Communication as commitment sharing

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□ Socialist view: **2** comes first.

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- ☐ Mentalist pragmatics stands in the way of theories of ontogeny and phylogeny.

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4. Inference
5. Marrying socialism and mentalism

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- □ Commitments are normative.

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NB telic $\neq$ intentional

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Sharing is the default

Ceteris paribus, if speech act S causes $\mathbf{C}_{a,b}\varphi$, then:

1. S's purpose is that *b* share *a*'s commitment and
2. *b* will share *a*'s commitment.

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□ If *b* refuses to share, *a*'s commitment is not necessarily cancelled (e.g., speakers may agree to disagree).

$\mathbf{C}_{a,b}$ and $\mathbf{C}_{b,a}$ may be viewed as operators in a normal modal logic in which at least the following hold:

1. $\mathbf{C}_{x,y}\varphi \rightarrow \neg\mathbf{C}_{x,y}\neg\varphi$
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3. $\mathbf{C}_{x,y}\varphi \rightarrow \mathbf{C}_{y,x}\mathbf{C}_{x,y}\varphi$ (Acceptance)

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□ Common ground is a normative construct.

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- ☐ It is a purely social construct.
- ☐ It is more general:
  - ○ It is not intrinsically epistemic or psychological.
  - ○ *Every* felicitous speech act expands the common ground (*a*) by being accepted and (*b*) by being shared (by default).

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NB These are normative concepts.

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A stronger version of SINCERITY:

□ SINCERITY∗ : If $\mathbf{C}_{a,b}\varphi$ then $\mathbf{C}_{a,a}\varphi$.

SINCERITY∗ yields implicatures like these:

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Cf. Grice's "quality implicatures" and Searle's "sincerity conditions".

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☞ How can that be?

Athena (3 years):

> Looks at model, places purple piece at correct location.

That goes there, does it?

> Sees other purple piece already placed incorrectly.

Ah …

> Looks at model.

That shouldn't go there, should it? Who put that there?

> Not me.

> Removes incorrectly placed purple piece.

Help … where's the orange bit?

> Points to model. Finds orange piece.

There.

> Places orange piece at correct location.

Goes … in the corner.

Washoe was often seen "moving stealthily to a forbidden part of the yard signing QUIET to herself." (Gardner & Gardner 1974)

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- Self talk supports reasoning, problem solving, planning and plan execution, attention, motivation, …

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THIS DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT

□ Bruce to Bruce: "Do the dishes!"

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□ Agnes to Agnes: "I forgot my keys!"

Agnes becomes privately committed to act on ⟦Agnes forgot her keys⟧, i.e she now believes that she forgot her keys.

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⇒ Self talk is a way of making commitments to oneself, and thus form beliefs and intentions.

In press: Communication as commitment sharing.
Theoretical linguistics.

2018: Making sense of self talk.
Review of philosophy and psychology.

2018: Convention and common ground.
Mind and language.