Towards a Synthesis of Inferential and Logical Expressivism

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Towards a Synthesis of Inferential and Logical Expressivism

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Abstract

I compare the logical expressivism of Hlobil and Brandom with the inferential expressivism of Incurvati and Schlöder with an emphasis on their respective analyses of negation. I conclude that these differences do not run very deep. For negation specifically, Incurvati and Schlöder, but not Hlobil and Brandom, appeal to a primitive expression for rejection in the object language. However, I note that both ultimately admit primitive rejection and, thus, that this difference is merely one of abstraction. However, I suggest that it would be useful for Hlobil and Brandom to follow Incurvati and Schlöder's lead on rejection in the object language. Conversely, it would be useful for Incurvati and Schlöder to adopt the overall meta-semantic strategy of Hlobil and Brandom. I sketch a synthesis that combines the best features of either approach.

Word count: $\approx$9000

Keywords: negation; rejection; inferentialism; expressivism; bilateralism

1 Introduction

Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) and Hlobil and Brandom (2025) present what they each call "expressivist" approaches to logic. On their faces, these approaches are very different. The *inferential expressivism* of Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) aims to explain certain terms by their inferential relation to primitive attitude expressions. The *logical expressivism* of Hlobil and Brandom (2025) aims to explain specifically logical terms by their function to make explicit primitive, material relations of entailment and incompatibility. Incurvati and Schlöder extend their approach to a breadth of applications, whereas Hlobil and Brandom go deep into the properties of their expressivist approach logic.

Hlobil and Brandom use the usual language of the sequent calculus and explain logical terms as derived from the derivability of certain sequents. Incurvati and Schlöder, by contrast, have each sentence *signed* with an attitude that is expressed towards the sentence and then explain embeddable terms by the inferential relations their bear to these attitudes. This means that Hlobil and Brandom can adopt the received inference rules for the logical constants (*modulo* some modifications necessitated by their substructural calculus) while Incurvati and Schlöder have new rules in their modified language (especially for negation). The core difference between inferential expressivism and logical expressivism thus seems to be about what is meant by "expression". Inferential expressivists deal in inferential connections to attitude expressions; logical inferentialists in the expression of inferential relations. Inferential expressivism has primitive attitude expressions; logical expressivism has primitive inferential relations.

Despite the apparent starkness of this difference, I argue that it is mostly superficial and is not indicative of significant conceptual disagreements.[1] A synthesis that combines the breadth of inferential expressivism with the depth of logical expressivism is both de-

[1]Ryan Simonelli (forthcoming) makes a related suggestion on how to "bring together" the bilateralism of Rumfitt (2000) (which Incurvati and Schlöder generalize) with that of Restall (2005) (which Hlobil and Brandom generalize). I compare Simonelli's approach with mine in Section 4.

sirable and possible. In brief, my argument will be that the primitive inferences of Hlobil and Brandom are done in a primitive practice of giving and asking for reasons and that this practice includes the attitude expressions of Incurvati and Schlöder. The difference between the two approaches is then a mere difference in the level of abstraction at which inferential practice is described. That is, inferential expressivism and logical expressivism are distinguished largely by where their respective practitioners have directed the focus of their attention (and then made modelling choices accordingly). I now go on to review two major issues for expressivism—the Price Point and the Frege–Geach Problem—and discuss how addressing these problems has lead inferential expressivists and logical expressivists to similar responses. I conclude by suggesting a synthesis that reconciles inferential expressivism and logical expressivism as *one* expressivism.

2 The Price Point

Price (1990) argued that language needs a device to indicate (or "register") a perceived incompatibility, since otherwise speakers might find it impossible to point out each other's (perceived) mistakes. In Schlöder 2022, riffing on Price (1998), I put the issue as follows.

> You might point to some berries … and make motions to begin consuming some of them. I, however, see that the berries are lilac and know that all lilac food is highly poisonous. … I could tell you *these are lilac!* but you might not realise that *edible* and *lilac* are incompatible. Then all I have achieved is that you now believe that these berries are *edible and lilac*. Clearly, me telling you *these are poisonous* is equally hopeless, as you may not realise the incompatibility between *edible* and *poisonous* either. … It does not suffice that there is an incompatibility … I also need to be able to *inform* you of it. (Schlöder, 2022, p423)

One might think that a competent speaker will realize that *poisonous* precludes *edible*.

But even a competent speaker will have to do some inferring and reasoning to reach the incompatibility between *edible* and *poisonous*. So there remains the troubling possibility of missing that inference.

> [W]e might miss the incompatibility, by missing the inference … the advantage of a sign of denial is that it gives us a perfectly general means of registering and pointing out the incompatibility. (Price, 1990, p224)

This is so even if the relevant incomaptibility is *primitive* (say, that the very meaning of *poisonous* includes incompatibility with *edible*). Price contends that even the incompatibility of truth and falsity is up for grabs: someone who fails to draw the relevant inferences might believe of some claim that it is true and when someone corrects them come to believe that the claim is true *and* false because they fail to realize that false entails un-true—or they might be a paraconsistentist (which is why Priest 2005 accepts the Price Point). Stipulating that the incompatibility of truth and falsity is "primitive" or "in virtue of meaning" does not help. Therefore, Price argues, the needed incompatibility-registering function cannot be reduced to a truth-function. It is rather required

> that the apprehension of incompatibility be an ability more primitive than the use of negation … An orthodox truth-functional account … depends on our knowing that truth and falsity are incompatible. If we do not have a sense of that, the truth tables for negation give us no sense of the connection between negation and incompatibility. (Price, 1990, p226)

Price concludes that the truth-functional explanation of *not* is inadequate. The *Price Point* is that, therefore, we must understand *not* as an expression of incompatibility, rather than as as the expression of something that merely *is* incompatible with something else. He, therefore, claims that *not* functions as a force-indicator for the expression of disbelief, where disbelieving some claim is *immediately* recognizable as incompatible with believing the same claim. This, however falls prey to the Frege–Geach Problem (more on this shortly), so a more sophisticated account of the relationship among negation, disbelief, and incompatibility is required.

Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) follow Rumfitt (2000) in responding to the Price Point by introducing in their logic a primitive sign '$-$' for rejection so that $-A$ expresses disbelief towards A. The meaning of negation is then *derivative* of this primitive expression. Specifically, the assertion of *not* A is equivalent to the rejection of A. That is, the meaning of negation is given by inference rules like $+\neg A \vdash -A$ (and *vice versa*) and $-\neg A \vdash +A$ (and *vice versa*). This, Incurvati and Schlöder argue, suffices to address the Price Point. To point out that someone is mistaken to believe A, one could directly reject A and thereby register an incompatibility to any competent speaker. The incompatibility of asserting A and asserting *not* A is then explained by the latter entailing the rejection of A. If someone "misses" this entailment, one can still correct them directly by rejecting A. The crucial distinction here is that rejecting A is the *expression* of an incompatibility with A, rather than the mere putting forward of something that *is* incompatible with A. Without such an expression, speakers in examples like the one cited above would have no other recourse than to continue making further claims that are incompatible with what they are attempting to rebut.

Hlobil and Brandom (2025) do not have primitive attitude expressions like $-A$ in their object language. Instead, they consider a primitive inferential relation of incompatibility, writing $\Gamma\#A$ for 'A is incompatible with Γ'. This is in addition to the more familiar relation of entailment which they write as $\Gamma \succ A$. However, Hlobil and Brandom note that instead of $\Gamma\#A$, they can just write $\Gamma, A \succ \emptyset$. This lets them keep with the usual sequent rules for negation. To wit, if $\Gamma \succ A$, then $\Gamma, \neg A \succ \emptyset$; and if $\Gamma, A \succ \emptyset$, then $\Gamma \succ \neg A$. To make explicit an incompatibility with A, Hlobil and Brandom contend, is to assert *not* A.

Thus, Incurvati and Schlöder and Hlobil and Brandom each attend to different parts of the Price Point. Incurvati and Schlöder more directly attend to his claim that a mechanism for *rejection* (Price: *denial*) is needed and that the meaning of negation depends on this mechanism. Hlobil and Brandom, by contrast, attend to his claim that a mechanism for *registering incompatibility* is needed and that the meaning of negation depends on this mechanism. The difference in formal treatment then, in part, arises from rejection being unary and incompatibility being binary. So Incurvati and Schlöder have a unary force-indicator for rejection and Hlobil and Brandom have a binary relation for incompatibility. There is, however, a more significant difference. Incurvati and Schlöder have their mechanism as part of the object language whereas Hlobil and Brandom have it only as part of the meta-language. For Incurvati and Schlöder, expressing rejection is something that speakers can *directly do* in their linguistic practices whereas for Hlobil and Brandom incompatibility is something *about* linguistic practice that speakers can (mediately) *explicate* by asserting a negation.

It may now appear as if Hlobil and Brandom are giving up on Price's requirement that there be a way to register incompatibility that is effective even if one's addressee fails to draw any inferences. But the appearance is misleading. In fact, Hlobil and Brandom claim that rejection is something that actual speakers *do*—it is only their formal language that does not include a device for rejection. So the object language of Hlobil and Brandom is not (a formalization of) the language spoken by actual language users. Rather, this object language is about the *contents* of the speech acts made by actual language users. Rejection is among these speech acts, as it must be. For if actual speakers had no means to express incompatibility, it is unclear how $A\#B$ could be a primitive inferential relation at all.

The sequent notation '$\succ$' for Hlobil and Brandom denotes some social norms of the *game of giving and asking for reasons* (Brandom, 1994). In brief, if someone claims A and is challenged to give a reason for this, the fact that responding by claiming B is a valid move in the game (if it is one) is recorded as $B \succ A$.[2] One can, supposedly, observe fragments of $\succ$

[2]That is, $\succ$ is a *reason relation*. Hlobil and Brandom also sometimes say that $A \succ B$ represents a sociolinguistic norm whereby one's commitment to accepting A precludes one being entitled to reject B. The

by observing speakers' socio-linguistic behavior. Accepting something as a reason is something that people *do* and by observing these doings, we can figure out what they *mean* (i.e. the contents of these doings).

> Content is understood in terms of properties of inference, and those are understood in terms of the norm-instituting attitudes of taking or treating moves as appropriate or inappropriate in practice. A theoretical route is accordingly made available from what people do to what they mean, from their practice to the contents of their states and expressions. (Brandom, 1994, p134)

When we now consider incompatibility, we must ask what sort of *doings* ground that $A, B \succ \emptyset$ or that $A \# B$. Hlobil and Brandom construe '$\#$' as denoting some further norms in the game of giving and asking for reasons. Like there is a practice of giving and asking for reasons *for* claims, there is a practice of giving and asking for reasons *against* claims. In this latter game, if someone rejects A and is challenged to give a reason for this, that their response B is a valid move (if it is one) is recorded as $A \# B$. Accordingly, Hlobil and Brandom conclude that

> the very same claim that is a reason *for* one commitment must also be a reason *against* some others. Not only must it be possible to accept or to reject any claimable, in addition, adopting either of those attitudes towards a claimable must be able to serve *both* as a reason to *accept* some further claimables (a reason *for* them), and as a reason to *reject* some other claimables (a reason *against* them). What can be accepted or rejected must stand both in relations of entailment and in relations of incompatibility. (Hlobil and Brandom, 2025, p38)

Thus, treating $A \# B$ as primitive presupposes that there is a practice of rejecting alongside the practice of claiming/accepting. The *observed doings* of the linguistic community are

relation $A \# B$, discussed below, represents a norm whereby one's commitment to accepting A precludes one being entitled to accept B.

their acceptances and rejections (and possibly further speech acts, see Section 5). These observations are then meta-linguistically *formalized* using both '$\succ$' and '$\#$' to obtain a logic of the *contents* of these doings. With this in mind, the approach of Hlobil and Brandom seems to be much closer to the one of Incurvati and Schlöder than one might have initially thought. That A is a reason for B could be formalized as $A \succ B$ or as $+A \vdash +B$; and that A is a reason against B could be formalized as $A\#B$ or as $+A \vdash -B$.

That is, once we recognize that the socio-linguistic practice that for Hlobil and Brandom is abstracted in '$\succ$' and '$\#$' must involve distinct speech acts—at least including assertions/acceptances and rejections/denials—the apparently significant differences between Hlobil and Brandom and Incurvati and Schlöder appear more like notational variations. Where Incurvati and Schlöder claim that the meaning of negation is given by the fact that it is correct to infer the rejection of A from the assertion of *not* A, Hlobil and Brandom claim that *not* A is explained as making explicit an inferential relation $\#$ that records reasons to reject A. The only remaining difference, it seems, is that Hlobil and Brandom have a further layer of abstraction between the meaning of negation and the observed practice of rejection. The approach of Incurvati and Schlöder, by contrast, seems to be a more direct formalization of the actual socio-linguistic practice. While Incurvati and Schlöder aim to have an object language that is *just* a formal representation of actual practice (speech acts and all), Hlobil and Brandom have an object language that formalizes something *about* actual practice.

However, one might think that the added abstraction makes for an important difference. Hlobil and Brandom assign meanings to bare sentences (or *claimables*) but Incurvati and Schlöder seem to assign meanings only to *speech acts*. The inferential role assigned to a sentence by Hlobil and Brandom is given by how the sentence features in two inference relations ('$\succ$' and '$\#$') among further sentences. By contrast, Incurvati and Schlöder assign inferential roles to sentences *signed with* a force-indicator ('$+$' and '$-$'). A sentence *itself* has no inferential role, only signed sentences (i.e. speech acts or attitude expressions) do.

But this apparent difference is also insubstantial. Incurvati and Schlöder claim to assign meanings to sentences proper as well.

> [T]he inferential expressivist lays down, for each linguistic item, the rules specifying the inferences that complete attitude expressions, in virtue of containing the item, can feature in. (Incurvati and Schlöder, 2023, p309)

That is, Incurvati and Schlöder claim that the meaning of a bare sentence is fixed by the inferential role of the attitude expressions that the sentence features in. Hlobil and Brandom claim that the meaning of a bare sentence is fixed by the inferential role the sentence takes on in distinct inference relations. But, as argued above, a single inferential role among sentences signed with $+$ and $-$ is mostly just a notational variation of multiple inferential roles in distinct relations $\succ$ and $\#$. So the meanings that Hlobil and Brandom and Incurvati and Schlöder assign to sentences featuring negation also seem to be the same, variations in notation and abstraction aside.

The remaining difference is that the approach of Incurvati and Schlöder has greater expressive flexibility. As above, Hlobil and Brandom have inference relations corresponding to Incurvati and Schlöder's $+A \vdash +B$ and $+A \vdash -B$. That is, Hlobil and Brandom can explain practices of making assertions to give reasons for assertions and practices of making assertions to give reasons for rejections. But, plausibly, one could also make rejections to give reasons (Schloeder, 2026). Say, when one rejects that *Antigone was Homer's second play* (A) and, when challenged, offers the rejection of *Homer wrote Antigone* (B) as a reason. Without negation, one cannot phrase a simple assertion that presents the converse of B as a reason against A, so there seems to be genuine utility in being able to use rejections as reasons.

This is an iteration of the Price Point: One can assert *Sophocles wrote Antigone*, but since this does not (by itself) exclude that *Antigone* had Homer as a co-author, it need not entail the rejection of *Homer wrote Antigone*. One could perhaps say *Sophocles wrote Antigone and*

Antigone had exactly one author, but it is (i) not clear whether 'exactly one' is part of the base language (it is, arguably, logical) and (ii) this is a lot more information than is contained in the rejection of *Homer wrote Antigone*. A speaker who does not know how many authors *Antigone* had or that it was authored by Sophocles may still be in the epistemic position of being able to reject *Homer wrote Antigone*. So presenting rejections as reasons has a discursive utility that is not replicable by assertions alone.

Hlobil and Brandom can only account for rejections as reasons in a roundabout way. In the above example, they could express an *equivalent* reason-giving practice as the sequent $A \succ B$, as this is equivalent to the rejection of B supporting the rejection of A (given some plausible variant of *modus tollens*; see, e.g., Smiley, 1996). Similarly, to formalize the use of rejections to give a reason for assertions, Hlobil and Brandom must help themselves to a multiple-conclusion calculus and say $\succ A, B$. For example, one may offer one's rejection of *Four is even* as a reason for one's assertion that *Four is odd*. In inferential practice this is, arguably, equivalent to a situation where at least one of *Four is even* and *Four is odd* must be accepted. This latter situation can be expressed as the sequent $\succ A, B$.

Nevertheless, differences remain superficial. As noted, Hlobil and Brandom have an additional layer of abstraction between observable socio-linguistic inferential practice and formal meaning. Abstractions abstract away from unimportant differences, so it is to be expected that Hlobil and Brandom are at somewhat greater remove from the observable practice. The difference between offering the rejection of B as a reason to reject A and offering the assertion of A as a reason to accept B (i.e. the difference between $-B \vdash -A$ and $A \succ B$) comes down to an easily recognized equivalence. So we can say that the abstraction of Hlobil and Brandom is equating distinct practices that are inferentially equivalent. However, it is not clear that the difference between $\succ A, B$ and $-A \vdash +A$ is similarly unimportant.

Consider for example the Preface Paradox (Makinson, 1965). Let $C_1, \ldots, C_n$ be all the distinct claims I make in this paper and let E_i be the claim that C_1 is in error, for each i.

Since I am not immune to error, I am not entitled to simultaneously reject all of $E_1, ..., E_n$. Hlobil and Brandom express this as $\succ E_1, ..., E_n$. Compare this to $-E_1, ..., -E_{n-1} \vdash +E_n$, i.e. that rejecting all $E_1, ..., E_{n-1}$ is a reason to accept E_n (or that rejecting all $E_1, ..., E_{n-1}$ commits one to accept E_n). If I carefully check all of $C_1, ..., C_{n-1}$ and thereby become entitled (or committed) to rejecting the corresponding E_i, it does not follow that I have thereby become entitled (or committed) to assert E_n (nor have I become precluded from rejecting E_n, in the alternative terminology of Hlobil and Brandom). Thus, the situation that was adequately described by $\succ E_1, ..., E_n$ is not adequately described by $-E_1, ..., -E_{n-1} \vdash +E_n$. So something gets lost when $-A \vdash +B$ is abstracted as $\succ A, B$.

3 The Frege–Geach Problem

Frege (1919) argued that the meaning of negation cannot be explained in terms of rejection since negation can be used embedded in certain contexts—such as the antecedents of conditionals—where no rejection is expressed. Frege's example (in an abbreviated form) goes as follows.

(1) a. If the accused was not in Berlin, he is innocent.

b. The accused was not in Berlin.

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c. He is innocent.

Frege's point is that in (1a), the embedded *the accused was not in Berlin* cannot express the rejection of *the accused was in Berlin*, since asserting the whole conditional is compatible with *accepting* that the accused was in Berlin. But if one then insists that (1b) is a rejection of *the accused was in Berlin*, it is unclear how the inference to (1c) could be valid. This is the *Frege–Geach Problem*.[3] Geach (1965) extended this argument to a problem for analyzing

[3]Price (1990) claimed that "Frege's argument is powerless" if one regards *not* P as "both a denial with content P and as an assertion with content $\sim P$". This patterns with *hybrid expressivist* approaches explored in meta-ethics (e.g. Bar-On and Chrisman, 2009; Ridge, 2014). Incurvati and Schlöder (2023, p65) argue that hybrid solutions are inadequate to the problem, since they end up treating the expressive component as irrelevant to reasoning; also see Schroeder, 2009.

any term that can embed in conditionals and Schroeder (2008) extended it further to show the problem arises in other kinds of embeddings as well.

Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) claim to solve the Frege–Geach problem in generality (also see Incurvati, forthcoming). They take the problem to be solved if one can assign a meaning to negation that (a) is the same in embedded and non-embedded contexts and (b) explains the validity of inferences like (1) and its variants. As described above, the meaning they assign to negation is given by inference rules that move between assertions of negatives to rejections and between rejections of negatives and assertions. This meaning can be shared by all occurrences of *not* in (1) and the inference itself is explained as as an instance of *modus ponens*. The role of rejection becomes more clear when considering variants like (2).

(2) a. Assert: If the accused was not in Berlin, he is innocent.

b. Reject: The accused was in Berlin.

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c. Assert: He is innocent.

Such inferences are also explained by the meaning that Incurvati and Schlöder assign to negation. Since (2b) entails the assertion of *the accused was not in Berlin*, the inference (2) is explained as the application of one of the negation-rules, followed by *modus ponens*.

Due to the added abstraction of $\succ$ and $\#$ in the logic of Hlobil and Brandom (2025), it may seem as if they do not face any version of the Frege–Geach Problem. They can explain (1) as an instance of *modus ponens*, and treat (2) as a more literal description of the same underlying inferential practice. However, Hlobil and Brandom claim that the conditional is expressive of the positive reason relation ($\succ$) and that negation is expressive of the negative reason relation ($\#$). So the conditional (2a) makes explicit that the rejection (2b) is a reason for the assertion (2c). As noted earlier, Hlobil and Brandom express this as $\Gamma \succ A, B$. Unpacking the inferential meaning of the conditional and negation thus results in the following inference:

$$\text{If } \Gamma \succ A, B \text{ and } \Gamma \# A, \text{ then } \Gamma \succ B.$$

For simplicity we can replace # by the equivalent formulation using $\succ$, as Hlobil and Brandom also do in their formalized discussions. That is:

$$\text{If } \Gamma \succ A, B \text{ and } \Gamma, A \succ \emptyset, \text{ then } \Gamma \succ B.$$

This is an instance of the Cut rule. Thus, if Frege's inference (1) is valid, then the logical vocabulary that features in it is used to make explicit an inferential practice that corresponds to the Cut rule. More formally, to explain the validity of inferences like (1), Hlobil and Brandom need to derive the sequent $\neg A, \neg A \to B \succ B$. Their rule for the conditional is as follows (they add the third premiss to the received conditional left-rule to account for the non-monotonic features of their calculus).

$$\frac{\Gamma \succ \Delta, p \qquad \Gamma, q \succ \Delta \qquad \Gamma, q \succ \Delta, p}{\Gamma, p \to q \succ \Delta}$$

The relevant instance of this rule required to explain (1) is the one where p is $\neg A$, q is B, Γ is $\{\neg A\}$ and Δ is $\{B\}$. That is:

$$\frac{\neg A \succ B, \neg A \qquad \neg A, B \succ B \qquad \neg A, B \succ B, \neg A}{\neg A, \neg A \to B \succ B}$$

All three antecedents are axioms in their logic (see Hlobil and Brandom, 2025, p109), so the sequent $\neg A, \neg A \to B \succ B$ is a theorem. Then, by the left-rule for conjunction and the right-rule for the conditional (whose standard versions Hlobil and Brandom accept), it is also a theorem that $\succ (\neg A \wedge \neg A \to B) \to B)$. But, as explained above, this conditional expresses an inferential practice that corresponds to a version of the Cut rule.

However, Hlobil and Brandom (2025, p83) deny that Cut is valid. So it follows that either (a) they are wrong to deny Cut or (b) the meaning of the conditional $(\neg A \wedge \neg A \to B) \to B)$ is not the making-explicit a prior inferential practice. A referee notes that Hlobil (2018, 2019) has independent reasons to deny that there should be a correspondence between the derivable sequents in a calculus and its admissible rules. But Hlobil denies only one direction of this correspondence, namely that for every admissible rule there must be a corresponding sequent in the object language. In the present context we may take Hlobil's view to be that there are facts *about* inferential practice that cannot be made explicit *in* the object language. This is fair. But the situation here is the other way around. To wit, there are theorems in the object language that are to be interpreted as making explicit something about inferential practice that Hlobil and Brandom claim to be not part of inferential practice.

More generally, the problem is that if a conditional makes explicit a sequent, then a conditional that embeds a conditional makes explicit a meta-sequent. If Cut is invalid, then some embedded conditionals make explicit invalid meta-sequents. So unless it is possible to make explicit something that does not exist, something must give way. This puts pressure on the claim (going back to Brandom, 1994) that the meanings of logical terms are very different from the meanings of other terms. The meanings of other terms are given by material relations of entailment and incompatibility. The meanings of logical terms, by contrast, are given by inference rules that make explicit these material relations.

To appreciate the point, consider how Incurvati and Schlöder avoid a similar problem. They likewise have the embedded conditional $+(\neg A \wedge \neg A \rightarrow B) \rightarrow B)$ as a theorem. Breaking this conditional down to bare speech acts will likewise result in a version of the Cut rule. To wit:

$$\text{If } \Gamma, -A \vdash +B \text{ and } \Gamma \vdash -A, \text{ then } \Gamma \vdash +B.$$

However, Incurvati and Schlöder are not committed to the claim that the embedded conditional expresses something that corresponds to a prior inferential practice. Their view is that the logical terms are embeddable terms that get their meanings from inferential relations to non-embeddable attitude expressions. It would be unsurprising to them that such embeddings create gains in expressive power so that a complex conditional expresses something that does not correspond to an implicit practice.

That said, the Cut rule strikes against Incurvati and Schlöder *at least* as much as it does against Hlobil and Brandom (2025). The natural deduction calculus of Incurvati and Schlöder is ill-suited to express substructurality (also see Simonelli, forthcoming). Undeterred, Incurvati and Schlöder (2023, ch. 6) assume some nonmonotonic rules that may require them to reject Cut in the end. So a substructural sequent calculus may be be the better formal tool to describe inferential practice for anyone. The situation calls for a synthesis of the substructural calculus with the direct expressions of attitudes.

4 Towards a synthesis

Hlobil and Brandom (2025), following Brandom (1994), assume that there is a pre-logical inferential practice in place and that the logical constants just are the terms that are used to explicate this practice. Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) undertake fewer commitments about the shape of their inferentialism. Their *semantic thesis* is as follows.

> The semantic value of a term is given by the inferential relations that an attitude expression towards a sentence containing the term bears to other attitude expressions in virtue of the fact that the sentence contains the term. (Incurvati and Schlöder, 2023, p71)

This is compatible with both Brandomian and Dummettian inferentialism (see Dummett, 1991 for the latter). For Dummett, the meaning of a term is given by some particular inference rules that are central to the inferential use of this term. For instance, the appropriate rules for the conditional are (supposedly) *modus ponens* and conditional proof—and this is so prior to any inferential practice. A thoroughgoing Dummettian would apply the same strategy to all terms in the language. That is, for Dummettians the inference rules are first and the inferential relations among sentences are derivative. For Brandomians, by contrast, the inferential relations among sentences are first and the inference *rules* are derivative of the totality of these relations.

Incurvati and Schlöder are careful not to commit to either Brandomian or Dummettian inferentialism; although when they respond to a challenge against inferentialism by Williamson (2008), they seem to lean Brandomian (Incurvati and Schlöder, 2023, pp. 55–61). As said, however, Incurvati and Schlöder do not accept the logical expressivism of Brandom (1994). They do not make a distinction between logical and other vocabulary and assign meanings to all the terms of the language in the same way. Therefore, when read as Brandomian, the 'inference rules' they stipulate as conferring meaning onto the logical constants should be read as sequents, i.e. as material relations among attitude expressions.

As noted above, there are technical reasons that should make the sequent calculus attractive to Incurvati and Schlöder. But there also are compelling conceptual reasons to reject Dummettian inferentialism, identified in the literature on neo-Fregean foundations of arithmetic (see Hale and Wright, 2001, Heck, 2002 and in particular the response to Rumfitt in Hale and Wright, 2003). The standard inference rules for the quantifiers involve singular terms (i.e. variables or constants in the formal language), so in order to grasp these rules, one must be able to identify the singular terms. But Dummett's criterion for identifying the singular terms appeals to inferences involving quantifiers (see Dummett, 1973; also Schwartzkopff, 2016). Incurvati and Schlöder (2022, p1571) accept the following rules for the universal quantifier.

$$\frac{+A[c/x]}{+\forall x A} \qquad \frac{+\forall x A}{+A[t/x]}$$

Where c is a constant symbol that does not occur in premisses and undischarged assumptions; and where t is any term. In order to apply these rules, speakers must be able to identify the *singular terms*, both the primitive names (i.e. constant symbols) and more complex formations (i.e. arbitrary terms), of their language. In the formulation of Hale (1996, p36), Dummett's criterion for identifying the singular terms includes the following *test* for singular-term-hood.

From any sentence '$A(t)$', it shall be possible to infer 'There is something such that A(it)'.

But note that the test contains a quantifier. Thus, in order to identify the singular terms, one must be able to infer with quantifiers. But to grasp the rules for the quantifiers, one must identify the singular terms. This is a vicious cycle. Brandom (1994), by contrast, gives a criterion for singular-term-hood that is not circular (it would take too much space to elaborate it in detail, but see Schloeder and Shapiro, ms.).[4]

Thus, there are good reasons for Incurvati and Schlöder to commit to Brandomian inferentialism. That is, commit to the view that there is an existing inferential practice in place that can be *observed* in order to determine what people *mean* (i.e. inference rules) from what they *do* (i.e. holistic inferential practice). But as I argued in the previous sections, there are also good reasons to be less abstract than Hlobil and Brandom in the description of these *doings*. In essence, when one interprets their inferentialism as Brandomian, Incurvati and Schlöder have it right that the fundamental *doings* of accepting and rejecting claims should be part of the observed inferential relations. But Hlobil and Brandom have it right that these relations are prior to inference rules and may be substructural.

Thus, as a tentative synthesis of both approaches, I suggest to modify the sequent calculus of Hlobil and Brandom to include the force-indicators of Incurvati and Schlöder. That is, a sequent is of the form $\Gamma \vdash \varphi$ where φ is a signed sentence and Γ is a set of signed sentences, i.e. expressions of the form σA where A is any sentence and σ is one of $+$ and $-$. Simonelli (forthcoming) discusses a similar sequent calculus of signed sentences. He and I share a notation, but our ambitions are quite different. I will note the main differences once I have laid out my calculus.

The interpretation of $\Gamma \vdash \varphi$ is that when one commits to all the attitude expressions in

[4]By force of this argument, I have become fully convinced of Brandomian over Dummettian inferentialism. Schloeder and Shapiro (ms.) therefore recommend that Neo-Fregeans also go Brandomian.

Γ, one is obliged (by the rules of the game of giving and asking for reasons) to commit to the attitude expression φ or retract one of one's commitments to the expressions in Γ.[5] With this in place, the following sequent rule expresses a version of the *coordination principles* of Incurvati and Schlöder where double strokes indicate that inference is valid top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top. Following Smiley (1996) and Simonelli (forthcoming), I write φ^* for the bilateral dual of φ (i.e. $\varphi^* = +A$ if $\varphi = -A$ and $\varphi^* = -A$ if $\varphi = +A$).

$$\text{Coord}\ \frac{\Gamma, \varphi \ \vdash}{\Gamma \ \vdash \ \varphi^*}$$

Simonelli (forthcoming) dubs the top-to-bottom direction '(Out)' and the bottom-to-top direction '(In)'. Simonelli also points out that these are weaker than the closest sequent analogue to the natural deduction rules Incurvati and Schlöder dub 'Smileian *reductio*'. Moreover, unlike Hlobil and Brandom but like Simonelli, I use a single-conclusion sequent calculus. Multiple conclusions lose their expressive advantage when one signs the sentences, since Coord allows one to re-conceive any additional conclusion φ as the additional premiss φ^*.[6] I take this to be a further advantage of the synthesis, since there are good reasons for inferentialists to keep conclusions single (Steinberger, 2011).

This coordination principle expresses that assertion and rejections are contraries in the primitive inferential practice (Incurvati and Schlöder, 2023, p67). In particular, it immediately entails that $+A, -A \vdash \emptyset$ given the structural rules of Reflexivity and Contraction. The latter follows from a sequent being defined as a relation of two *sets*. Following Hlobil and Brandom, 2025, p110), Reflexivity is a consequence of the assumption that the primitive inferential practices satisfy the *Containment* principle.

[5]Hlobil and Brandom (2025) follow Restall (2005) in giving bilateral interpretation of the sequent. To wit, that $\Gamma \vdash \Delta$ means that it is out of bounds to assert all of Γ and reject all of Δ. This does not work (and would, anyway, be superfluous) if the members of Γ and Δ are already signed as assertions and rejections.

[6]Arguably, my description of the Preface Paradox (in Section 2) demonstrates an expressive advantage of multiple conclusions, since it suggests that $\vdash +E_1, ..., +E_n$ is something else than $-E_1, ..., -E_{n-1} \vdash +E_n$. However, recall that the problem for Hlobil and Brandom was that they could not distinguish the two. Here, the latter can be expressed as-is, and the former can be captured as $\vdash +(E_1 \vee ... \vee E_n)$.

Recall that the purpose of the synthesis is to let inferential expressivists like Incurvati and Schlöder become Brandomian rather than Dummettian inferentialists (and, conversely, allow Brandomians to be inferential expressivists). That is, to let material relations among sentences be prior to inference rules. Thus, the synthesis should adopt the view of Hlobil and Brandom that the *axioms* of the calculus are just the totality of these material relations (i.e. the observed doings of the linguistic community). Hlobil and Brandom stipulate that these relations include at least all sequents of the form $\Gamma \succ p$ where p is in Γ and Γ contains only atoms. In the synthesis, the principle (or, rather, axiom scheme) of *Containment* will look as follows, where φ is any sentence signed with either $+$ or $-$.

$$\text{Cont}\ \frac{}{\Gamma, \varphi \vdash \varphi}$$

This states that if one is committed to φ then one must concede φ or retract a commitment. This seems unimpeachable. For my purposes, moreover, it would be misguided to require that φ be atomic or that Γ contain only atoms, since (with Incurvati and Schlöder), I now consider the logical terms to be just part of the language. The instances of Cont where $\Gamma = \emptyset$ are then just the structural rule Reflexivity. The following *additional* axioms then specify the meaning of negation in analogy to the meaning-conferring inference rules of Incurvati and Schlöder with the same labels.

$$-\neg\text{I.}\ \frac{}{\Gamma, +A \vdash -\neg A} \qquad +\neg\text{I.}\ \frac{}{\Gamma, -A \vdash +\neg A}$$

$$+\neg\text{E.}\ \frac{}{\Gamma, +\neg A \vdash -A} \qquad -\neg\text{E.}\ \frac{}{\Gamma, -\neg A \vdash +A}$$

As mentioned, this is to keep with the Brandomian interpretation of Incurvati and Schlöder, i.e. reading their natural deduction rules as sequents. Now, this would not be much of a synthesis (or of any other interest) if one could not derive also some *rules* that are in the spirit of Hlobil and Brandom. Their rules for negation were the following.

$$\frac{\Gamma \succ \Delta, A}{\Gamma, \neg A \succ \Delta} \qquad \frac{\Gamma, A \succ \Delta}{\Gamma \succ \Delta, \neg A}$$

Given that $\succ$ is the relation for *reasons for*, we can make explicit that it is a relation among *accepted* claimables, i.e. asserted claims. Moreover, multiple conclusions are superfluous once force-indicators are added. Thus, in the sequent calculus with force-indicators, the *same exact claims about inferential practice* can be described as follows.

$$+\neg\text{L}\,\frac{\Gamma \vdash +A}{\Gamma, +\neg A \vdash} \qquad +\neg\text{R}\,\frac{\Gamma, +A \vdash}{\Gamma \vdash +\neg A}$$

These rules are derivable given some further coordination principles. Specifically, the following version of *Bilateral Excluded Middle*.

$$\text{BEM}\,\frac{\Gamma, \psi \vdash \varphi \qquad \Gamma, \psi^{*} \vdash}{\Gamma \vdash \varphi}$$

This is a bilateral version of the disjunctive syllogism. Versions of BEM in a natural deduction system are discussed by Pedro del Valle-Inclan (2023). He notes that (in natural deduction) they are interderivable with the Smileian *reductio* rules of Rumfitt (2000) and Incurvati and Schlöder (2023). In the present context, they complement the Coord principle laid down above to further approximate full Smileian *reductio*. Using this additional principle, one can then derive $+\neg$L and $+\neg$R. This is for $+\neg$L:

$$\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{}{\Gamma, +A \vdash -\neg A}\,-\neg\text{I.} \qquad \dfrac{\Gamma \vdash +A}{\Gamma, -A \vdash}\,\text{Coord}}{\Gamma \vdash -\neg A}\,\text{BEM}}{\Gamma, +\neg A \vdash}\,\text{Coord}$$

And this is for $+\neg$R:

$$\dfrac{\Gamma, +A \vdash \qquad \dfrac{}{\Gamma, -A \vdash +\neg A}\,+\neg\text{I.}}{\Gamma \vdash +\neg A}\,\text{BEM}$$

Negatively signed versions of these rules are similarly derivable. I take the derivability of these rules to show that also in the synthesis, it is right to say that negation can be used to make explicit primitive relations of incompatibility. But this does not mean that this function of making explicit exhausts the meaning of negation. Something similar works for the conditional. The following are obvious adaptations of the rules of Rumfitt (2000).

$$+\rightarrow\text{E.}\ \frac{}{\Gamma, +A \rightarrow B, +A \ \vdash\ +B}$$

$$+\rightarrow\text{I.}_1\ \frac{}{\Gamma, -A \ \vdash\ +A \rightarrow B} \qquad +\rightarrow\text{I.}_2\ \frac{}{\Gamma, +B \ \vdash\ +A \rightarrow B}$$

This suffices for Frege–Geach, since it immediately follows that $+\neg A \rightarrow B, +\neg A \vdash +B$ is a derivable sequent. Moreover and keeping with the approach to Frege–Geach of Incurvati and Schlöder, that $+\neg A \rightarrow B, -A \vdash +B$ is a derivable sequent then follows from the derived rules for negation and Coord. In keeping with the strategy of Hlobil and Brandom, one can also derive the following rules for the conditional. Following their nomenclature, I label it Deduction/Detachment (DD).

$$\text{DD}\ \frac{\Gamma, +A \ \vdash\ +B}{\overline{\Gamma \ \vdash\ +A \rightarrow B}}$$

The derivation for the top to bottom direction (i.e. Deduction) is as follows and the converse (i.e. Detachment) is an immediate consequence of axiom $+\rightarrow$E. and the SCC rule derived below.

$$\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{\dfrac{\Gamma, +A \ \vdash\ +B}{\Gamma, -B, +A \ \vdash}\,\text{Coord} \qquad \dfrac{}{\Gamma, -B, -A \ \vdash\ +A \rightarrow B}\,+\rightarrow\text{I.}_1}{\Gamma, -B \ \vdash\ +A \rightarrow B}\,\text{BEM}}{\Gamma, -A \rightarrow B, -B \ \vdash}\,\text{Coord} \qquad \dfrac{\dfrac{}{\Gamma, +B \ \vdash\ +A \rightarrow B}\,+\rightarrow\text{I.}_2}{\Gamma, -A \rightarrow B, +B \ \vdash}\,\text{Coord}}{\Gamma, -A \rightarrow B \ \vdash}\,\text{BEM}}{\Gamma \ \vdash\ +A \rightarrow B}\,\text{Coord}$$

In the second application of BEM, 'φ' is instantiated as empty. The derivability of DD means that the conditional can be used to make explicit primitive relations of entailment. The sequent calculus with force indicators can hence be regarded as giving due to both the inferential expressivism of Incurvati and Schlöder and the logical expressivism of Hlobil and Brandom. It includes the inferential expressivist insight that the meaning of negation should be explained *directly* in terms of the connection that negation bears to the primitive practice of rejecting. And it captures the logical expressivist insight that negation and the conditional can be used to make explicit the prior inferential practice of *giving and asking for reasons (for and against).*

However, BEM might look uncomfortably close to the Cut rule. Indeed, the combination of Coord and BEM suffices to derive *shared context Cut* (SCC), a special case of "full" or *mixed context* Cut (MCC).[7]

$$\text{SCC}\,\frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \qquad \Gamma, \varphi \vdash \psi}{\Gamma \vdash \psi} \qquad \text{MCC}\,\frac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi \qquad \Delta, \varphi \vdash \psi}{\Gamma, \Delta \vdash \psi}$$

The derivation of SCC is as follows (and it is easy to see that a mixed-context version of BEM would, given Coord, permit an analogous derivation of MCC).

$$\dfrac{\dfrac{\Gamma \vdash \varphi}{\Gamma, \varphi^* \vdash}\text{Coord} \qquad \Gamma, \varphi \vdash \psi}{\Gamma \vdash \psi}\text{BEM}$$

Now, Hlobil and Brandom reject both SCC and MCC. Their reason for rejecting MCC is that it, combined with Containment, immediately entails problematic instances of Weakening (Hlobil and Brandom, 2025, p111). To see this, note that $+A, +B, +C \vdash +C$ is an instance of Containment. But this and $+A \vdash +C$ immediately entails $+A, +B \vdash +C$ by MCC. But if A is *Tweety is a bird*, B is *Tweety is a penguin* and C is *Tweety can fly*, this is a mistake. This is compelling, so MCC should be rejected.

Hlobil and Brandom (2025, p79) give two reasons to also reject SCC. The first is a class of counterexamples discussed by Simonelli (2022). He claims that one may accept that *If Tweety is a Bird, then Tweety flies* and *If Tweety is a bird and Tweety flies, then she's not a penguin* without accepting that *If Tweety is a bird, then she's not a penguin.* In sequents, this is $+A \vdash +C$ and $+A, +C \vdash -B$, but not $+A \vdash -B$. But SCC states that the first two sequents entail the third. Their second reason to reject SCC is that, when combined with DD, it also entails problematic instances of Weakening. Their derivation (adapted to the present setting) is as follows.

[7] I thank the editors of this issue for very helpful comments on the relationship of BEM and Cut and in particular for showing me this derivation.

$$\dfrac{\dfrac{+A \vdash +C \qquad \dfrac{\dfrac{}{+A, +C, +B \vdash +C}\,\text{Cont}}{+A, +C \vdash +B \to C}\,\text{DD}}{+A \vdash +B \to C}\,\text{SCC}}{+A, +B \vdash +C}\,\text{DD}$$

So the synthesis brought us to a point where (finally) we must acknowledge a substantial conflict between Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) and Hlobil and Brandom (2025). I argued that Incurvati and Schlöder's strategy of treating the logical constants like any other term means to express their meaning-conferring postulates as axiomatic sequents. To then prove anything about these meanings requires coordination principles that, as just seen, entail a version of Cut that is objectionable to Hlobil and Brandom. This dispute about the status of SCC cannot be explained away as a difference in abstraction or focus. Something has to give.

My earlier discussion of the Frege–Geach Problem already put pressure on Hlobil and Brandom's rejection of SCC. The solution that my synthesis gives rise to is to reject that each conditional is expressive of a prior inferential practice. That is, to go along with Incurvati and Schlöder in treating logical terms like any other vocabulary and, as I have done here, derive rules to show that logical terms (merely) *can* be used to make explicit these primitive relations. However, as just seen, this requires accepting the coordination principles and, thereby, SCC. There seems to be no way around SCC.

So what about the reasons to reject SCC? The counterexample of Simonelli (2022) requires that *in the same context*, one accepts *If Tweety is a bird, then Tweety flies* but not that *If Tweety is a bird, then Tweety is not a penguin.* But in a context in which one accepts the first conditional, one is reasoning about typical birds. Since penguins are not typical birds, one may then also accept the second conditional. Say, if somebody tells me about their bird-watching holiday, I am ready to infer that any given bird flies and that any given bird is not a penguin. Conversely, in a context in which one does not accept the second conditional, one is reasoning about a class that includes atypical birds. But then one may not accept the first conditional, since not all birds fly. Say, if I am exploring the antarctic, I will not infer that any given bird is not a penguin, but I will also not infer that any given bird flies. Simonelli "leave[s] it as an exercise for the reader to specify … a context" in which one conditional is accepted and the other is rejected, since he finds this "not hard". But it may be more difficult than it appears at first glance.

As for the derivation of the problematic instance of Weakening from SCC, note that it is very unlike the derivation from MCC. Before any coordination principle is applied, the derivation from SCC reaches the intermediate conclusion that $+A, +C \vdash +(B \to C)$. This is already dubious. Instantiating the variables as before, this says that if *Tweety is a bird* and *Tweety flies*, then *If Tweety is a penguin, then Tweety flies.* The conditional is supposed to express that *Tweety is a penguin* is a reason to accept *Tweety flies*, but (if anything) it is a reason to reject that *Tweety flies.* This is so regardless of background assumptions. The best one can say is that there is a very special background assumption here, namely the conclusion of the conditional itself. So the conditional $B \to C$ is acceptable only if it is trivial. Indeed, the derivation of the Deduction direction of DD rested on axioms that express trivial introductions of the conditional. Arguably, such introductions are not part of common inferential practice—the folk are often puzzled by trivial conditionals—and hence may be rejected on these grounds.

Therefore, I submit, the problem is not with SCC, but with Hlobil and Brandom attempting to have a conditional that, at the same time, can be trivial *and* be expressive of inferential practice. But trivial introductions are not part of inferential practice and some material inferences (namely, the defeasible ones) do not play nice with them. Thus, one can have *either* triviality *or* defeasibility. If one keeps with defeasibility and rejects the axioms for introducing trivial conditionals, one is left with only the Detachment-direction of DD, i.e. that from $\Gamma \vdash +A \to B$ one may infer that $\Gamma, A \vdash B$. This blocks the problematic derivation from SCC. Arguably, having only Detachment still suffices to say that the conditional can be used to express inferential practice, since it means that someone who asserts a conditional is committed to the corresponding inference.[8]

To conclude this discussion of the coordination principles, my inclusion of BEM makes my calculus very different from the one of Simonelli (forthcoming). His final calculus is aimed at maximizing "substructural freedom". BEM would be in the way of this project, since (as just seen) it adds a lot of "structure," as it were. Simonelli, in the end, even gives up on Coord. His final calculus has *none* of my structural rules.

The most significant difference, however, is how I and Simonelli treat the logical constants. Simonelli has a calculus with minimal "structure" but with many inference rules for the logical constants. I held myself to the opposing ambition of deriving such rules from primitive sequents, so as to bring the logical constants in continuity with all other vocabulary. Naturally, I then require a calculus with more "structure". I find my approach more suited to capture the view of Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) in a sequent setting. Examining their natural deduction calculus reveals that the *only* primitive inference rules with subderivations in their system are the coordination principles. So the sequent analogue to their calculus would have only the coordination principles as transitions form sequent to sequent, and all other rules translated as axiom schemes. I would argue that this system also preserves much of what is appealing about the view of Hlobil and Brandom. Accepting SCC is a significant concession for them, but their rejection of this rule was already on shaky ground after Frege–Geach.

[8]It might also be possible to state axioms for non-trivial introductions of conditionals that let one re-gain some parts of Deduction. I must leave that matter open, but I conjecture that a substructural interpretation of Incurvati and Schlöder's distinction between commitment-preserving and evidence-preserving inferences may be useful here.

5 Further reason-giving practices

A further reason for a synthesis is that it may allow both parties to expand the scope of their explanatory ambitions. Hlobil and Brandom (2025) have a much deeper grasp of lexical entailments, a topic on which Incurvati and Schlöder (2023) have only sketched answers. For their part, Incurvati and Schlöder have much more to say about modals, conditionals, and other vocabulary that one may want analyze in an expressivist fashion. In a recent discussion of different varieties of expressvism, Incurvati (forthcoming) likewise observed that

> Brandom, … Hlobil and other members of the Research on Logical Expressivism group have recently endorsed bilateralist ideas (see Hlobil and Brandom [2025], which had not come out at the time of writing this article). I invite them to go even further and become multilateralists, by embracing, for example, conditional assertions and rejections in addition to their categorical counterparts.

The calculus I present in the previous section may make this invitation easier to accept. Once force-indicators are admitted into the Brandomian sequent calculus, it becomes immediately possible to extend it with further force-indicators to explain further embeddable terms in terms of further inferential practices. Following Incurvati and Schlöder, one may for example explain epistemic and probabilistic vocabulary in terms of primitive practices of giving reasons for *refraining to reject*; or one may explain moral vocabulary in terms of practices of giving reasons for moral *approvings* and *disapprovings*. This possibility, however, points to one further difference between Incurvati and Schlöder and Hlobil and Brandom, also observed by Incurvati (forthcoming).

> One issue that Brandom and Hlobil face is whether they can hold on to the thesis that logical vocabulary is demarcated by its expressive role.

As already noted, Incurvati and Schlöder treat the logical constants just like any other word. They explain *not* as related to the expression of disbelief in the same way that they explain moral *wrong* as related to the expression of disapproval. Their *multilateral methodology* outlines the principles they take to be required for treating any further term in the same fashion (Incurvati and Schlöder, 2023, ch4). Hlobil and Brandom, by contrast, claim that the logical constants are characterized *as logical* in virtue of being the terms that *make explicit* a prior inferential practice. Note that one may still take this function to be *characteristic* of logical terms, even if this function does not exhaust their meaning.

Nevertheless, if Hlobil and Brandom adopt my synthesis and accept Incurvati's invitation to treat, say, epistemic, probabilistic, or moral vocabulary as making explicit some prior inferential practice, they must either re-conceive their characterization of logicality, treat moral or epistemic terms as logical, or give up on logicality altogether. Even if they reject my synthesis or decline Incurvati's invitation, they cannot fully avoid this kind of pressure on logicality. For instance, Tiefensee (2021) gives a broadly Brandomian story about moral vocabulary as making explicit certain *practical* inferences. Arguments like Tiefensee's show that inferential practice is not confined to giving reasons for and reasons against claimables. There are also practices of giving reasons for and against practical matters. So insofar as a term counts as logical if it is used to make explicit *any* reason-giving practice, we may come to the conclusion that moral vocabulary is logical even without attending to my synthesis.

Qualms about logicality should, therefore, not stop Hlobil and Brandom here. To maintain their characterization of logicality, they must exclude other reason-giving practices anyway. If they succeed—if they can say what is specifically *logical* about making explicit the reason-giving practices involving only assertions and rejections of claimables—they can maintain their characterization of logicality also if becoming multilateralists. If this turns out to be impossible, then the fact that there are further reason-giving practices (e.g. practical reason) should trouble them also outside of my synthesis.

In conclusion, then, I put forward my synthesis as an opportunity to have it all. With it, expressivists can combine the broad applicability and flexibility of Incurvati and Schlöder's inferential expressivism with the advantages of Brandom-style inferentialism and the depth of Hlobil and Brandom's logical expressivism.

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