Insincerity*

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Abstract

This paper argues for an account of insincerity in speech according to which an utterance is insincere if and only if it communicates something that does not correspond to the speaker's conscious attitudes. Two main topics are addressed: the relation between insincerity and the saying-meaning distinction, and the mental attitude underlying insincere speech. The account is applied to both assertoric and non-assertoric utterances of declarative sentences, and to utterances of non-declarative sentences. It is shown how the account gives the right results for a range of cases.

Keywords Insincerity, lying, assertion, irony, implicature, questions, orders, self-deception

1   Introduction

This paper defends a conception of insincerity according to which an insincere utterance is one that communicates something that does not correspond to the speaker's conscious attitudes. The paradigmatic case of insincerity in speech is lying. But although all lies are insincere, lying is not the only way of being insincere. One goal of an account of insincerity, then, is to provide an understanding of insincerity that counts lies as insincere, but is broad enough to capture other kinds of insincerity.

According to many philosophers (e.g., Chisholm and Feehan (1977), Kupfer (1982), Adler (1997), Williams (2002), Carson (2006), Sorensen (2007), Fallis (2009),

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Stokke (forthcoming)), you lie only if you make an assertion. Given this, there are two general questions to be addressed by an investigation of the broader phenomenon of insincerity: What makes an assertion insincere? And what makes a non-assertoric utterance insincere? In turn, there are two categories of non-assertoric utterances to be examined: Non-assertoric utterances of declarative sentences and utterances of non-declaratives.

On the view I will defend, insincerity is a property of communicative acts that crucially turns on the speaker's attitudes. This means that I will be addressing two main topics. The first concerns the way in which insincerity relates to the distinction between *what is said* and *what is meant* by an utterance, that is, roughly the distinction between truth-conditional content, or the proposition expressed, and what is conveyed over and above what is said. The second concerns the mental attitude underlying insincerity.

Two points of caution should be made clear from the outset. First, this paper is only concerned with insincerity as a property of linguistic utterances. Other things than linguistic utterances can be insincere. For example, someone's feeling of sadness at an event or state of affairs may be insincere. We also speak of persons, works of art, gestures, facial expressions, and other things, as being candidates for insincerity. While there may be interesting connections between these phenomena and insincerity as a property of utterances, they are not under discussion here.[1]

Second, I will only be concerned with giving an account of insincerity and will not assume that such an account entails an account of sincerity. Some writers think that there are utterances that are not insincere and yet fail to be sincere.[2] It cannot be taken for granted, therefore, that if an utterance is not insincere, it is sincere. However, the converse is obvious and uncontroversial.[3] So, I will merely assume here that if an utterance is sincere, it is not insincere.

The plan for the paper is as follows. Section 2 is concerned with declarative utterances, i.e., both with assertions of declarative sentences and non-assertoric uses of declaratives. I argue that an utterance of a declarative sentence is insincere if and only if it communicates something the speaker does not mentally assent to. Section 3 spells out this proposal in terms of the theory of communication I favor. Section 4 turns to the case of non-declarative utterances. I argue that utterances of non-declaratives, while they do not have truth conditions, nevertheless serve to communicate propositional information about the speaker's attitudes. An utterance of a non-declarative will then be seen to be insincere just in case what is communicated does not correspond to the speaker's conscious attitudes. Finally, Section 5 expands on and defends the proposal by responding to a number of potential objections.

2 Declarative Insincerity

2.1 Searlean Orthodoxy

It is useful to begin by considering what is often thought to be the orthodox account of insincerity in speech, namely the one given by Searle (1969). According to this view, a wide range of speech acts serve to express mental attitudes:

to assert, affirm, or state that p counts as *an expression of belief* (that p). To require, ask, order, entreat, enjoin, pray, or command (that A be done) counts *as an expression of a wish or desire* (that A be done). To promise, vow, threaten, or pledge (that A) counts as *an expression of intention* (to do A). To thank, welcome, or congratulate counts as an *expression of gratitude, pleasure* (at H's arrival), *or pleasure* (at H's good fortune). (1969, 65)

Against this background, Searle subscribed to the general view that a speech act is insincere if and only if the speaker fails to have the mental state expressed by it.[4] Let us call this *Searlean Orthodoxy*.

In this section I discuss the component of Searlean Orthodoxy pertaining to assertion. I return to Searle's account of insincerity for other types of utterances in Section 4.

2.2   Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions

Here is Searle's condition for insincere assertion:

Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions
An assertion that p by a speaker S is insincere if and only if S does not believe that p.

In order to see how this proposal is intended to be understood, a few remarks are in order. I want to first comment briefly on the notion of assertion and second on the condition on the right hand side.

The notion of assertion has been understood differently by different philosophers. For the most part, these debates will not matter for our discussion. However, we need to make explicit a few assumptions that will be important in what follows. The first is the distinction between what Searle called the *proposition expressed* by a particular utterance and the act of asserting that proposition. For Searle,

Stating and asserting are acts, but propositions are not acts. A proposition is what is asserted in the act of asserting, what is stated in the act of stating. (1969, 29).

Consider Searle's example of (1).

(1)   Sam smokes habitually.

We can think of the proposition expressed by (1) as roughly the truth conditions of (1).[5] We also sometimes refer to this as *what is said* by the sentence. In accordance with Searle's view, the act of asserting (1) is the act of asserting the proposition expressed by (1), i.e., asserting that Sam smokes habitually.

Further, Searle also thought that a range of utterances other than declaratives express propositions. For example, he thought that a question like (2) expresses the proposition that Sam smokes habitually, although it does not assert it.

(2)   Does Sam smoke habitually?

The reason was that Searle maintained that "Whenever two illocutionary acts contain the same reference and predication, provided that the meaning of the referring expression is the same, I shall say the same proposition is expressed." (1969, 29)

This claim that non-declarative sentences, like questions, express propositions is more controversial, and we need not assume it here. (I shall return to it in Section 4 when discussing non-declaratives.) So we will just take on board the plausible suggestion that declarative sentences express propositions that can be asserted by speakers.

The second point to note regarding Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions is the condition on its right hand side. The condition identifies a propositional attitude, and the principle then states that an assertion is insincere if and only if the speaker does not have that attitude toward the proposition asserted. I take this basic structure to be correct. In particular, although I shall disagree with the suggestion that belief is the relevant attitude for characterizing insincerity, I will agree that the right requirement to impose is that the speaker not have the attitude in question.

In the case of assertion, this means that we are not making the stronger requirement that the speaker have the relevant attitude toward the negation of the proposition asserted. For example, Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions could have been stated such that it defined an assertion as insincere if and only if the speaker believes that the proposition asserted is false. But this can immediately be seen to be too strong. Suppose you have no belief either way about whether Sam smokes habitually. So you do not believe that he smokes habitually, and nor do you believe that he does not. Even so, if you assert (1), you are being insincere. Since nothing here seems to be particular to the case of assertion, I will assume that, in general, insincerity turns on whether the speaker lacks a particular attitude toward a relevant content, rather than on whether the speaker has a particular attitude toward the negation of that content.

2.3 Assertion, Irony, and False Implicature

Versions of Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions have been adopted by many (e.g., Gibbard (1990), Simpson (1992), Green (2007a)). It is easy to appreciate the motivation for the view. It makes the right predictions in a wide range of cases. For example, suppose Mary is invited to dinner by her uncle. She has nothing planned for the evening, but in order to get out of having to spend it with her uncle, she tells him,

(3)   I'm having dinner with a friend that night.

By uttering (3) in the situation we are imagining, Mary asserts something she does not believe. Her assertion is insincere. Indeed, her assertion is a straightforward case of lying. So Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions correctly predicts that standard cases of lying are insincere. In such cases the speaker asserts something she does not believe.

But there are also utterances of declarative sentences that do not assert anything. As an example, consider the classic form of irony. Imagine that Mary ends up having to go to dinner with her uncle. The next day, in a mocking tone of voice, she says to a friend of hers,

(4)   Yeah, that was a really fun dinner!

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I take it to be clear that in cases like this the speaker is not making an assertion. She is not asserting the proposition expressed by the sentence she utters; i.e. in this case that it was a really fun dinner. As it is often put, although the speaker says something, she is not asserting what she says.[6] But nor is the ironic speaker asserting the content that is uncontroversially communicated by her utterance; in this case that the dinner was not fun. One of the main points of speaking ironically is to avoid directly asserting one's opinion.

But even though ironic utterances of declarative sentences fail to make assertions, they are nevertheless capable of being insincere. For example, suppose that Mary in fact *did* enjoy the dinner, but for some reason wants her friend to think that she did not. (Perhaps she wants to be perceived as too sophisticated to enjoy a meal with an older relative.) So, when she utters (4) in an ironic tone of voice, she does so with the intention of deceiving her friend into thinking the opposite of what she herself thinks. In such a case, it is clear that we will want to say that her utterance is insincere. And significantly, her utterance is insincere in a sense in which standard ironic utterances are not.[7]

Searlean Orthodoxy fails to predict this result because it remains silent on non-assertoric uses of declarative sentences. Similarly, as we will see next, Searlean Orthodoxy also remains incomplete with respect to other kinds of declarative utterances that exploit the saying-meaning distinction.

When speaking ironically, speakers assert neither what is said by their utterances, nor what is meant by them. By contrast, the general phenomenon of conversational implicature shows that speakers often assert one thing and mean something else. As an instance of this, one may assert something one believes to be true in order to implicate something one believes to be false. This kind of falsely implicating is a well known way of avoiding an outright lie.[8] But utterances that falsely implicate are nevertheless clearly insincere.

For example, consider the stock example of (5).[9]

(5)   *In a letter of recommendation*: This student is punctual and has excellent
       penmanship.

While in this case what is said (asserted) is that the student is punctual and has excellent penmanship, what is meant (conversationally implicated) is that she is not a good student. But now imagine that the letter writer believes that, while the student is indeed punctual and has excellent penmanship, she is also a very good student. In this case we will want to judge the utterance as insincere. Implicating something one believes to be false is a form of insincerity, although falsely implicating falls short of lying.

Again, Searlean Orthodoxy fails to predict this result. To be sure, it is not entirely clear whether we will want to say that, in cases of false implicature, the assertion *itself* is insincere. Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions may be correct in predicting that asserting something one believes to be true is sufficient for the assertion itself to be sincere, even if one does so in order to implicate something one believes to be false. However, there is a clear sense in which the utterance is insincere in such cases, and this should be explained by a general account of the insincerity conditions for utterances of declarative sentences.

The upshot is, then, that while Searlean Orthodoxy may be correct for assertion, a more complete account will need a broader understanding of insincerity for declarative utterances. But moreover, it is arguable that Searlean Orthodoxy is incorrect even for the limited case of assertion due to the belief-condition it appeals to. This issue is what I turn to next.

2.4 Declaratives and Self-Deception

It has been argued that counterexamples to Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions can be found in cases involving subjects that have false second-order beliefs, that is, false beliefs about what they believe. Typically such subjects are self-deceived.[10] Here is an example that Ridge (2006) gives:

> Bob believes that he believes his mother loves him but actually does not believe that she loves him. In fact, Bob believes his mother hates him. [...] Suppose we ask Bob whether his mother loves him and he says, "Yes, of course she does". [...] So according to Searle's view, Bob's answer is insincere. However, this is simply not correct. Bob's speech-act reflects delusion rather than insincerity. (488-489)

More schematically, this is a case in which a speaker asserts that p, believes that she believes that p, but does not in fact believe that p. Ridge's verdict on the case is that the assertion is not insincere. This I take to be correct. In other words, this is a counterexample to the right to left direction of Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions.

What about the other direction? As Chan and Kahane (2011) have observed, counterexamples arise from the kind of situation described in this example from Peacocke (1998):

> Someone may judge that undergraduate degrees from countries other than her own are of an equal standard to her own, and excellent reasons may be operative in her assertions to that effect. All the same, it may be quite clear, in decisions she makes on hiring, or in making recommendations, that she does not really have this belief at all. (1998, 90)

Now consider Chan and Kahane's case:

> Suppose the professor, a Briton, is asked in a newspaper interview about how the best American universities compare with the best British ones. In order to help oppose proposed cuts in British government higher education funding, she answers, 'British universities are the best in the world,' even though she thinks this is not what an impartial and informed observer would say. (2011, 219)

In this case a speaker asserts that p, believes that she does not believe that p, but in fact does believe that p. Yet, as Chan and Kahane point out, the assertion is insincere. Hence, this is a counterexample to the left to right direction of Searlean Orthodoxy for Assertions.

The conclusion to draw from this is that insincerity should not be characterized in terms of mere first-order belief.

2.5 Higher-Order Beliefs and Mental Assent

If first-order belief is not the right attitude to focus on, then what is? One suggestion is that what the cases we have looked at show is that, as we might put it in sloganized form, insincerity tracks the highest belief. That is, when there is a conflict

between the speaker's first-order beliefs and her higher-order beliefs, then whether or not she is being insincere depends on the beliefs of the highest order.

Yet there is a further complication here. The highest belief in this sense need not be a conscious belief. One may have a belief that p but have an unconscious belief about this belief. For example, suppose that Michael consciously believes that there is no god but has a suppressed, and hence unconscious, belief that this belief is sinful and false. Further, imagine that Michael is interviewed for a job in a religious institution. During the interview, Michael asserts that

(6)   There is a god.

Intuitively, this assertion counts as insincere. And yet, what is asserted conforms with the highest belief that Michael has about that content.

So while the cases we looked at earlier showed that when a speaker has unconscious first-order beliefs and conscious higher-order beliefs, whether she speaks insincerely is determined by her conscious higher-order beliefs, this case shows that when a speaker has unconscious higher-order beliefs and conscious first-order beliefs, whether she speaks insincerely is determined by the conscious first-order beliefs.

In light of this, it might be suggested that insincerity tracks the highest, conscious belief. This would handle the cases we have examined above. In fact, however, this suggestion can be seen to be inadequate. Counterexamples arise from considering the notion of what is often called *assent*.

Following Shoemaker (1996), we can distinguish between *linguistic* and *mental* assent. In the former sense, one assents to a proposition "if one asserts it or answers affirmatively to a question whether it is true." (1996, 78) According to Shoemaker, linguistic assent is the expression of mental assent. The notion of mental assent is the relevant one here, and in what follows I will mean 'mental assent' by 'assent'.[11] Mental assent, in this sense, is always conscious and is commonly the result of having consciously considered a thought or issue.

Nevertheless, as Chan and Kahane point out, assent and second-order belief may come apart. They cite the following example that Shoemaker gives:

> [S]uppose that a psychiatrist tells me that I have the repressed belief that I was adopted as an infant. In fact, the psychiatrist has confused me with another patient (he has been reading the wrong case history), and has no good grounds for this belief attribution. But I accept it on his authority. It seems compatible with this that when I consider the proposition I am supposed to believe, that I was adopted, I find no evidence in its support, and am disposed to deny it. (Shoemaker 1996, 89-90)

What the patient assents to (that she was not adopted) here diverges from what she consciously believes she believes (that she was adopted.) Now suppose the patient is asked about her parentage and in reply asserts,

(7)   I was adopted.

In this case the speaker asserts what she does not assent to, although she consciously believes she believes it. Intuitively, the assertion is insincere. So, insincerity is not always determined by the highest conscious beliefs.

The more plausible, general condition on insincere assertion, then, involves assent rather than conscious higher-order belief. I think this is the right idea. Next, I turn to a potential argument against it.

2.6   The Case of Huckleberry Finn

Although Chan and Kahane note that an account of insincerity in terms of assent makes the right prediction in cases like the one involving the psychiatric patient's utterance of (7), they argue that ultimately insincerity should not be analyzed in terms of assent. Their argument turns on the case of Huckleberry Finn who, although superficially endorsing the racist morals of his time, finds himself aiding a run-away slave in his attempt to escape pursuers.[12] Chan and Kahane describe a complex twist on the story:

> Huck knows that search parties are on their trail. Whenever Huck is troubled by the fact that he is doing something (he takes to be) wrong, he tells himself that the following day he will deliberately lead Jim into the pursuers' likely path. But each time he either forgets about the plan, or delays it under some flimsy pretext, while continuing on the path to safety. One night Huck tells himself that there is still time to carry out his scheme, but in fact (though he wouldn't admit it) he possesses enough information to know that they have left the pursuers behind. When Jim anxiously asks, 'Do you think we have shaken off the search parties?' Huck answers, 'Yes, we have indeed shaken them off,' taking himself to be lying in order to keep Jim at his side until he turns him in. Jim feels reassured, and Huck finds himself strangely satisfied and relieved. (2011, 225–226)

Chan and Kahane conclude that

> Huck assents to the proposition 'We have [not] shaken off the search parties' yet asserts its negation. Nevertheless, his assertion seems to us clearly sincere. (2011, 226)

According to Chan and Kahane, then, the case of Huckleberry Finn shows that sincerely asserting is compatible with not assenting to what is asserted.

I think this conclusion should be rejected. There are two reasons for this. The first is that Huck's assertion is made with the intention of deceiving Jim into thinking something he himself does not, i.e., that they have escaped. This is evident from Chan and Kahane's description of the case. The second is that Huck is arguably lying. Although Chan and Kahane do not explicitly present this judgement, it is nevertheless strongly suggested by the example. In particular, Chan and Kahane are explicit that Huck is "taking himself to be lying", and that he would not admit that he has enough evidence to realize that what he says is in fact true.[13]

These features of Huck's assertion should be sufficient to judge it as insincere. In particular, if Chan and Kahane are right, neither lying nor intending to deceive is sufficient for insincerity. Both of these consequences are counterintuitive.[14] Hence, I think the right thing to say about the case of Huck is that his utterance is insincere.

So since there are compelling reasons to reject Chan and Kahane's argument, we may continue to assume that the right account of insincere assertion should be couched in terms of mental assent. The challenge now is to spell out such an account in more detail.

3 Insincerity and Communication

In this section I present my preferred account of insincerity for declarative utterances. We will see that it handles all the cases we have looked at so far. The next section will then turn to non-declarative utterances.

3.1 A Communicative Account

We have seen that insincerity may attach to both what is said (as with lying) and what is meant (as with irony and false implicature.) Further, we have seen that insincerity depends on what the speaker mentally assents to (rather than believes, or believes she believes.) Given these observations, it is natural to suggest that insincerity, in the declarative realm, is a matter of communicating something one does not mentally assent to.[15] We can state this idea precisely as follows:

> **The Communicative Account of Declarative Insincerity**
> If u is an utterance of a declarative sentence by a speaker S to a hearer H, then u is insincere iff there is a proposition p such that:
>
> (C1) by making u, S communicates that p to H, and
>
> (C2) S does not mentally assent to p.

This proposal can handle the cases we have examined. Asserting something one does not mentally assent to – as in typical cases of lying – is a form of insincerity on this account. So is speaking ironically with the intent to deceive, because what the speaker communicates in such cases is something she does not assent to. The same is so for the case of asserting something true in order to implicate something false. For while the speaker here communicates something she assents to (namely what is said), she also communicates something she does not assent to (what she means, or implicates.)

I take the Communicative Account of Declarative Insincerity to be the correct general picture. In order to ratify this suggestion I will flesh it out in what follows in terms of a well tried picture of communication. It should be emphasized up front, however, that this is by no means a *necessary* component of the view. Although the framework for theorizing about communication I shall adopt is what I think is the right view, the suggestion that insincerity is a kind of deviant communication, in the sense to be argued for in what follows, can be implemented in terms of other theories of communication.[16]

3.2 Declaratives and Common Ground

The general view of communication I want to adopt is the one familiar from the work of Stalnaker (1978), (1998), (2002). According to this view, a conversation takes place against a background of shared information, called the *common ground*. The common ground is a collection of propositions, intuitively, the propositions mutually taken for granted, or presupposed, by the participants. In turn, communication, on this picture, is a matter of adding information to the common ground.

According to this theory of communication, to assert that p is to say that p – in the strict sense of uttering a declarative sentence that expresses p – and thereby propose to make p common ground. An utterance of (1) performed as a proposal to add to the common ground the information that Sam smokes habitually counts as an assertion of that proposition.

(1) Sam smokes habitually.

I have argued elsewhere that this conception of assertion can offer a satisfactory account of lying.[17] If this is right, then given the account of insincerity I offer below, lying will count as a special case of insincerity. I will therefore focus exclusively on the broader category of insincerity in what follows.

Given the common ground view of communication, the Communicative Account of Declarative Insincerity can be restated as follows:

> **The Common Ground Account of Declarative Insincerity**
> If u is an utterance of a declarative sentence by a speaker S to a hearer H, then u is insincere iff there is a proposition p such that:
>
> (D1) by making u, S proposes to make it common ground that p, and
>
> (D2) S does not mentally assent to p.

The crucial thing to note is that we are not requiring that the speaker say that p. This means that we are not requiring that the speaker assert that p. Asserting is not the only way of proposing propositions for the common ground. Hence, assertion is not the only kind of utterance that can be insincere. In turn, therefore, while all lies are insincere, lying is not the only way of being insincere.

Both speaking ironically and conversationally implicating are ways of proposing propositions for the common ground. When Mary says ironically that the dinner was fun, she thereby proposes to make it common ground that the dinner was not fun. Hence, in the case where she intends to deceive and does not mentally assent to this proposition, she counts as being insincere on our account. Similarly, when a speaker asserts one thing in order to implicate something else, she proposes to make common ground both what she asserts and what she implicates. Hence, asserting something true in order to implicate something false counts as being insincere on our account. So, the Common Ground Account of Declarative Insincerity makes the right predictions for standard assertions, irony, and implicature.

Irony and implicature are cases in which the speaker proposes to make common ground information that diverges from what she 'literally' says. It is instructive to note that the account handles other cases of this kind, too. One such type involves *malapropism*.

As discussed by Reimer (2004) and Sorensen (2011), malapropism gives rise to cases in which speakers arguably say things they do not intend to say. Indeed, in cases of malapropism, speakers may say things they do not mentally assent to, in our sense, and still intuitively not be insincere. For example, suppose that Dave, who is mistaken about the conventional meaning of *suppository*, utters,

(8)   The library is a suppository of wisdom.

Following Reimer (2004), I assume that in this case Dave *says* that the library is a suppository of wisdom.[18] Yet, Dave does not mentally assent to this proposition. Hence, it might seem that his utterance will be counted as insincere on our account. But, intuitively, while Dave is misspeaking, he is not being insincere.

However, the proponent of the Common Ground Account of Declarative Insincerity is not committed to this verdict on the case. In fact, there is a natural way of avoiding it. It is intuitively compelling to describe Dave's utterance as a case in which what the speaker said was not what she proposed to make common ground. The information that Dave hopes will become common ground as a result of his utterance is not that the library is a suppository of wisdom, but, presumably, that the library is a repository of wisdom. So, while the former proposition is what he said, it is not the one that is relevant for evaluating whether he is being insincere.[19] And since the proposition he proposes for the common ground in this case is one that he mentally assents to (we may assume), he does not count as being insincere.[20]

4 Non-Declarative Insincerity

As we have seen, philosophers at least since Searle (1969) have recognized that utterances of declarative sentences are not the only kinds that can be insincere.[21] In this section I will show how the common ground framework can account for non-declarative insincerity. I present the account by looking at a narrow class of non-declarative utterances, namely questions and orders, and I will assume that it is relatively clear how the proposal will generalize. As before, I will begin by looking at Searlean Orthodoxy.

4.1 Searlean Orthodoxy for Non-Declaratives

We saw that according to Searle's view, a variety of non-declarative utterance types serve to express mental attitudes that figure directly in their insincerity conditions. On this view, a question expresses the attitude of wanting to know the answer, an order that of wanting the order to be carried out. Utterances of questions and orders are therefore insincere, according to Searlean Orthodoxy, when the speaker fails to have these attitudes:[22]

Searlean Orthodoxy for Questions
A question whether p uttered by a speaker S is insincere if and only if S does not want to know whether p.

Searlean Orthodoxy for Orders
An order to ϕ uttered by a speaker S to a hearer H is insincere if and only if S does not want H to ϕ.

It is important to be explicit that Searlean Orthodoxy only applies to a narrow sample of these speech acts. First, Searle (1969, 66) notes that "There are two kinds of questions: (a) real questions, (b) exam questions. In real questions S wants to know (find out) the answer; in exam questions, S wants to know if H knows."[23] Searlean

Orthodoxy for questions is only directed at real questions, and accordingly I focus on this standard type of question in what follows. Second, for Searle, orders are a subcategory of the broader category of requests. I believe that the view of insincerity for orders I propose below applies to the broader category of requests. But for clarity and brevity, I concentrate on the special case of orders.

Since Searle took assertions to be expressions of beliefs, his account of non-declaratives is parallel to the account of insincerity for assertions we examined in Section 2. It should therefore not be surprising that problems arise for Searle's view of the insincerity conditions of non-declaratives mirroring those we considered for his account of assertions.

I will argue below that cases involving self-deception present counterexamples to Searlean Orthodoxy for questions and orders. For both types of non-declarative utterances, it is neither necessary nor sufficient for insincerity that the speaker fails to have the attitude she expresses. Rather, an utterance of a non-declarative is insincere if and only if the speaker fails to *consciously* have the attitude expressed, regardless of any unconscious configuration that may be in play.

4.2 Questions, Orders, and Self-Deception

Consider the following example:

> Julie is a student in a literary history class. While her professor regularly emphasizes the importance of biographical information for the appreciation of a writer's authorship, Julie is steeped in modernist criticism and takes herself to be a firm believer in the doctrine that biographical information is irrelevant. Julie nevertheless wants to make a good impression on her professor, and so during a class on Proust, she poses as keenly interested in the professor's biographical explanations, and asks her, 'Did Proust feel inferior to his brother?' Yet, at the same time, although she does not realize it, Julie is unconsciously fascinated by the lurid details of Proust's biography.

In this example the speaker consciously does not have the attitude expressed, i.e., that of wanting to know whether Proust felt inferior to his brother. Yet, she unconsciously does have that attitude. Nevertheless, her utterance is clearly insincere.

Hence, this case is a counterexample to the left to right direction of Searlean Orthodoxy for Questions. I take it to be clear that there are cases that are equally damaging to the other direction. (E.g., imagine that Julie is consciously as interested as the professor in Proust's biography but deep down feels guilty about this.)

Here is a similar example involving an order:

> James is trying to impress Donna by feigning a devil-may-care disposition. Their friend, Bobby, is standing on a window ledge high above the street having second thoughts on whether he can make the jump and land safely on the ledge of the opposite building. James knows that Bobby will do anything he tells him. So he shouts, 'Jump!', wanting to display to Donna both his power over Bobby as well as his supposed

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reclessness. As a matter of fact James is as faint-hearted as most people and consciously hopes that Bobby will call off the dangerous feat. However, unconsciously, without realizing it, James harbors the desire that Bobby *will* jump because of a repressed wish to see him plummet to his demise.

As in the previous example, the speaker consciously lacks the attitude expressed, i.e., that of wanting Bobby to jump. Yet he unconsciously does have that attitude. But since the utterance is clearly insincere, this case falsifies the left to right direction of Searlean Orthodoxy for Orders. Again, similar examples will be counterexamples to the other direction.

Just as for assertions, then, Searlean Orthodoxy fails to take into account that non-declarative insincerity turns on whether the speaker *consciously* has the attitude she expresses, and not on whether she has that attitude *tout court*. As for declaratives, then, this motivates a view that sees non-declarative insincerity as a communicative phenomenon. Below I detail such an account in terms of the common ground framework.

4.3 Non-Declaratives and Common Ground

I claim that one function of a non-declarative utterance is to add propositional information to the common ground. The information contributed ascribes to the speaker the attitude that Searle identified as expressed by the type of non-declarative utterance in question. This information is not said by the speaker. Rather, the information is communicated by the utterance in some other way.

For example, when Julie asks her question in class, she makes it common ground that she wants to know whether Proust felt inferior to his brother. But Julie's question does not *say* (let alone assert) that she wants to know whether Proust felt inferior to his brother. Instead, this information is communicated by her utterance in some other way. If this is right, we will have a straightforward way of analyzing the insincerity conditions of non-declaratives while at the same time explaining why they are not candidates for lying.

I take the proposal that questions and orders communicate information about the speaker's attitudes to be a relatively natural observation about these types of utterances. But there are also more rigorous kinds of evidence for it. I present one kind here, and will present a few more in Section 5.

Familiarly, one chief function of common ground information is to support presuppositions. That is, a presuppositional utterance is felicitous only if its presuppositions are established as common ground (or are accommodated.) Hence, we may test whether a piece of information is made common ground by a particular utterance by asking whether the information can subsequently be felicitously presupposed. To do so, I will use the so-called 'Hey, wait a minute' test formulated by von Fintel (2004).

First, suppose that the professor does not hear Julie's question. Then consider the following dialogue between her classmates, Paul and Emma, each of whom

clearly heard the question and knows that the other one heard it, knows that the other one knows this, etc.:

(9)   Paul: Professor Johnson doesn't realize that Julie wants to know whether Proust felt inferior to his brother.
       Emma: #Hey, wait a minute, I had no idea that Julie wants to know whether Proust felt inferior to his brother.

Paul's utterance presupposes that Julie wants to know whether Proust felt inferior to his brother.[24] The utterance is perfectly felicitous. So this is evidence that this information is established in the common ground by Julie's question. Correspondingly, it is infelicitous to challenge this information, as Emma's utterance tries to do. Again, this supports the claim that the information that Julie wants to know the answer to her question is common ground subsequent to her asking it.

Second, suppose that Bobby does not hear James's order. Then consider the following dialogue between Donna and another bystander, Shelly, each of whom clearly heard the order and knows that the other one heard it, knows that the other one knows this, etc.:

(10)   Donna: Bobby doesn't realize that James wants him to jump.
       Shelly: #Hey, wait a minute, I had no idea that James wanted Bobby to jump.

Again, since Donna's utterance felicitously presupposes that James wants Bobby to jump, this information can be seen to be common ground. Correspondingly, it is infelicitous to question this information, as in Shelly's utterance.

4.4   An Account of Non-Declarative Insincerity

We have seen that there are good reasons to think that non-declarative utterances produce changes in the common ground. In light of this observation, it might seem natural to propose that the account of declarative insincerity in terms of mental assent can simply be transposed to non-declarative utterances as well. This, however, should strike us as unpromising.

Mental assent, as we saw, is typically the result of conscious deliberation. What you mentally assent to are things you judge after having considered the issue before you. As Shoemaker describes the usual case, "A thought occurs to me, and I either assent to its content or not." (1996, 78) But while this kind of attitude toward a proposition is precisely what underlies assertion – when assertion is not insincere – it it is implausible to suggest that asking a question or issuing an order avoids being insincere only if the speaker has reflected on whether she wants to know the answer or wants the order to be carried out. This suggestion is arguably in danger of overintellectualization in that it requires that in order to utter a non-declarative without being insincere, the speaker must have the conceptual means to ascribe complicated desires to herself (e.g., desires about acquiring knowledge.)

Although we want to say that an utterance of a non-declarative is insincere when the speaker does not consciously have the attitude it communicates, we do not want to say, I think, that the speaker is required to mentally assent to having this attitude for her utterance not to be insincere.

Instead, I propose to simply formulate the condition for non-declarative insincerity in terms of the speaker's conscious attitudes as follows:

The Common Ground Account of Non-Declarative Insincerity
If u is an utterance of a non-declarative sentence by a speaker S to a hearer H, and p is a proposition that ascribes to S the attitude given by the Searlian sincerity condition for the type that u belongs to, then u is insincere iff:

(N1) by uttering u, S proposes to make it common ground that p, and

(N2) S does not consciously have the attitude ascribed to S by p.

This proposal makes the right predictions in our cases. First, Julie's question counts as insincere because by asking it she proposes to make it common ground that she wants to know the answer while she consciously does not. Second, by issuing the order for Bobby to jump, James proposes to make it common ground that he wants Bobby to jump; but since he consciously does not want this to happen, his utterance is insincere. In both of these cases, it is irrelevant that the speaker unconsciously does have the attitude in question.

Insincerity for non-declaratives can thus be accounted for along the same lines as insincerity for declaratives. In both cases, insincerity is a matter of communicating something that does not correspond to one's conscious attitudes. In the declarative case this means communicating a proposition one does not mentally assent to. In the non-declarative case this means communicating that one has an attitude one consciously lacks. Further, we have seen that these claims can be unified and made precise by the general picture according to which communication is a matter of adding information to the common ground.

5   Objections and Replies

In this section I clarify and defend the proposal I have made by responding to a number of potential objections to it. Some of the issues apply only to the account of non-declarative insincerity, some apply to the account of declarative insincerity as well.

5.1   Non-Declaratives do not Express Propositions

The first objection to be considered springs from the observation that utterances of non-declaratives do not express propositions. One standard motivation for this claim is that such utterances are not capable of being true or false. I take this point to be obviously right. But it is easy to see that it does not threaten the account of non-declarative insincerity from above.

To bring out the intuitive sense that utterances of orders and questions are not candidates for truth and falsity, consider the infelicity of the responses in (11)–(12).

(11)   a. Did Proust feel inferior to his brother?
　　　 b. #That's false.

(12)   a. Jump!
        b. #That's true.

This is evidence that these utterances do not have truth conditions. If questions and orders had truth conditions, it should be felicitous, indeed commonplace, to respond to such utterances with an evaluation of their truth-value, as we routinely do with assertions of declaratives.[25]

So it might be concluded that since non-declaratives do not express propositions, utterances of them cannot be proposals to add propositional information to the common ground. This conclusion, however, is too hasty. Assertion, as I have stressed, is not the only way of adding information to the common ground. Certain utterances bring about a change in common ground information that is not only due to what is said. This is clear already from the familiar cases of conversational implicature.

In the case of conversational implicature, to be sure, there is a proposition literally expressed by the utterance, and this proposition is proposed for the common ground along with the implicature. Yet, what is said is not always proposed for common ground uptake. For instance, when being ironic, the speaker is not asserting what she says, and hence what is proposed for the common ground is only the inferred, ironic, information.

But although, even in cases of irony, there is a proposition literally said, there is no principled reason to reject the idea that one can propose to add information to the common ground without making a declarative utterance at all. Utterances of questions, orders, and other non-declaratives do just that.

We have already considered one kind of evidence for this claim, namely that, in run-of-the-mill cases, the information in question can be felicitously presupposed by the participants following utterances of these kinds. The suggestion can be further supported in the following way.

In normal situations, one cannot felicitously assert a declarative, and then subsequently assert its negation, as illustrated by (13).

(13)   It's raining. #It's not raining.

This is readily explained as the infelicity of adding a proposition to the common ground and subsequently proposing to add its negation. Orders and questions exhibit the analogous pattern:

(14)   a. Did Proust feel inferior to his brother? #I don't want to know whether
            Proust felt inferior to his brother.
        b. Jump! #I don't want you to jump.

Our suggestion explains this pattern. In each case uttering the first sentence adds a proposition to the common ground the negation of which is then asserted by the second sentence. Hence, the infelicity of the utterances in (14a–b) is parallel to that of (13).[26]

Yet, to repeat, I am not claiming that orders and questions express propositions. That is, I do not claim that these utterances have truth conditions. Rather, what I am claiming is that such utterances communicate information about the speaker's

attitudes in some other way. The fact that this information is communicated is evidenced by (14).

5.2   Questions Under Discussion and To-Do Lists

The next potential type of objection to consider concerns some state-of-the-art theories of questions and orders. Philosophers and linguists have proposed sophisticated analyses of both questions and orders. Some of these theories may appear to directly oppose the claim that questions and orders serve to update the common ground of the conversation. I will briefly comment on two of these. In each case we will see that the analysis is not incompatible with the account offered here.

The first theory I want to comment on is the theory of discourse structure developed by Roberts (1998), (2004). According to this view, the information structure of a conversation or discourse involves, in addition to the common ground, an evolving set of *Questions Under Discussion* (QUDs). The QUD is the topic of the conversation, in the sense that answering the QUD is the immediate goal of the conversational participants. When a question is uttered, and accepted by the participants, it is added to the set of QUDs.

Within this theory, a question is not analyzed as updating the common ground of the conversation, but rather as updating the set of QUDs. Correspondingly, following the seminal account in Hamblin (1973), Roberts argues for a semantic view of questions on which they denote sets of alternatives. Hence, a question does not express a proposition, but rather imposes a structure on the set of QUDs.

So, on this analysis, questions are seen as targeting a discourse component different from the common ground. But even so, the claim I have made – that asking a question involves a proposal to update the common ground with the information that one wants to know the answer – is not incompatible with this theory. Indeed, Roberts allows that accepting a question may influence the common ground. In particular, she plausibly suggests that

> When interlocutors accept a question, they form an intention to answer it, which intention is entered into the common ground. (1998, 4)

My suggestion, which I take to be equally plausible, is that when a speaker asks a question, her desire to know the answer is entered into the common ground. That claim is not incompatible with seeing questions as updating the set of QUDs.

The second theory I want to comment on is the analysis of imperatives of Ninan (2005) and Portner (2007). They argue that utterances of imperative sentences do not propose to update the common ground of a conversation but rather serve to impose obligations. In the framework of Portner (2007), this is modeled by another aspect of discourse contexts called *to-do lists*. On this view, the function of an order for the hearer to jump is not to add information to the common ground but to place the act of jumping on the to-do list of the hearer.

As before, this theory is not incompatible with my proposal. One can accept that the right analysis of the semantics of imperatives is one that sees them as adding non-propositional information to a special discourse component distinct from the

common ground and still maintain that imperative utterances, in addition, increment the common ground with a particular piece of propositional information.

It might be that the right analysis of the semantics of imperatives will turn out to be one that takes imposing obligations to be what they semantically contribute; and this might then in turn be analyzed in terms of non-propositional to-do lists. Indeed, it seems undeniable that orders do impose obligations, in some way or other. But I think it is equally evident that orders also communicate information about the desires of the speaker.

For both questions and orders, then, it is entirely consistent with what I have argued that they interact with different kinds of discourse information than the common ground. What I have suggested is that a well motivated and plausible account of their insincerity conditions can be given by noting that they also contribute to the latter kind of information.[27]

5.3   The Common Ground and Proposing to Add to It

Finally, I want to look at some issues concerning common ground information and the notion of proposing to add to it.

First, consider the following utterances made by Laurence Olivier on stage during a performance of *Hamlet*.

(15)   a. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
         b. Where's your father?
         c. Get thee to a nunnery.

Olivier did not assert that something is rotten in the state of Denmark. Nor did he ask where Ofelia's father is, and nor did he order her to enter a convent. Olivier enacted someone, i.e., Hamlet, engaged in these speech acts. And the utterances are not insincere if their communicated contents fail to correspond to Olivier's conscious attitudes.

At the same time, it is natural to suggest that during the performance of a play a body of information accumulates, which is used, among other things, to support presuppositions triggered by subsequent lines.[28] So if communication is a matter of proposing to add information to the common ground, then why is Olivier not asserting, asking, or ordering when he makes the utterances in (15)? If he is, then his utterances are predicted to be insincere if and only if Olivier does not mentally assent to the proposition asserted, does not consciously want to know the answer to the question, or does not consciously want the order to be carried out. These are clearly wrong results.

However, the common ground picture does not have to accept that Olivier is asserting, asking, or ordering. The kind of information that is built up during the performance of a play, the telling of a story, the screening of a film, etc. is not identifiable with the kind of common ground information that our account of insincerity makes reference to.

We can call the common ground of the play *unofficial* and the common ground that persists outside the play *official*.[29] One straightforward way of appreciating this distinction is to note that, although this rarely happens, actors can drop out of

character and make utterances on their own account. If one looks at how presuppositions behave in this kind of situation, one finds evidence that two distinct bodies of information are being used. This is illustrated in (16).

(16)   The king my father? .... I'm sorry, the spotlight is right in my eyes.

In the first half of (16) the definite description *the king* triggers the presupposition that there is a king. Uttering it is felicitous because the unofficial common ground of the play contains the information that there is a king. In the second half of (16) the definite description *the spotlight* triggers the presupposition that there is a spotlight. Uttering it is felicitous because it is clear that Olivier has dropped out of character and is now relying on the official common ground, outside the play, which either already contains the information that there is a spotlight shining on the stage, or can easily be adjusted so as to accommodate this presupposition.[30] So we have good, independent reasons to accept the distinction between official and unofficial common ground.

The notion of common ground appealed to in the account of insincerity argued for in this paper is the notion of official common ground. Insincerity is a matter of proposing to add information not corresponding to one's conscious attitudes to the official common ground. And while there are different ways one can use the notion of unofficial common ground to analyze utterances of lines in stage performances and the like, it should be clear that, whatever the details, we are in a position to explain why such utterances are not insincere if they fail to correspond to the performer's conscious attitudes.

To further clarify this distinction, it is important to note that, even though official common ground information is to be distinguished from unofficial information taken for granted for a particular purpose, this does not mean that the official common ground contains only information that the participants believe, let alone know, to be true. Following Stalnaker (2002), common ground information in general is defined in terms of *acceptance*, which is a non-factive propositional attitude weaker than belief and akin to, but not identifiable with, assumption and supposition. Hence, proposing that p become common ground is not necessarily to propose that p be believed by the participants. Consequently, even so-called 'bald-faced' lies, i.e. lies told without an intention to deceive, count as proposals to add what is said to the common ground.[31]

Second, however, even if this distinction is accepted, it may still seem that the account suffers from another problem arising from the very suggestion that utterances count as *proposals* for adding information to the common ground. This worry is particularly salient in the case of non-declaratives. Saying that by uttering a non-declarative, a speaker proposes to add to the common ground a piece of information about her attitudes may seem implausible.

The everyday notion of proposing has an intentional connotation and can be used to describe a deliberately planned action (as when someone says, 'I propose to run for mayor next year.') Yet it is implausible to suggest that someone who asks a question is necessarily engaged in a deliberate plan to inform her interlocutors of her desire to know the answer, or that someone issuing an order is performing this

kind of informative act. Asking a question is just eliciting information. Ordering is just requesting action.

As I suggested above, however, we can accept that non-declaratives have other functions than communicating information about the speaker. But we have found evidence for the claim that the latter is among their functions. And it is this function that is described by the claim that they propose information for the common ground.

Accordingly, the verb *propose* is used in the account of insincerity in a technical sense. In particular, it is used to refer to the kind of action that speakers undeniably perform and which routinely results in information becoming common ground. The primary declarative action of this kind is that of asserting. Implicating is another one. In the non-declarative realm, I have suggested, contents are likewise proposed for the common ground. When you ask a question, you communicate that you want to know the answer. That is, you propose to make that proposition common ground. Just as when you assert something, you communicate what you assert. That is, you propose to make that proposition common ground.

Finally, an important feature of proposing in this sense is that it is not guaranteed to succeed. Even if an utterance is rejected by the participants it may nevertheless still be evaluated for insincerity depending on whether it was made as a proposal to update the common ground. For example, consider these dialogues:

(17)   Mary (in an ironic tone of voice): Yeah, that was a really fun dinner!
       Anna: What do you mean?! I know you enjoyed it very much.

(18)   Julie: Did Proust feel inferior to his brother?
       Paul: Oh, come on! I know you couldn't care less whether he did or not.

(19)   James to Bobby: Jump!
       Donna: What are you doing?! I know you don't want him to jump. You're just trying to play hardball!

Even though, in these cases, the information proposed does not in fact become common ground, it is nevertheless clear that the utterances are insincere in the settings we described earlier.[32] Similarly, an assertion is an assertion even if what is said, and thereby proposed for the common ground, is not entered in the common ground.

The suggestion that information may be proposed for the common ground and yet fail to actually achieve that status is a natural part of this overall conception of communication. Indeed, the fact that utterances of this sort can be rejected in the way illustrated by (17)–(19) is another piece of evidence that they (attempt to) communicate the kind of information I have claimed they do. For instance, if the question in (18) did not propose to add to the common ground the information that Julie wants to know the answer, it should not be felicitous to reject her question by pointing out that she does not.

To conclude, then, I think the common ground framework for theorizing about communication is sufficiently motivated to support the account of insincerity I have defended.

6 Conclusion

An utterance is insincere if and only if it communicates a piece of information that does not correspond to the speaker's conscious attitudes. By showing how this suggestion can be made precise by adopting the common ground framework for theorizing about communication, I have argued that it provides an adequate picture of the circumstances in which both assertions of declarative sentences, non-assertoric utterances of declarative sentences, as well as utterances of non-declarative sentences are insincere.

Notes

[1] For relevant discussion, see, e.g., Trilling (1972), Walker (1978), Williams (2002, ch. 8).

[2] Examples include Williams (2002), Owens (2006), Ridge (2006).

[3] Cf. Chan and Kahane (2010, 217).

[4] Accordingly, Searle did not hold that one can only express mental states that one actually has (see Searle (1969, 65)). The opposite view is held by Owens (2006). For an objection to this, see Chan and Kahane (2011). I am not concerned with giving an account of expression in this paper. See, e.g., Davis (2003), Ridge (2006), Green (2007a), (2007b), Eriksson (2011) for recent, relevant discussion.

[5] Searle was adamant that only utterances of sentences express propositions, not sentences themselves. Since nothing will turn on this, I will allow myself in this paper to speak in terms of declarative sentences expressing propositions. In doing so, I am also ignoring debates in the literature on the semantics-pragmatics distinction over to what extent the proposition expressed by an utterance of a declarative sentence is generated by the semantics of the constituents of the sentence and their mode of combination. Philosophers on the pragmatic side of this debate include Bach (1994), Carston (2002), Recanati (2004). Opponents include Stanley (2000), (2005), Cappelen and Lepore (2004), Predelli (2005), Stokke (2010). The assumption that (utterances of) declarative sentences express propositions should be uncontroversial in the absence of any assumptions about how the proposition expressed is generated.

[6] This was denied by Grice (1989), who claimed that ironic speakers do not say, but merely 'make as if to say', the proposition literally expressed by their utterance. The notion of saying that Grice had in mind was one that, arguably, corresponds to what most other writers have meant by 'assertion'. On this, see Neale (1992).

[7] Kumon-Nakamura, Glucksberg, and Brown (2007) argue that irony always involves a form of *pragmatic insincerity*. However, it is clear that what they have in mind is not the kind of insincerity at issue in this paper, that is, the notion of insincerity on which all lies are insincere. Pragmatic insincerity, as Kumon-Nakamura et al. characterize it, can be compared to the act of flouting a Gricean maxim. For relevant discussion of this conception of irony, see Camp (2011).

[8] See Adler (1997), Williams (2002), Fallis (2009), Stokke (forthcoming).

[9] Adapted from Grice (1989, 33).

[10] Having false second order beliefs is arguably neither necessary nor sufficient for self-deception. Some philosophers (e.g., Bach (1981)) argue that self-deception is not to be analyzed in terms of beliefs at all, but rather in terms of desires. This paper does not attempt to provide an analysis of self-deception. It should be uncontroversial, though, that having false second order beliefs is, at least sometimes, an instance of self-deception. For relevant discussion, see Bach (1981), (2009), McLaughlin (1988), Johnston (1988).

[11] Note that, as Shoemaker (1996, 78) understood the notions, linguistic assent can be sincere or insincere, while mental assent cannot be insincere. By definition, one cannot mentally assent to a proposition half-heartedly, or in jest, or despite (consciously) not really accepting it. So if linguistic insincerity is characterized in terms of mental assent, as in the account I defend in this paper, there is no sense in which the problem has been pushed back to a question of the insincerity conditions for a mental state. Cf. also Shoemaker who maintains that "When linguistic assent is sincere, it involves mental assent." (ibid.)

[12] See Twain (1884).

[13]I do not wish to endorse the strong claim that one *cannot* lie without realizing it here. I am sympathetic to this claim, but it is by no means a trivial one. Note that even on views (such as that of Carson (2006)) on which you have not lied if what you say is true (regardless of whether you believe it to be false), it does not follow that one can lie without realizing it, although it does follow that one can fail to lie without realizing it.

[14]Although I think intending to deceive is sufficient for insincerity, I do not think that intending to deceive is necessary for insincerity. The reason for this is that I think that intending to deceive is not necessary for lying (which is always insincere.) For discussion, see Carson (2006), Sorensen (2007), Fallis (2009), Stokke (forthcoming).

[15]This does not mean that we are committed to the implausible claim that only speakers who have the concepts of belief or assent and are willing to employ them can be insincere. I assume that even a theorist who does not believe that there are beliefs or events of mental assent has beliefs and undergoes mental assent, and hence we make predictions about the insincerity conditions of declarative utterances such speakers make.

[16]E.g., the classic account in Grice (1989), or its descendants such as the relevance-theoretic approaches of Sperber and Wilson (1986), Carston (2002).

[17]See Stokke (forthcoming). For a response, see Fallis (2012). For recent discussion of this view of assertion, see e.g., Hawthorne and Magidor (2009), Stalnaker (2009), MacFarlane (2010), Almotahari and Glick (2011).

[18]The contrary view was held by Davidson (1986).

[19]There are also cases of malapropism in which the speaker says something she does believe, as in the following example, suggested by an anonymous reviewer: "A zebra does not change its spots," said by Al Gore in a 1992 attack on President Bush. Since what Gore said is trivially true (because Zebras do not have spots), Gore does believe what he said. And yet, he may be insincere. The suggestion in the text handles this type of case, as well. Abstracting away from the further complication of Gore's use of metaphorical language, whether he is being insincere or not arguably turns on whether he mentally assents to the proposition that a leopard does not change its spots (or perhaps the proposition metaphorically associated with it, or the like.) And correspondingly this is the proposition that is most naturally taken to be what Gore proposed to make common ground, despite what he said.

[20]To be sure, cases like this are very likely to result in what Stalnaker (1978, 85) dubbed a 'defective' common ground. Particularly, if the hearer is not aware of the speaker's mistaken grasp of the meanings of the words she is using, it is likely that the hearer's beliefs about what is proposed for the common ground will be false, and hence what the hearer will take to be common ground is not what the speaker will take to be common ground. Yet, it is simply a further advantage of the common ground framework that it provides an intuitively plausible way of analyzing complex cases of this kind.

[21]An earlier account in this tradition, to which Searle was explicitly indebted, was given by Austin (1962) in the so-called 'Doctrine of the Infelicities' (ch. IV). For more recent discussion, see Green (2007a), Eriksson (2011).

[22]Cf. Searle (1969, 66–67).

[23]An anonymous reviewer observes that there are also questions which are posed just with the aim of getting the hearer to go on record with an answer, and hence do not belong to either (a) or (b). For example, a reporter may ask a politician a question without wanting to know the answer and without wanting to know whether the politician knows, but just in order to get her to assert an opinion on the matter.

[24]*Realize* is a factive verb that presupposes its propositional complement, as seen from the fact that the information in the complement projects from under negation. See Levinson (1983, ch. 4), Geurts (1999, ch. 1). For an account of the presuppositions of factive verbs in terms of the common ground framework, see Stalnaker (1974).

[25]Note also that (11)–(12) are not evidence that the non-declaratives do not communicate propositional information. As can be seen from considering conversational implicatures, responses such as "That's true" usually only target what is said. So, the fact that this kind of response is infelicitous following a non-declaratives does not suggest that the non-declarative does not succeed in communicating propositional information, but merely suggests that nothing is said by such an utterance. Moreover, Grice (1989) familiarly held that conversational implicatures are communicated via a reasoning process in which the fact that a particular proposition was literally said figures as a key premise. The fact that such a reasoning process is not available for non-declaratives, since there is no literal proposition to appeal to, is one indication that the information they communicate is not classifiable as conversational implicature.

I have no account in this paper of *how* non-declaratives communicate propositional information. My argument merely turns on the observation, argued for in the text, that they do.

[26]Of course, utterances such as those in (14) are not infelicitous in all circumstances. The speaker may change her mind, for example. (Note that, tellingly, in such a case it is natural to prefix the retracting utterance with *actually* or *come to think of it*, or the like.) But significantly that is again completely parallel to (13). One may of course discover that one was wrong, and therefore want to adjust the common ground accordingly.

[27]Another view might be that their insincerity conditions should be stated directly in terms of the alternative discourse components (this was suggested to me by François Recanati, p.c.) For example, a question will be analyzed as insincere just in case the speaker does not want to know the answer to the question added to the set of QUDs. Similarly, an order will be analyzed as insincere just in case the speaker does not want the addressee to perform the order added to the to-do list. I have no principled disagreement with this suggestion. However, since it is hard to deny that non-declaratives do add information concerning the attitudes of the speaker to the common ground, the account I have proposed has the virtue of unification with the corresponding account of insincerity for assertion.

[28]According to Stalnaker (1998), common ground information is also used to determine the referents of indexicals, such as personal pronouns. This I take to be a more controversial contention. But note that if it is right, the suggestion that information is stored during the performance of a play naturally explains why we take indexicals uttered by actors to refer to the people portrayed by the play, as in (15b) and (15c) where the 2nd person pronouns are interpreted as referring to Ofelia.

[29]I have argued for this distinction in Stokke (forthcoming).

[30]As before, the interpretation of pronouns support the same point. Whereas the 1st person pronoun in the first half of (16) is interpreted as referring to Hamlet, the 1st person pronouns are interpreted as referring to Olivier, once he has dropped out of character and is falling back on the official common ground.

[31]For details on this, see Stokke (forthcoming). For further relevant discussion of bald-faced lying, see Carson (2006), Sorensen (2007), Fallis (2009).

[32]This is arguably an advantage of the Common Ground accounts of both Declarative and Non-Declarative Insincerity over the corresponding, general statement of this view given by the Communicative Account of Declarative Insincerity. It is less clear that the general formulation captures the fact that insincerity is independent of communicative *success*, whereas the Common Ground accounts do justice to this fact.

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