an appeal to any such property. Moreover, such expressive needs have nothing to say about truth—its nature or even its existence—or about whether there need be any such property in order to express what we aim to convey. So, while truth-talk does appear to be *expressively* indispensable, truth, qua property, may well be *theoretically* dispensable.<sup>5</sup>

The connection between understanding the notion of truth in this way (as theoretically dispensable but expressively indispensable) and alethic fictionalism is as follows. Suppose that we can explain the expressive advantages of employing truth-talk, and suppose, with T-deflationists, that these expressive purposes exhaust our use of that talk. Suppose, finally, that what we are trying to get across through our use of truth-talk is not *about* any property of truth, in the sense that what we aim to convey itself has nothing to do with any such property. In that case, because 'true'—the notion of truth, as it occurs in truth-talk—serves essentially in the indirect expression of facts that are not about any property of truth, it simply functions as what Stephen Yablo (2005) calls a "representational aid[e]." As we understand things, when the central locutions of some fragment of discourse function as representational aides in this way—to allow speakers to make *as if* they are talking about one thing for the purposes of talking about something else indirectly, via implementing what we call *semantic redirection*—that just is for that fragment of discourse to operate via some element of fiction.

According to the line of reasoning just sketched, T-deflationists should see truth-talk as operating through some element of fiction, effecting some sort of semantic redirection away from a face-value reading of its instances. After all, T-deflationists acknowledge the *expressive* indispensability of truth-talk, but they do not then go on to conclude that the truth-predicate is "ontologically serious." Rather, they hold that the truth-predicate functions as a device that allows speakers to talk indirectly about other matters, facilitating the expression of facts that are not about truth.

## 2 Semantic Pretense-Involving Fictionalism

We take the above to provide some reason for concluding that T-deflationism should be understood as a type of fictionalism.<sup>6</sup> But there are several species and varieties of fictionalism, and it is important to recognize that not all fictionalist accounts are the same. For present purposes, the most relevant distinction within fictionalism is that between the perhaps more familiar prefix-fictionalism and the newer pretense-involving variety.<sup>7</sup> With respect to most fragments of discourse, there are general reasons for worrying

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about prefix-fictionalist accounts.<sup>8</sup> Accounts of this sort are highly restricted in the semantic redirection they can implement, being able only to indicate how things are according to or within the fiction cited in the story-prefix. They also typically turn out to be cases of what we call *error-theoretic fictionalism* (ETF), which involves attributing error theories of the discourse being analyzed.<sup>9</sup> We contrast the class of ETF accounts with *pretense-involving fictionalism* (PIF), a kind of fictionalism on which it is possible for utterances from a fragment of discourse so analyzed to make serious claims about the world indirectly. Within the latter approach, we favor *semantic* pretense-involving fictionalism—SPIF—over an alternative *pragmatic* version.<sup>10</sup>

Our SPIF approach involves postulating a semantic mechanism at work in the linguistic functioning of the relevant fragment of discourse, involving a special but familiar kind of pretense: *make-believe*. Make-believe games (e.g., the classic children’s games of “mudpies,” cowboys and Indians, cops and robbers, etc.) involve pretenses of two types. In the first type, certain pretenses are stipulated, or *expressly pretended*—typically about the props that are employed in the game of make-believe (e.g., globs of mud counting as pies, sticks counting as horses, fingers counting as pistols, etc.). The second type involves pretenses that are “generated from reality” via the game of make-believe’s *principles of generation* (e.g., it is to be pretended that someone has put a pie in the oven whenever she has put a glob of mud into the hollow stump). These principles are rules for the make-believe that establish a systematic dependency between some of what is to be pretended—that is, which pretenses are *prescribed*—and real-world conditions that are, as it were, outside of the game.<sup>11</sup> Postulating such dependencies as holding for the claims from some discourse can explain how speakers can use utterances from the discourse to say indirectly things that the utterances appear unsuited to say. This is done by making utterances that, in a sense, *belong* to a game of make-believe involving the characteristic locutions of the discourse. A typical merit of the approach is that it allows speakers to use readily available, familiar linguistic resources—ordinary object-talk, predication, and objectual quantification—in order to make much more complicated and technical claims indirectly.<sup>12</sup>

In general, a SPIF account of some apparently problematic discourse appeals to make-believe to implement semantic redirection away from a face-value reading of the sentences of the discourse. On our view, sentences from a target discourse that merit a SPIF account are “semantically infelicitous” on a face-value reading. The fact that the sentences still function linguistically is then explained in terms of semantic redirection away from this face-value reading, with the notion of fiction we appeal to—make-believe—playing a pivotal role in the redirection. As we see it, this generates what we call the “serious content” of that utterance—namely, what it can be used to say about the real world outside of the make-believe.<sup>13</sup>

In the “games” that our SPIF accounts posit, we take the props to be certain linguistic items, and the principles of generation that we lay out specify the real-world

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conditions that prescribe the pretenses displayed in the uses of those props (i.e., the relevant locutions). The systematic dependency established between the appropriateness of the pretense-involving utterances in question and the obtaining of certain real-world conditions outside of the make-believe is what allows SPIF accounts to avoid being error-theoretic and, unlike with prefix-fictionalism, allows utterances from discourses so analyzed to be about the real world instead of just being about how things are “according to the fiction.”

### 3 Our SPIF Account of Truth-Talk

According to our SPIF account of truth-talk, we talk *as if* there were a property of truth though this fragment of discourse operates with complete indifference as to whether there really is any such property.<sup>14</sup> More specifically, we speak as if we are describing things as having or lacking properties, named “truth” and “falsity,” in order to express other (more complicated) content (or M-conditions—see note 13) indirectly. On our view, truth-talk is underwritten by a game of make-believe, one that allows us to use familiar linguistic resources in order to specify, indirectly, certain complex M-conditions, the direct specification of which would involve technical and unfamiliar linguistic and logical devices that ordinary language does not explicitly contain. The kinds of devices that we have in mind include schematic sentence variables and substitutional quantifiers (‘ $\Pi$ ’ and ‘ $\Sigma$ ’, understood as means for encoding potentially infinite conjunctions and potentially infinite disjunctions, respectively).

As we noted above, make-believe, including that described in our SPIF account of truth-talk, involves two kinds of *prescribed* pretenses—namely, stipulated background pretenses that are expressly pretended and additional pretenses that are systematically *generated from reality* via a game’s principles of generation. The make-believe that our SPIF account of truth-talk proposes as the basis of this fragment of discourse is governed, at least in part, by rules like the following.<sup>15</sup>

#### Truth-Talk Make-Believe

(T-I) The central props for the game are the linguistic expressions ‘is true’, ‘is false’, ‘is not true’, and their cognates (e.g., ‘is correct’, ‘is right’, ‘is so’, etc.), as well as the expressions ‘truth’ and ‘falsity’. Other props include ‘that’-clauses and linguistic (and cognitive-state) items that can be related to them in proposition-talk. The following pretenses are stipulated about these props:

- (i) The adjectival expressions ‘is true’, ‘is false’, and so on function predicatively to describe objects as having or lacking certain properties.
- (ii) The nominal expression ‘truth’ picks out the property attributed with the expression ‘is true’ (and ‘falsity’ picks out the property attributed with the expression ‘is false’).

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(iii) The most basic objects that directly have or lack the properties that ‘is true’, etc. attribute are abstract, mind- and language-independent entities called *propositions*. Other kinds of objects (e.g., linguistic items) can have the properties that ‘is true’, and so on attribute only derivatively, in virtue of expressing a proposition that has the relevant property.

(T-II)  $\Pi p$ (The pretenses displayed in an utterance of ‘(The proposition) that p is true’ are prescribed iff p).

(T-III)  $\Pi p$ (The pretenses displayed in an utterance of ‘(The proposition) that p is false’ are prescribed iff  $\neg p$ ).

(T-IV)  $\Pi p$ (If  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  are sentences that are alike except (in some transparent context) one has a subsentence ‘p’ where the other has ‘ $\langle p \rangle$  is true’ then one can directly infer  $S_1$  from  $S_2$  and  $S_2$  from  $S_1$ ).

(T-V)  $\Pi p$ (If  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  are sentences that are alike except (in some transparent context) one has a subsentence ‘ $\neg p$ ’ where the other has ‘ $\langle p \rangle$  is false’ then one can directly infer  $S_1$  from  $S_2$  and  $S_2$  from  $S_1$ ).

In our SPIF account of truth-talk, the first rule, (T-I), states the stipulated, *expressly* made-believe, background pretenses for the make-believe,<sup>16</sup> while rules (T-II) and (T-III) are the central principles of generation for the game. Rules (T-IV) and (T-V) are further principles that explicitly codify certain consequences of rules (T-II) and (T-III) that are crucially important for the truth- and falsity-predicates playing their more important expressive roles. To show how a game of make-believe based on these rules can account for all of the expressive roles that the truth-predicate plays in various forms of truth-talk while adhering to T-deflationist commitments, we will briefly explain the operation of these rules and their implications.

### 3.1 Rule (T-I), Background Pretenses, and the Truth-Predicate

In laying out the background pretenses for the make-believe behind truth-talk, rule (T-I) identifies certain linguistic expressions as the props for the game and explains what is to be pretended *about* such props. It involves three subrules regarding these props. We will explicate these subrules in reverse order.

Rule (T-I.iii) indicates that the basic applications of ‘is true’ are those that combine this locution with expressions that are supposedly content-connected to propositions.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the pretense that underwrites truth-talk includes the *existentially creative* pretense that we claim is behind proposition-talk. Within the pretense involved in that SPIF account, ‘that’-clauses emerge as the most “transparent” way (pretendedly) to name particular propositions and (pretendedly) to describe or relate things to them.<sup>18</sup> According to our account of truth-talk, the most basic instances will involve combining a ‘that’-clause with either ‘is true’ or ‘is false’. Call this part of discourse *transparent propositional truth-talk*. Making this part of truth-talk the discourse’s core fits

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with standard linguistic and inferential practices with the truth-predicate.<sup>19</sup> Extending truth-talk beyond its basic cases, to cover applications of 'is true' to sentences, utterances, or thought-states, requires bringing in our account of the role of 'that'-clauses in meaning-attribution (or proposition-expression) claims. These extended instances of truth-talk involve taking things of these other kinds to have certain relations (e.g., the *expressing* or *meaning* relation or the *belief* relation) to propositions that are true. Explaining this sometimes requires quantifying over propositions and concatenating the truth-predicate to the bound variable; we return to this issue below, after we explain the operation of quantificational truth-talk.

Rule (T-I.ii) covers the nominal locutions peculiar to truth-talk and reveals that they, too, involve an existentially creative pretense. These expressions are stipulated to be the names for the putative properties that the predicates 'is true' and 'is false' (pretendably) attribute to propositions. However, as we have suggested above, we maintain that, really, the operation of the discourse is indifferent as to whether there are any properties of truth and falsity—it operates *as if* there were in any case. Moreover, as we noted above (see note 18), we maintain that the putative bearers of these supposed properties, propositions, are also just an existentially creative pretense. Thus, it is only a pretense that there are such properties, as well as anything that could have them, at all. As a result, there are no uses of the expressions 'truth', 'falsity', and so on that do not involve pretense, meaning that these expressions cannot be employed in any direct specification of M-conditions.

Rule (T-I.i) involves the most fundamental background pretense of the make-believe in that it indicates that the game involves an *operational* pretense regarding the locution 'is true' (as well as 'is false', etc.). This is because it is only a pretense that 'is true' (etc.) functions as a genuinely descriptive predicate at all. We take there to be an operational pretense at work in the logico-linguistic functioning of any expression that, while serving logically or grammatically as a predicate, does not require anything of the putative objects it supposedly describes in its applications. We maintain that this pertains to 'is true' (and 'is false', etc.) because the application conditions for the truth-predicate—at least in its fundamental role in transparent propositional truth-talk—do not require anything of the putative objects supposedly described.

This is especially so in the context of T-deflationism, since T-deflationists maintain that the instances of the equivalence schema

(ES) It is true that p iff p (= That p is true iff p)

are fundamental. That is, T-deflationists claim that there is no deeper explanation, in terms of other concepts, for why these equivalences hold. But this attitude toward these equivalences also entails believing that, at least in the basic instances of truth-talk (*viz.*, those that figure in the instances of (ES)), the applicability conditions for the expression 'is true' place no conditions on any objects putatively picked out by the

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(supposed) designation expressions these utterances employ, that is, by ‘that’-clauses. In turn, this suggests that ‘is true’ also does not really function predicatively in the full, genuinely descriptive sense.

To see this, consider a basic instance of truth-talk, such as

(1) It is true that crabapples are edible.

For reasons pertaining to our inferential practices with ‘that’-clauses, including ‘that’-clauses in sentences of the form ‘It is F that p’, we think that (1) is more perspicuously rendered as

(1’) That crabapples are edible is true.

The instance of (ES) that pertains to this sentence is

(ES<sub>i</sub>) That crabapples are edible is true iff crabapples are edible.

If we take this biconditional to give the applicability conditions for the use of ‘is true’ made on the left-hand side, we can see that the conditions specified on the right-hand side place no requirements on any proposition putatively designated by the ‘that’-clause employed on the left. The only things these conditions seem to require anything of are the crabapples. We conclude from this that the applicability conditions for this use of the truth-predicate—as well as for other cases of transparent propositional truth-talk—show that this locution does not actually function directly to describe anything, contrary to its surface appearances. Again, this is part of the truth-predicate’s operation as a representational aide and indicates that the linguistic functioning of ‘is true’ involves an operational pretense. That means the pretense that implements semantic redirection in instances of truth-talk is actually about the very logico-linguistic functioning of the locution, with the result that the pretense must be taken as intrinsic to the locution’s operation in any utterance.

According to the line of reasoning just given, T-deflationism involves viewing truth-talk as not genuinely predicative, not even in terms of employing a primitive predicate. Prosentential theorists, such as Robert Brandom, explicitly endorse a thesis even stronger than this, claiming that ‘is true’ is not even a predicate *logically* speaking.<sup>20</sup> But this seems too strong, since the locution functions like a predicate in inference.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the instances of truth-talk look exactly like cases of genuine predication, and prosententialists offer no substantive account as to *why* they take this form. We can resolve the apparent conflict between truth-talk’s surface appearances and the denial that it is genuinely predicative by recognizing the instances of truth-talk as invoking an operational pretense at the level of the logico-linguistic functioning of its central locutions. So, an account of truth-talk in terms of operational pretense fits especially well with the core commitments of T-deflationism.

As just mentioned, identifying the central pretense that the instances of truth-talk involve specifically as an operational pretense indicates that this way of talking involves

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pretense intrinsically. This in turn shows how our SPIF account of truth-talk avoids any version of the Problem of Error—namely, the problem of attributing massive error, both to what is said with the discourse and to speakers regarding their understanding of the status of their talk—by skirting even a modified error-theoretic interpretation. That said, there is a sense in which the instances of truth-talk are misleading on our account. Since the basic functioning of the expression ‘is true’ is not genuinely predicative, it is not possible to make “pretense-free” claims of the sort that (1/1′) appears to make on the surface. So it is never correct to say that (1/1′) is true when we take it literally (i.e., take it seriously at face value). But our account is not an error theory in any problematic sense because it is also never correct to say that (1/1′) is false when we take it literally, or even that (1/1′) is not true when we take it literally. The point is that we cannot take (1/1′) *literally*—that is, we cannot assign it an interpretation on a face-value (which is *not* to say standard) reading. But this is because truth-talk never puts forward genuine claims about the world *directly* (i.e., without the operation of pretense). (1/1′) has *no* literal (i.e., pretense-independent) content at all because the standard use of ‘is true’ invokes pretense intrinsically. The only content regarding the real world that we can associate with (1/1′) is the serious content it puts forward indirectly, in virtue of how it is governed by a principle of generation for the make-believe. We thus turn to the operation and consequences of the game’s central principles of generation, rules (T-II) and (T-III).

### 3.2 Rules (T-II) and (T-III) and Transparent Propositional Truth-Talk

The serious content that an instance of transparent propositional truth-talk puts forward (or specifies) comes from the operation of the make-believe’s central principles of generation—specifically, rules (T-II) and (T-III). On our account, these principles of generation of the game of make-believe underlying truth-talk give the discourse a “quasi-anaphoric” functioning. This effects the sort of semantic descent that T-deflationists highlight, through a kind of collapse of the use/mention distinction, here effecting an indirect use of a sentence performed through some mention (nominalization) of it.

To illustrate how, according to the principles of generation we have offered, the most basic instances of truth-talk function in the indirect specification of M-conditions, consider again the example of truth-talk we introduced above,

(1′) That crabapples are edible is true.

In (1′), ‘that crabapples are edible’ operates (in the context of the pretense of proposition-talk embedded in the pretense behind truth-talk) as a designation expression that (in the context of that pretense) is content-connected to the proposition that crabapples are edible. Syntactically speaking, the ‘that’-clause is a nominalization of the sentence

(2) Crabapples are edible.

When assertorically uttered, a ‘true’-involving sentence like (1′) presents the pretenses it displays as prescribed, where pretenses being prescribed is a matter of:

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- (a) the particular principles of generation that govern those pretenses (here, rule (T-II)), and
- (b) whether the conditions, whose obtaining those principles make prescriptive for the pretenses, actually obtain.

Recall that rule (T-II) has it that the prescriptive conditions for the pretenses displayed in (1') are those specified by a denominalized use of the sentence that is nominalized as the subject expression of (1')—in this case, by a use of (2). In short, by presenting the pretenses it displays as prescribed, an assertoric utterance of (1') specifies, indirectly, precisely the M-conditions that an assertoric utterance of (2) specifies directly.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the serious content put forward by an assertoric utterance of (1') is the content put forward directly by an assertoric utterance of (2).<sup>23</sup>

One consequence of the principles of generation for the pretense that truth-talk invokes is that this make-believe is what we call *world-oriented*. While this type of make-believe is similar to the pretenses at work in the SPIF account of proposition-talk that we (Armour-Garb and Woodbridge 2012, 2015) have developed, in that the point of sentences that count as moves in these games has to do with how things are in the real world outside of the make-believe (as opposed to with which pretenses are part of the “world” or content of the make-believe), truth-talk is slightly different in that it is not focused on features specifically of the *props* that the game employs.<sup>24</sup> As we explain proposition-talk, the serious content that its instances specify has to do with certain features of the designation-expression props used in the utterances (in particular, *as* they are used in the utterances). In the case of proposition-talk, the serious content that its instances specify typically has to do with attributing certain “use” features of its definitive props (‘that’-clauses) to certain other props employed in the game (utterances, cognitive states, and expressions that can be substituted for ‘that’-clauses). The serious content that the instances of truth-talk specify, in contrast, does not typically have to do with features of either the definitive props of the game (the alethic-locutions) or of the other props employed (‘that’-clauses). Instead, pretenses involving these props are displayed as prescribed in order to specify the (not necessarily prop-involving) M-conditions that the make-believe’s principles of generation make prescriptive for those pretenses.

As should be apparent, a further consequence of our pretense account of truth-talk is that any specification of M-conditions (that obtain or fail to obtain outside of the pretense) that is accomplished by a ‘true’-involving sentence will be accomplished only indirectly, via the operation of the pretenses that govern the functioning of the truth-predicate. Thus, like T-deflationism, the upshot of our SPIF account is that there are no M-conditions that involve any property of truth; the truth-predicate is a representational aide that serves in the indirect specification of M-conditions that have nothing to do with any such property. The rules for the make-believe that underwrites truth-talk

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make this possible by establishing an identity of serious content between an instance of transparent propositional truth-talk of the form ‘That p is true’ and an assertoric utterance of a denominalized occurrence of the content-vehicle nominalized in it (viz., the sentence that goes in for ‘p’). This, in turn, means that the game of make-believe behind truth-talk generates all instances of the equivalence schema

(ES) It is true that p iff p.<sup>25</sup>

This is an important result because, as most theorists—T-inflationists along with T-deflationists—on the topic of truth recognize, these equivalences (or variants of them) are (some of) the central principles governing truth-talk. Our pretense account has them follow directly from the functioning that truth-talk is given by the rules of the game of make-believe that underwrites it, satisfying one of the central commitments of T-deflationism.

The principles of generation for the game of make-believe that we think underwrites truth-talk make the correctness of a putative attribution of truth or falsity to some nominalized sentence a function (possibly negating) of whether the M-conditions specified by a denominalized use of that sentence obtain. Since these indirectly specified M-conditions can actually obtain, this makes it possible for instances of truth-talk to make (what we might, now *employing* the very pretense being explained, describe as) “genuinely true” claims about the world outside of the pretense. In this way, our SPIF account of truth-talk avoids any (in this context, incoherence generating) error-theoretic interpretation, along with any versions of the Problem of Error, which might plague such an interpretation.

### 3.3 Rules (T-IV) and (T-V) and Quantificational Truth-Talk

We now turn to the more interesting forms of truth-talk, those that manifest the important expressive role this fragment of discourse plays: the quantificational instances. We take this class to include both universal generalizations involving the truth-predicate, such as

(3) Everything Isabel says is true,

which, in the context of the pretense behind truth-talk, we understand to have the form

(4)  $\forall x(\text{Isabel says } x \rightarrow x \text{ is true}),$

and what are sometimes called *blind truth-attributions*,<sup>26</sup> but which we call *opaque truth-ascriptions* (since we very well might “see” what it is that we (nontransparently) endorse (or deny) with a truth (or falsity)-ascription), such as

(5) What Corey said is true,

which, in the context of the pretense behind truth-talk, we understand as an existential quantification of the form

(6)  $\exists x(\text{Corey said } x \wedge x \text{ is true}).$ <sup>27</sup>

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Rules (T-IV) and (T-V) make the account satisfy an important condition of adequacy for any T-deflationary theory of truth-talk, as they provide versions of rules of *intersubstitution*.<sup>28</sup> In the set of rules for the make-believe under consideration, rules (T-IV) and (T-V) are, in a manner of speaking, consequences of rules (T-II) and (T-III), respectively. The intersubstitution rules further capture the sense in which the serious content of a putative ascription of truth to some content-vehicle just is the serious content of the content-vehicle itself. Codifying this equivalence of serious content in rules that license general intersubstitution is important for ensuring that our pretense account yields the right serious content for the more interesting cases of truth-talk, namely, the quantificational instances. Since those instances are where expressive indispensability emerges, they are what give truth-talk its point. Accounting for them is thus a crucial condition of adequacy for any account of truth-talk.<sup>29</sup>

To demonstrate the importance of rules (T-IV) and (T-V) for our account, and to show how the account satisfies this condition of adequacy in virtue of them, it will help to explain further the role of intersubstitution in the truth-predicate's functioning in the expression of infinite conjunctions and infinite disjunctions. One of the central contexts in which we need 'is true' to fulfill this function is when it serves to express the kind of "extended" opaque endorsement performed in an utterance of a 'true'-involving generalization like (3), which, as we mentioned above, gets (semi-) formalized as (4). To see what serious content such a generalization puts forward, we need to unpack the quantification at work in (4), as it operates in the context of the pretense.

We explained above that, in the context of the pretense, the truth-predicate applies fundamentally to propositions. Since we maintain that, really, there are no such entities, and that propositions are just the pretense-bound "ontological shadows" of 'that'-clauses, the serious upshot of the quantification in (4) has to do with all of the 'that'-clauses that are available. Thus, we can delve more fine-grainedly into the 'x's in (4), by re-rendering them as ' $\langle p \rangle$ 's (where, as before, the angle brackets indicate a 'that'-clause nominalization of whatever sentence goes in for 'p') since, in the pretense, this notation still provides a variable that ranges over objects—now just restrictedly over only the "truth-bearer" objects. What the universal quantifier in (4), operating within the pretense, seriously expresses, then, is a commitment to every filling of the schema 'Isabel says  $\langle p \rangle \rightarrow \langle p \rangle$  is true'. Gathering all of these together, by prefixing the schema with a universal *substitutional* quantifier governing the occurrences of 'p', we arrive at (7)  $\Pi p(\text{Isabel says } \langle p \rangle \rightarrow \langle p \rangle \text{ is true})$ .

Since this still employs the truth-predicate, it still involves the pretense at work in truth-talk. However, it is precisely here that intersubstitution plays its role. By applying rule (T-IV) to (7), we move, from a formula that still employs the truth-predicate, to one that does not—that is,

(8)  $\Pi p(\text{Isabel said } \langle p \rangle \rightarrow p)$ .

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While (8) does not employ the truth-predicate, it does employ some technical devices that are not available in natural language—substitutional quantification and schematic sentence variables—in order to perform a kind of generalization on sentence-in-use positions (that of the second ‘p’). This is precisely what many T-deflationists claim the truth-predicate is for—to function as a surrogate in natural language for these nonstandard logical devices, allowing speakers to express “fertile generalizations” that do not really have anything to do with truth.<sup>30</sup> We might offer (8) as a quasi-formal specification of the M-conditions that an utterance of (3) specifies indirectly.<sup>31</sup> Specifying those M-conditions in ordinary language without the truth-predicate would require uttering a gigantic conjunction of conditionals along the lines of

- (9) If Isabel says that crabapples are edible, then crabapples are edible; and if Isabel says that grass is green, then grass is green; and if Isabel says that power corrupts, then power corrupts; and if Isabel says ...

However, since (9) must go on to cover everything Isabel might say, and since that is an infinite number of things, it is actually impossible for us to utter (9) assertorically. But we can, and do, express a commitment to what an utterance of (9) would express by assertorically uttering (3). An utterance of (3) accomplishes this in virtue of the rules that govern truth-talk—in particular, rule (T-IV), licensing intersubstitution. Thus, on our account, in keeping with a central emphasis of T-deflationism, truth-talk provides speakers with a finite means for expressing what it would otherwise take infinite conjunctions to express, a means that still employs just the standard logical and linguistic devices of an ordinary language like English.

As we see it (and as T-deflationists would agree), allowing speakers to generalize in this new way, on sentence-in-use positions within claims, without having to incorporate new, complicated logical devices into our language, is the main, perhaps the central, purpose of truth-talk. Our appeal to pretense explains how truth-talk does this with linguistic resources that seem, on the surface, unsuited to the task (and without leaving it a brute, unexplained fact that it does this). Furthermore, our SPIF account’s incorporation of intersubstitution rules (T-IV) and (T-V) within a make-believe that includes a pretense that alethic-predicates serve to attribute alethic properties provides an additional benefit for the T-deflationist. The infinite conjunction, which the rules allow a claim like (3) to express indirectly, takes on an important modal status because of the operation of the pretense. Typically, encoding an infinite conjunction with substitutional quantification ties the conjunction to a specific substitution class, so it covers only the “current” substitution instances of the schema prefixed. If new sentences are introduced into the language, with the development of new concepts and new vocabulary, they are not included in the original conjunction encoded. The pretense gives the infinite conjunction a kind of *indefinite extendability*, so that it automatically includes every new substitution instance in every possible extension of the

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language. It is part of the make-believe that language expansions simply “reveal” more objects (propositions) already in the domain of the objectual quantifier a claim like (3) employs. The merit of this feature is that it gives the serious content of a claim like (3) the sort of scope that the content of a universal generalization is supposed to have—one covering all instances, not just those currently expressible in our language.<sup>32</sup>

Much of what we have said so far regarding the role of intersubstitution in explaining the serious content put forward by an assertoric utterance of a generalization like (3) carries over to an explanation of the serious content put forward by opaque truth-ascriptions, such as

(5) What Corey said is true.

We noted above that, in the make-believe behind truth-talk, an utterance like this has the logical form of an existential claim—that is,

(6)  $\exists x(\text{Corey said } x \wedge x \text{ is true})$ .

Again, since it is part of the pretense that what is true (as well as what gets said) are propositions, and since we maintain that these putative entities are just part of the pretense, the serious point of the quantifier in (6), as it operates in the context of the pretense, has to do with what is expressed when some ‘that’-clause goes in for (i.e., replaces) the ‘x’. Thus, what the quantifier expresses a commitment to is some unspecified filling in of the schema ‘Corey said  $\langle p \rangle \wedge \langle p \rangle$  is true’.

We can indicate such a commitment by prefixing the schema with an existential substitutional quantifier, as in

(10)  $\Sigma p(\text{Corey said } \langle p \rangle \wedge \langle p \rangle \text{ is true})$ .

Here again is where intersubstitution plays its important role, as the application of rule (T-IV) takes us from this truth-involving formula to one that does not employ truth-talk, namely

(11)  $\Sigma p(\text{Corey said } \langle p \rangle \wedge p)$ .

We take (11) to provide a quasi-formal specification of the M-conditions that (4) specifies indirectly (albeit, again, still employing the pretense-involving discourse of proposition-talk). But, like (8), (11) employs technical devices that are not available in ordinary language. Specifying those M-conditions without recourse to those devices (or to the truth-predicate) would require the utterance of a potentially infinite disjunction of conjunctions (each specifying what Corey said and how the world is).

An opaque ascription of the truth-predicate, as in (5), thus serves as a means for endorsing what would otherwise require uttering an infinitely long sentence to endorse. When the context of an opaque truth-ascription makes it obvious which disjunct is relevant (by making it clear, e.g., what Corey said), the rest of them drop out of any processing. We might say that, technically, all of the disjuncts are included in

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what is expressed, but practically (or inferentially) speaking, the other disjuncts do not play any role. However, when a truth-ascription is “blind,” the ability to express, in a finite manner, what it would otherwise take the entire infinite disjunction to express implements the important expressive role of opaque endorsement, a role that truth-talk incorporates into the language by including the intersubstitution license granted by rule (T-IV).

Even when the truth-predicate is not serving directly as a device for facilitating the expression of opaque endorsement, there is still a logical need for intersubstitution. Consider, for example, a sentence like

(12) If what the weatherman said is true, then you should bring your umbrella.

(employed in a conversational context where it is assumed that the weatherman said something). Here, the truth-predicate operates in the antecedent of the conditional, bracketing any expression of commitment. In the context of the pretense, (12) has the superficial form displayed in

(13)  $(\exists x(\text{weatherman said } x \wedge x \text{ is true}) \rightarrow \text{you should bring your umbrella})$ .

The quantification that (13) involves operates only in the antecedent, but it still applies in the context of the pretense, so we can understand its serious operation as we did above. Replacing the ‘x’s with ‘ $\langle p \rangle$ ’s, and indicating an unspecified filling of ‘p’ with the existential substitutional quantifier, we arrive at

(14)  $(\Sigma p(\text{weatherman said } \langle p \rangle \wedge \langle p \rangle \text{ is true}) \rightarrow \text{you should bring your umbrella})$ .

Once again, intersubstitution is crucial for getting from the truth-talk-involving (14) to something that we can consider to specify, without the pretense involved in truth-talk, the M-conditions that (12) specifies indirectly. Applying rule (T-IV) to (14) gives us the needed truth-talk-free formula,

(15)  $(\Sigma p(\text{weatherman said } \langle p \rangle \wedge p) \rightarrow \text{you should bring your umbrella})$ .

### 3.4 Non-Propositional Truth-Talk

Instances of truth-talk involving non-propositional subjects (e.g., sentences, utterances, thought-states, and so on) receive a similar analysis to that of existentially quantified instances of truth-talk. The difference is that, in the presentation of the logical form, the relevant non-propositional item will get (pretendedly) related either to a particular, specified proposition (via use of a ‘that’-clause) or to what a bound variable ranges over by putative relations like *proposition-expression* or *meaning*.

In some instances of non-propositional truth-talk, the meaning or proposition-expression aspect of the truth-ascription turns out to be automatically, immediately available, in virtue of the default and immediate status of homophonic (or even extended homophonic) meaning-attribution sentences. So, in a case like

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(16) 'Birds are dinosaurs' is true.

the default automatic availability of the homophonic meaning-attribution sentence

(HMA) 'Birds are dinosaurs' means that birds are dinosaurs.

makes the first conjunct in the "official" analysis of the truth-ascription,

(17) ('Birds are dinosaurs' means that birds are dinosaurs  $\wedge$  that birds are dinosaurs is true).

trivial, in a sense. As a result, the point of the truth-ascription in (16) boils down to

(18) That birds are dinosaurs is true.

which Rule (T-II) reveals to be an indirect way of specifying the same M-conditions that are specified by

(19) Birds are dinosaurs.

Thus, in purely "home-language" cases like (16), truth-talk functions essentially in a disquotational manner.<sup>33</sup>

This point can be extended to other sorts of cases in which context makes it obvious what 'that'-clause would figure in the relevant meaning or proposition-expression clause (e.g., if it is obvious what meaning-attribution sentence applies regarding someone's utterance). Factoring in the relevant clause (pretendedly) relating the non-propositional item in question to a proposition, the serious content that a non-propositional instance of truth-talk puts forward indirectly is just the (serious) content that is or would be put forward by the putative content-vehicle to which the truth-predicate is being applied. This is the sense in which our account of truth-talk understands this fragment of discourse to operate quasi-anaphorically with respect to other sentences or utterances.

In other cases of non-propositional truth-ascription, where the relevant (pretended) connection to a particular proposition is not automatically apparent, truth-talk does not function in a disquotational manner (although there may be a sense in which it is still quasi-anaphoric). To see this, consider an opaque instance of truth-talk, such as

(20) 'Holzäpfel sind eßbar' is true.

Within the pretense behind truth-talk, (20) has the logical form

(21)  $\exists x$ ('Holzäpfel sind eßbar' means  $x \wedge x$  is true).

We then analyze this form along the lines we applied to (6) to arrive eventually at

(22)  $\Sigma p$ ('Holzäpfel sind eßbar' means  $\langle p \rangle \wedge p$ ).

As with (8) and (11), this result of processing the truth-talk aspect of (20)/(21) would then have to be processed through our analysis of meaning-attribution sentences, to arrive at a direct specification of M-conditions along the lines of

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(22\*)  $\Sigma p$ (‘Holzäpfel sind eßbar’ has the same long-arm conceptual role as ‘ $p$ ’-as-the-speaker-actually-understands-it  $\wedge p$ ).<sup>34</sup>

Direct statements of the M-conditions specified indirectly via “blind” truth-ascriptions to thought-states or utterances would be similar but would appeal to our analysis of proposition-relational/expressing talk. Once again, in these sorts of cases, truth-talk functions as a surrogate for substitutional quantification and schematic sentence variables, providing a way of incorporating the expressive power of these devices into our language without the actual technical aspects that they involve.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4 Conclusions

We have claimed that T-deflationists should be alethic fictionalists about truth-talk, but given what our SPIF account says about the function and purpose of truth-talk, one might ask why we bother to offer specifically a *pretense* account of truth-talk instead of just endorsing T-deflationism.

We think that such a question, while not unexpected, belies a misunderstanding of what T-deflationism involves. On our view, the pretense approach is correlated with the *genus* of T-deflationism as a whole. The different *species* of this genus (e.g., disquotationalism, prosententialism, inference-rule deflationism, etc.) might fruitfully be viewed as attempts at cashing out principles of generation for a game of make-believe that could underwrite truth-talk. Our main reason for claiming this is the recognition that a central thesis of T-deflationism is that truth-talk serves only logical and linguistic *expressive* purposes. The alethic-locutions exist in order to provide a means for talking about other things, which are unrelated to truth. So T-deflationism *in effect* treats the alethic-locutions as representational aides, which are introduced not to express something about the world directly but rather in order to facilitate a certain kind of indirect talk about aspects of the world. For this reason we are inclined to say that understanding a way of talking in the way that T-deflationists view truth-talk just is to see it as involving a kind of fiction. We also maintain that the most fruitful way to understand a way of talking as involving an element of fiction is in terms of a SPIF account of that fragment of discourse, explaining the linguistic functioning of the talk as involving mechanisms that invoke pretense. For these reasons, we offer a SPIF account of truth-talk.

While we do not think that ordinary speakers are (or, if queried, would acknowledge) pretending anything when they employ truth-talk, an awareness of the pretense at some level could be part of our account. If it were, we would locate this awareness at the level of a *theorist*, when she aims to explain the linguistic functioning of the instances of certain fragments of discourse in expressing the serious content they put forward. We think that something like this theorist-level pretense-awareness may be present when philosophers attempt to “regiment” some fragment of discourse.<sup>36</sup>

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Although we shall not try to establish that point here, we will provide a sense for how one might go about establishing it.

We get an initial indication of the kind of theorist-level pretense-awareness that we have postulated by considering how a truth theorist who advocates T-deflationism might deal with the issues that surround ‘true’-involving generalizations. When our theorist is concerned with determining how to interpret some ‘true’-involving discourse, or if she is attempting to show how one can *prove* such ‘true’-involving generalizations, there is a question as to whether she is providing a *descriptive* account of our actual practices or whether she is providing a *prescriptive* account of how we should use the language. Some T-deflationists—we think, for example, of Hartry Field—relegate such a descriptive account to a branch of sociology, one they see as neither particularly interesting nor particularly relevant, given the problems they are tackling. As such, we are inclined to conclude that our regimenting theorist is offering a prescriptive, rather than a descriptive, account.

But our theorist need not go so far as to embrace some form of *revolutionary* fictionalism, claiming that, insofar as it is prescriptive, her view suggests how we might either change our language or change the practices that determine how we use truth-talk. Rather, what seems more plausible is that such a theorist is providing a *hermeneutic* fictionalist account—frequently, in the form of what might count as principles of generation for a pretense already involved in truth-talk.<sup>37</sup> This account makes it seem as if it is about *truth* when, in fact, it is not. On her view, there is nothing—no property (at least of the sort there would have to be)—to which the proposed principles would answer. Moreover, when such a theorist presents an account of the truth-predicate, thereby explaining the serious content of ‘true’-involving sentences, we can take what she does as analogous to what we are doing in presenting our SPIF account of truth-talk.

Understanding ‘principles of generation’ in a suitably broad way, we might see a T-deflationist’s proposal of such rules—be they instances of the T-schema, the inference rules, ‘*True-In*’ and ‘*True-Out*’, or what have you—as, in effect, attempts to explain principles of generation for a pretense involved in truth-talk. So, depending on which rules or principles a T-deflationist develops for ‘true’, she will get various brands of T-deflationism—various species of that genus. But such a theorist need not be saying—and we do not need to construe such a theorist as saying—that these rules are what actual language users have in mind or aim to follow when they employ truth-talk. Rather, what the T-deflationist (and, by proxy, what we) should (or would) say is that what enables truth-talk to work is that it is *as if* these principles actually govern the behavior of speakers employing the locutions ‘true’, ‘false’, and so on. Insofar as the theorist is not offering principles that speakers actually, psychologically realize (any more than Alfred Tarski was, perhaps), there is a sense in which she herself is engaged in a pretense, making *as if* these principles are correct for purposes of accounting for truth-talk and for yielding the serious content of uses of ‘true’-involving sentences.<sup>38</sup>

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In this chapter we have argued that T-deflationists should be (or, perhaps, already are) pretense theorists about truth-talk, and we have provided some of the central features of our favored pretense account of that talk. But one might ask why one should be a T-deflationist at all. In order to answer this question, we must consider what the alternatives to T-deflationism might be. In order to get to the alternatives, notice that one might either accept that there is a real, robust, perhaps explanatorily important, property of truth, or one might not accept that there is any such property. One who adopts the first option would be an inflationist *about truth*.<sup>39</sup> One who adopts the second option would either be a deflationist or an eliminativist *about truth-talk*. As we see it, a primary reason for being a T-deflationist is because of the reasons for not adopting one of these other positions.<sup>40</sup>

The central issue that T-inflationists point to, as the basis for their claim that the truth-predicate expresses a substantive property, turns on the explanation of linguistic and mental content.<sup>41</sup> (Earlier responses to T-deflationism focused on the putative role of truth in explanations of success—either of scientific theorizing or of behavior—but we think that this earlier issue has been adequately resolved by T-deflationists.<sup>42</sup>) However, while truth-conditional/referential semantics is still more or less orthodoxy, it is not without gaps and problems.<sup>43</sup> Nor is it the only game in town (so to speak).<sup>44</sup> Moreover, an inflationist view about truth (and reference), according to which the truth-predicate (as well as the reference- and satisfaction-predicates) functions to attribute a substantive, explanatory property, faces the daunting task of providing a revenge-immune (and consistent) solution to the full range of *semantic pathology*. This putative phenomenon includes the familiar liar paradox—along with Curry’s, Yablo’s, Grelling’s, and Berry’s, as well as the truth-teller and a whole host of other indeterminate cases we have identified that are analogs for the rest of the putative semantic paradoxes, plus all of the dual-symptom variants of what we call the “open pair.”<sup>45</sup>

In contrast, as part of a broadly T-deflationist package, we have provided a diagnosis and treatment of the full spectrum of (putative) semantic pathology, based on elements of the SPIF accounts we offer for talk involving each of the traditional semantic notions.<sup>46</sup> On our accounts, none of the sentences that appear to manifest semantic pathology has any real-world (i.e., serious) content. They therefore all turn out to be semantically defective (what we sometimes call *s-defective*), as we explain this notion.<sup>47</sup> These sentences have this status because of a “content-seeking” looping that arises in these cases, due to the quasi-anaphoric operation that all of the traditional semantic locutions involve,<sup>48</sup> one given to them by the principles of generation that govern their use, according to the games of make-believe that underlie these ways of talking. This looping keeps the “semantic reach” of these sentences entirely within the relevant make-believe, making them “purely pretend” claims that say nothing about the world outside of the game.<sup>49</sup> Because the problematic sentences are all thereby s-defective, they cannot serve as premises or conclusions in any arguments, nor, we argue, can

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they be embedded in truth-functional constructions without rendering the whole s-defective as well. This factors into the immunity that we claim our dissolution of semantic pathology has to the sorts of revenge problems that plague other responses to the liar paradox and its kin. We consider this provision of a unified, revenge-immune dissolution of the full range of semantic pathology to be one of the most important accomplishments of our project. This tidy approach to semantic pathology is unavailable to T-inflationists, who must therefore provide their own solution to the problem. We conjecture that this will be very difficult for a T-inflationist to do.<sup>50</sup>

### Notes

1. While fictionalism is sometimes motivated by metaphysical considerations, it ought to be understood as a genus of theories in the philosophy of language, rather than in metaphysics. See Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 1).
2. Woodbridge (2005) presents the original version of this sort of view.
3. See Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015) for the most complete presentation of our mature account of truth-talk, as well as our related accounts of talk putatively about propositions, what does and does not exist, identity and difference, reference, and predicate-satisfaction.
4. While not explicitly formulating the thesis in this way, Yablo (2005) relies on something like (EI) to argue for a particular fictionalist account of “number-talk.”
5. We should note that by ‘property’ what we primarily have in mind here is what one intuitively might call a *robust* or *substantive* property—in David Lewis’s (1983) terminology, a “sparse” property—of the sort that T-deflationists reject. As far as a Lewisian “abundant” property is concerned, we, like most theorists, accept that a “property” of that sort exists (simply as the extension of ‘true’), but we think of it as a by-product of the operation of the predicate rather than anything that can do theoretical (i.e., explanatory) work. If one wants to posit “thin” properties of some other sort, as Horwich (1998) seems to do, we are agnostic about whether anything of that sort exists, although we are not inclined to endorse this type of view. We are skeptical that such a property would do any theoretical work.
6. For more on this, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2014; 2015, chap. 4).
7. Prime examples of prefix-fictionalism include the accounts that Lewis (1978), Field (1989), and Rosen (1990) develop. Pretense-involving fictionalist accounts include Yablo (1996, 2005), Crimmins (1998), and Kroon (2001, 2004), all of which stem from Walton (1990). See Caddick Bourne (2013) and Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 1) for more details on the distinction.
8. For some of the reasons, see Armour-Garb (2015) and Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 1).
9. As seems clear, an ETF account of truth-talk would be intolerable, as it would render false all truth-ascriptions, thereby undermining the status of the T-schema, since not every instance of it would be true.

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10. For pragmatic PIF accounts, see Kroon (2001, 2004). See Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 2) for reasons to prefer SPIF accounts over pragmatic PIF accounts.

11. See Walton (1990) and Crimmins (1998).

12. For more on the details of make-believe and its role in semantic pretense, see Richard (2000); Woodbridge and Armour-Garb (2009).

13. In general, we call the real-world conditions specified by a sentence that sentence's *M-conditions* (*M* for "meaning"—although we could have used *W* for "worldly" instead). The serious content that a pretense-involving utterance expresses is just the *M-conditions* specified by the utterance. Such claims are "partially pretend" claims, since they say something about the real world; they just do so indirectly *via* semantic mechanisms that involve pretense. In contrast, pretense-free utterances specify their *M-conditions* directly.

14. Cf. Woodbridge (2005). In order to deflect a possible misinterpretation, we should make clear that we are not saying that being true is a matter of being pretended true. There is an important difference between claiming something is true—and the pretenses always involved in such a claim—and pretending that something is true. When we claim, or assert (e.g.) that a given sentence is true, we are not pretending that it is true.

15. There is a potential worry that is peculiar to a proposed *pretense-based* account of truth-talk, which emerges once we consider a putatively plausible reading of what pretending might involve. The worry is that we will not be able to explain truth-talk in terms of pretense because the explanations of pretense and the activity of pretending itself rely on a notion of truth. For a response to this worry, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 7).

16. This is to say that if someone were explicitly and intentionally to engage in this game of make-believe, that person would expressly make-believe what is laid out in rule (T-I). That said, we do not think that speakers employing truth-talk do explicitly and intentionally engage in the game of make-believe we describe here, so no one is actually stipulating or expressly pretending what we specify in (T-I). As we explain in responding to what we call the *Engagement Complaint* (or, the EC), we do not offer our view as an account of speakers' attitudes or of what speakers are, or take themselves to be, doing. Rather, we claim that it is *as if* speakers employing truth-talk are actively engaged in the game of make-believe we explain here. For more on the EC and our response to it, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 2).

17. Like most T-deflationists, we reject the standard truth-conditional/referential conception of linguistic meaning or content, in favor of a *use-theoretic* understanding. More specifically, we favor explaining meaning in terms of long-arm conceptual roles or broadly inferential roles (cf. Brandom 1994). We use the terms *content-connection* and *content-connected* to indicate whatever connection an expression has to some part of the world—the worldly entanglement aspects of the long-arm conceptual role that someone's use of the expression gives it—in virtue of which it is possible for a speaker to use the expression to talk about that part of the world. For more on *content-connectedness*, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 2).

18. We also advocate, and have developed, a SPIF account of proposition-talk, which we cannot discuss in this chapter, but see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2012; 2015, chap. 3).

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19. Cf. Alston (1996, 14).

20. The classic presentation of prosententialism is Grover, Camp, and Belnap (1975). Brandom's version of the approach appears in Brandom (1994, chap. 5).

21. Cf. Horwich (1998, 125).

22. This explains the sense in which the truth-conditions for a sentence are a by-product of its meaning, of which M-conditions are a significant component. As should be clear, on our view, truth-conditions have only a thin, derivative status, as conditions for the appropriate use of the truth-predicate.

23. The directness of the specification of those conditions by an assertoric utterance of (2) is an accidental feature of this case (and others like it), but it is not necessary in general. Rules (T-II) and (T-III) both allow that the sentence that goes in for the 'p' in 'That p is true' or 'That p is false' can itself be a pretense-involving sentence (e.g., an instance of existence-talk or of proposition-talk or even truth-talk) that specifies M-conditions only indirectly. This is the case with an utterance of "It is true that Santa Claus does not exist" or even an utterance of "It is true that it is true that crabapples are edible."

24. See Walton (1993) and Yablo (1996) on the distinction between content-oriented and prop-oriented make-believe.

25. For present purposes, this is taken to be equivalent to

(ES\*) That p is true iff p.

26. Azzouni (2006).

27. Mutatis mutandis for quantificational utterances employing the falsity-predicate.

28. (T-IV) captures a form of 'True'-In and 'True'-Out, namely,

'True'-In: From  $p \Rightarrow T\langle p \rangle$

'True'-Out: From  $T\langle p \rangle \Rightarrow p$ ,

where these can be understood as representing inference rules or as capturing substitution rules, to the effect that, in all extensional (or "transparent") contexts, one can intersubstitute ' $\langle p \rangle$  is true' ('p') for 'p' (' $\langle p \rangle$  is true'), where 'p' serves as a sentential variable, which can be replaced by any declarative sentence, and where the chevron brackets, ' $\langle$ ' and ' $\rangle$ ', serve as a device for nominalizing any sentence that goes in for 'p'. Compare Beall (2009, vii, 1, 12) on the role of intersubstitution.

29. Notice that Horwich's (1998) minimalism runs into difficulties precisely on this point, since he does not introduce an intersubstitution rule but desperately needs one, lest he lose the explanation for why, in some sense, the assertability of any utterance of the form 'If p, then q' is conditional on one of the form 'If  $\langle p \rangle$  is true, then  $\langle q \rangle$  is true' and vice versa (and ditto for their unassertability).

30. Quine (1986, 11–12); Horwich (1998, 4n1, 25–26, 32–33); Azzouni (1999, 541–544); and Field (1999, 533).

31. The specification that (8) accomplishes does, however, still involve the pretense of proposition-talk and thus is still an indirect specification, strictly speaking. Unpacking the

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proposition-talk along the lines of our SPIF account of that discourse would involve moving from (8) to

(8\*)  $\Pi p(\text{Isabel assertorically uttered a sentence with the same long-arm conceptual role as } \ulcorner p \urcorner\text{-as-the-speaker-actually-understands-it} \rightarrow p)$ .

For more on this, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 3).

32. This aspect of our SPIF account of truth-talk gives T-deflationists an easier time dealing with the generalization problem (cf. Gupta 1993). An explicit appeal to pretense would allow the T-deflationist to take 'true'-involving generalizations to be actual generalizations, logically speaking, instead of just the conjunction of the instances. While the serious content of such generalizations is the totality of the instances, because this serious content also automatically incorporates any new cases that arise with the expansion of a language, it avoids taking the meaning of 'true' to change when the substitution class for the otherwise necessary substitutional quantifiers or schematic sentence variables changes. Thus, the recognition of pretense might better account for the role that 'true'-involving generalizations can play in explanations, the expression of logical laws, and so on. Cf. Woodbridge (2005, 154–161).

33. Relative to the speaker's understanding, as per Field (1994).

34. Similarly, instances of truth-talk that are propositional but *nontransparent*, such as 'Goldbach's conjecture is true', would receive an initial analysis along the lines of

$\Sigma p(\text{Goldbach's conjecture} = (p) \wedge p)$

with the embedded sentence then getting analyzed to yield

$\Sigma p(\text{'Goldbach's conjecture' has the same singular-term long-arm conceptual role as } \ulcorner \text{that } p \urcorner\text{-as-the-speaker-actually-understands-it} \wedge p)$ .

35. Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 4) also explains how our SPIF account analyzes truth-ascriptions embedded in intentional contexts.

36. For a good discussion of *regimentation*, see Azzouni (2006, 74–81).

37. On the distinction between revolutionary and hermeneutic fictionalism, see Stanley (2001) and Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chap. 1).

38. Lest a reader worry that, deep down (so to speak), we are committed to the claim that such theorists are actually engaged in (formulating or constructing) a pretense (i.e., are intentionally making as if), we note that we, as metatheorists, can describe the situation by saying it is simply *as if* they are engaged in (formulating or constructing) a pretense—that is, that they are offering rules or principles as background pretenses for a game of make-believe.

39. In general, a T-inflationist could be either a primitivist or a reductionist about truth. Since the points that we will make apply to either species of T-inflationism, we will not discuss the details behind such positions.

40. Since the expressive indispensability of truth-talk is acknowledged by all truth-theorists, we find eliminativism about such talk to be a nonstarter.

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41. Cf. Davidson (1996) for an appeal to this explanatory role in an argument for primitivism about truth and Devitt (1997, 101–105) for an appeal to this explanatory role in an argument for a reductionist view of truth.
42. See Leeds (1978, 1995), Williams (1986), Field (1994), and Devitt (1997, 98–101). But see Damnjanovic (2005) and Gamster (2018) for reconsideration of this attitude.
43. Cf. Schiffer (1987) and Soames (1992).
44. See Brandom (1994).
45. See Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, chaps. 5 and 6).
46. For the details, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2013; 2015, chaps. 5 and 6).
47. Ibid. As we would put it, these sentences do not express any M-conditions.
48. Cf. Grover (1977)'s proposed solution to the liar paradox.
49. This is not to say that such sentences are entirely meaningless; for discussion, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (2015, 157–161).
50. Our thanks to Jeremy Wyatt for helpful comments and suggestions.

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