

On the Locus of Expressivity

Deriving Parallel Meaning Dimensions from Architectural Considerations

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1. Introduction

In this chapter, I would like to defend the claim that certain non-truth conditional meanings are exclusively triggered by properties of vocabulary items (in the sense of Halle and Marantz 1993, and subsequent work). In other words, those meanings arise “late” and are not part of the syntactic-semantic derivation. Thus, we capture the notion of *parallel meaning dimension* from architectural considerations without the need for any metalogic operator (e.g., the symbol \bullet in Potts 2005 and McCready 2010, among others) especially designated to separate meaning dimensions. The basic expressive paradigm I am concerned with involves pairs of mixed words in Argentinian Spanish whose contribution to truth-conditional meaning is equivalent. They are only differentiated by register (e.g., *comer* ‘to eat’ vs. *morfar* ‘to eat_{inf}’) or by register plus a derogative dimension (e.g., *boliviano* ‘Bolivians’ vs. *bolita* ‘Bolivians_{pejorative}’). Here are two crucial properties of both informal and slur terms:

- (A) In the general case, expressives form doublets: *boliviano/bolita*ⁱ ‘Bolivian/Bolivian (pejorative)’, *comer/morfar*, ‘to eat’.

(B) These doublets contribute to a certain meaning dimension: style, tone or expressivity.

My initial conjecture is that at least some forms of expressivity are the direct result of free (lexical) variation; i.e., competition in the paradigmatic space among truth-conditionally identical terms gives rise to expressive meanings, an idea that has its roots in the functionalist tradition initiated by Trubetzkoy (1939) and others. Free variation implies competition in the paradigmatic (and phonetic) space and, at least in some cases, a non-truth conditional contribution to meaning. The final picture, I claim, results in a theory that integrates Fregean tone into semantics, against Frege's original considerations in this respect.

It makes no difference to the thought whether I use the word 'horse' or 'steed' or 'cart-horse' or 'mare'. The assertive force does not extend over that in which these words differ. What is called mood, fragrance, illumination in a poem, what is portrayed by cadence and rhythm, does not belong to the thought.

[Frege (1918/1956): 23]

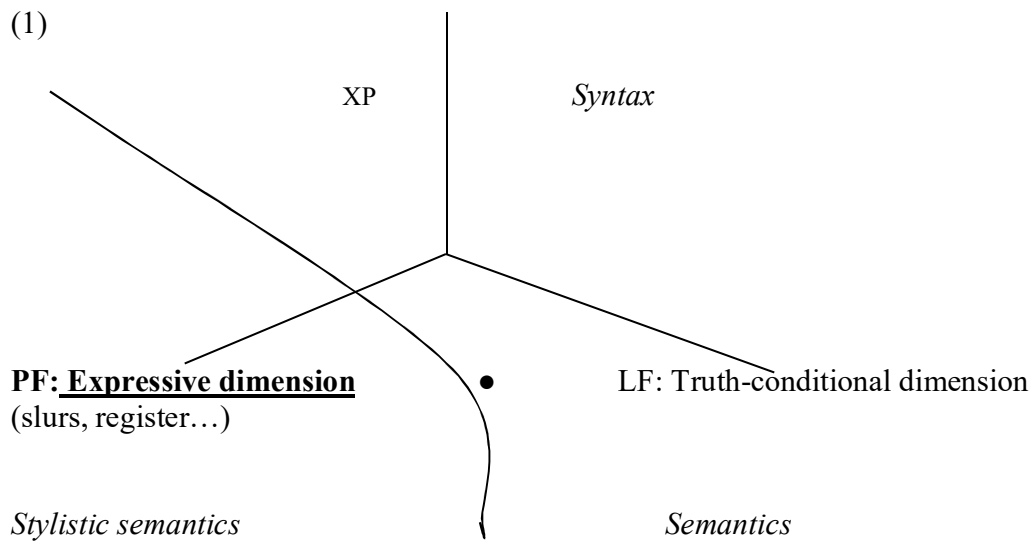
The idea that tone is not involved in the notion of truth in any relevant sense and, consequently, "does not belong to the thought" was revived, although not literally, by Capelen and Lepore (2013a, 2013b) and by Lepore and Stone (2018).

[...] tone, unlike meaning, does not seem to be a feature of language that speakers negotiate among one another and coordinate on. Indeed, tone, unlike meaning, does not seem to be something that speakers generally command in virtue of knowing their

language or universally respect in their choices of linguistic behavior [...] In short, Frege was right: tone “is not part of the thought expressed.”

[Lepore and Stone 2018, 144]

In a few words, Lepore and Stone shares Frege’s view that tone is not part of the semantic agenda. This decision is somewhat arbitrary once that one acknowledges the basic fact that linguistic expressivity is subject to linguistic regularities, i.e., to a set of conventions that governs some sort of semantic competence. To be competent with the use of an informal term or a slur is to know the rules that make such uses expressively correct (see Kaplan 1999 and, more recently, Predelli 2013). That the conditions behind expressive correctness don’t involve the notion of truth doesn’t make expressivity in natural language less “semantics” than those conditions that guarantee truth or falsity. Then, I agree with Kaplan and Predelli in that there is no obvious reason why the limits of semantics should be limited in the narrow sense Frege suggested. Put differently, expressivity has the right to pertain to the research agenda of the theory of linguistic meaning or, perhaps more properly, I should say to the theory of “linguistic meanings”. Following also original insights in Trubetzkoy (1939), I call this research agenda *stylistic semantics*. Stylistic semantics is about a parallel dimension of conventional, non-truth conditional meaning. In this respect, the theory is (at least) two-dimensional, as in Kaplan (1999), Predelli (2013), Potts (2005), McCready (2010) and Gutzmann (2015), among others. However, as I have already advanced, I contend that expressivity is not represented in the Logical Form (LF) of a sentence, but it is deduced at Phonetic Form (PF), through a principle of lexical competition to be discussed in the next section. Assuming the Y-model of grammar, we can get a flavor of the division of labor in semantics in the following scheme:



Here, the symbol ●, used in Potts (2005) and others to separate meaning dimensions, is derived from the division in the Y-model. In this way, we dispense with this operator and propose that the division is given by the architecture of the grammar. The consequence of this is that I also dispense with mixed lexical entries like the following one for words like *bolita*, which is the pejorative term for Bolivians in Argentinian Spanish:

$$(2) \llbracket \text{bolita} \rrbracket = \lambda x. \text{Bolivian}(x) \blacklozenge \text{Bad}(\cap \text{Bolivian}): \langle e, t \rangle^a \times t^s$$

This is the lexical representation proposed in McCready (2010) for slur terms. It contains both truth-conditional and non-truth conditional information. The latter is modelled as a conventional implicature (following Grice 1975 and, in particular, Potts 2005). The symbol ◆ in this particular representation is changed for the symbol ● through a rule that allows introducing conventional implicatures in the semantic derivation. Putting technical details aside, compare the lexical entry in (2) to the following simplified lexical entry I propose is active in the syntax:

(3) Syntax-semantics: $\llbracket \text{bolita} \rrbracket = \lambda x. \text{Bolivian}(x)$

According to (3), the denotation of *Bolita* is equivalent to that of *Bolivian*; they denote the set of Bolivians. It is only when this word is sent to the PF component of the grammar (i.e., after syntax) that the expressive meaning is added to the phonological matrix of the relevant lexical item. This requires some particular implementation of lexical representation. In particular, it requires taking for granted that the phonetic makeup of lexical items is determined after syntax, concretely, at the PF interface.

The empirical argument in favor of this implementation of stylistic semantics comes from the behavior of expressives in the realm of ellipsis. The observation is that expressivity doesn't survive ellipsis. This was already shown by Potts *et al* (2009) for ellipsis sites which take as antecedents predicates containing attributive adjectives like *fucking* in English ($\langle \rangle$ = ellipsis site).ⁱⁱ

(4) A: I saw your fucking dog in the park.

B: No, you didn't \langle see my dog \rangle —you couldn't have \langle seen my dog \rangle . The poor thing passed away last week.

Here, the two ellipsis sites are modeled without expressives, an analysis justified by the clear intuition that B doesn't endorse A's hostility to the dog at hand. Potts *et al*'s conclusion is that ellipsis only requires recovery of descriptive content, an idea in consonance with the approach to ellipsis in Merchant (2001), according to which ellipsis identity boils down to

mutual entailment between the antecedent and the ellipsis site. In principle, this seems to be correct when it comes to evaluating the distribution of mixed terms in ellipsis. Consider the following short dialogue:

- (5) A: Qué morfaste?
 what ate.2SG.INFORMAL
- B: Una pizza <?>, pero no tolero cuando
 a pizza but not tolerate.1SG when
 hablás tan informalmente. Yo nunca lo hago.
 speak.2SG so informally I never it do
 ‘A pizza. But I don’t tolerate when you speak informally. I never do it’

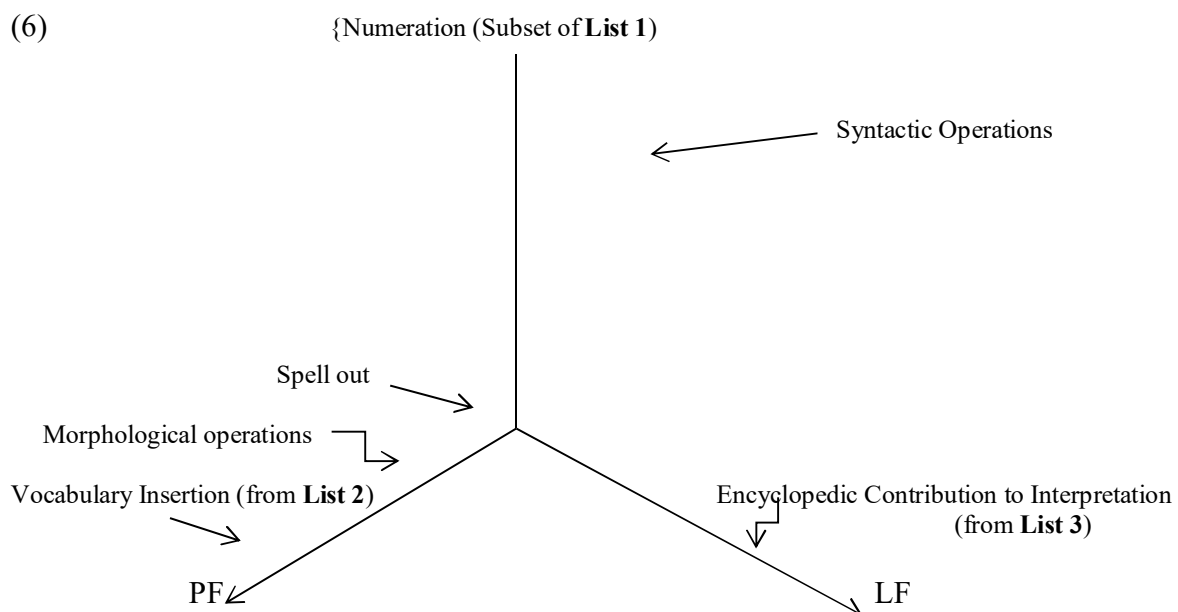
Here B’s answer contains an ellipsis site that, unlike what happens in the antecedent, cannot be interpreted as containing the verb *morfar*, which is the informal term for the verb *comer* ‘to eat’. In principle, we can generalize Potts *et al*’s argument and conclude that given that *morfar* and *comer* can be substituted *salva veritate*, mutual entailment is satisfied and ellipsis applies. If this approach is correct, then ellipsis cannot help us to distinguish between the two theories in competition. However, I argue, following previous proposals, that ellipsis requires lexical identity as a necessary condition (Chomsky 1965, Chung 2006 and Saab 2008, among many others). If this is correct, then ellipsis can be indeed used as a relevant test, one that seems to favor the late approach to expressivity that I sketch in this chapter. I elaborate the argument from ellipsis in section 3 for informal terms and, in section 4, I extend the analysis to slurs. But before entering into the details concerning the behavior of mixed terms under ellipsis, in section

2, I sketch my analysis for mixed terms. As I have already advanced, my implementation requires two core ingredients: (a) a model of late insertion for phonological information, and (b) a principle of lexical competition that, among other things, accounts for the fact that certain expressive terms require a non-expressive counterpart. These are the themes of the following section.

2. Implementation: Expressivity as a PF property

2.1. Background assumptions

I assume the Distributed Morphology framework (cf. Halle and Marantz 1993, 1994 and, in particular, Embick 2000, 2007, Embick and Noyer 2001, Arregi and Nevins 2012, Marantz 2013, and Harley 2014, among many others). The general architecture is the following (from Harley 2014, 228):



A crucial property of this conception of the grammar is form-meaning separation, i.e., the fact that meaning-form connections are determined by the syntax in an all-the-way-fashion (Halle and Marantz 1994). Syntax manipulates abstract objects (from List 1) that are supplied with a given phonological form after syntax through a set of lexical insertion rules that adds items from List 2. The primitives that syntax manipulates are Roots and abstract morphemes. Abstract morphemes are features drawn from a Universal Inventory and encode things like [past], [plural] and so on. Roots are represented by an index that is replaced at PF by a phonetic matrix (Chomsky 1995, Embick 2000, Saab 2008, Acquaviva 2008, and Harley 2014, among others). Finally, as for the LF side, syntax provides an abstract object built out from Roots and abstract morphemes, which is interpreted on the basis of the information available in List 3. Let me summarize the information contained in each of the lists in (6) (also from Harley 2014):

List 1: *Feature bundles*: Syntactic primitives, both interpretable and uninterpretable, functional and contentful.

List 2: *Vocabulary Items*: Instructions for pronouncing terminal nodes in context.

List 3: *Encyclopedia*: Instructions for interpreting terminal nodes in context.

Thus, the full representation of an abstract morpheme like, say, the imperfect in Spanish (-ba/-ía) requires information taken from the three lists:

List 1: [imperfect past]

List 2: [imperfect past] ↔ /-ía/ / TV_{2,3} ____

[imperfect past] \leftrightarrow /-ba/

List 3: [imperfect past] \leftrightarrow \llbracket truth-conditional meaning \rrbracket

For a Root like *gat(o)* ‘cat’, the relevant information, distributed in each list, can be summarized as follows:

List 1: $\sqrt{13}$

List 2: $\sqrt{13} \leftrightarrow$ /gát-/

List 3: $\sqrt{13} \leftrightarrow \llbracket \lambda x. C(x) \rrbracket$

In sum, on DM conception, there is not a generative lexicon that syntax uses to construct syntactic objects; lexical objects are instead syntactic constructs derived by the same principles that derive phrasal objects. I contend now that expressivity, at least for the cases I am concerned with, is an exclusive property of vocabulary items, that is, of objects taken from List 2.

2.2. Expressivity as a List 2 property

With these background assumptions in mind, we can now state the basic hypothesis in the following way:

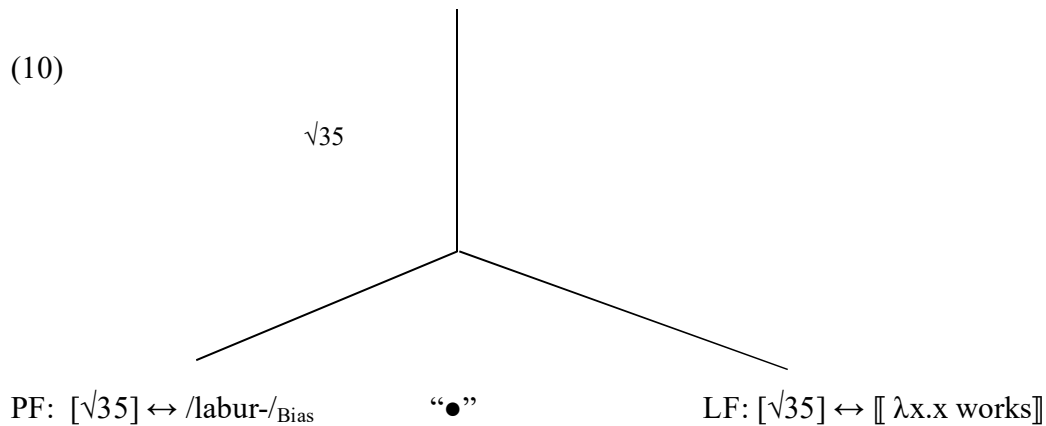
(7) (At least) some forms of expressivity are exclusively encoded on List 2.

Let's illustrate the theory with the pair *trabajar* 'to work' vs. *laburar* 'to work_{informal}'.

The crucial step is adding the informal flavor of *laburar* as part of the vocabulary item:

- (8) a. *trabajar*
- b. List 1: $\sqrt{122}$
- List 2: $\sqrt{122} \leftrightarrow /trabaj(\acute{a}r)/$
- List 3: $\sqrt{122} \leftrightarrow \llbracket \lambda x. W(x) \rrbracket$
- (9) a. *laburar*
- b. List 1: $\sqrt{221}$
- List 2: $\sqrt{221} \leftrightarrow /labur(\acute{a}r)/_{BIAS}$
- BIAS*: $c \in CU(laburar)$ only if, in c , c_a is a participant in register *informal*
- List 3: $\sqrt{221} \leftrightarrow \llbracket \lambda x. W(x) \rrbracket$

For the sake of exposition, I assume that the expressive meaning of *laburar* is a bias on contexts of use (CU), which, in this particular case, characterizes the agent of the context as a participant in an informal register (Predelli 2013). Yet, other alternatives are also possible for different types of expressive terms: a stereotype for slurs (Orlando and Saab 2019), or a conventional implicature for both slurs and informal terms (Potts 2005 and, especially, McCready 2010) are some of the available options that our theory allows. For the purposes of this chapter, we can remain neutral, inasmuch those meaning dimensions do not interact with the truth-conditional dimension. We can illustrate the representation in (9) with the scheme in (10), assuming that the index for the Root of the informal term *laburar* is $\sqrt{65}$:



As I advanced in the introduction, on this theory, the metalogic symbol • is trivial: it is deduced from architectural considerations and a principle of lexical competition. A crucial question is, of course, how lexical competition in the paradigmatic space is determined. I conjecture that the following general principle of lexical competition is active in natural languages:

(11) **Principle of stylistic meaning (PSM)**: Given a pair of abstract nodes X and Y, taken from List 1, if X and Y are not semantically distinguishable at LF (List 3), they are “semantically” distinguished at PF (List 2).

The notion of *meaning* in this formulation requires some qualifications. If Y is semantically distinguished from X at LF, we say that the meaning contribution of both lexical items is truth-conditionally relevant. If Y is semantically distinguished from X at PF we say that the meaning contribution of both lexical items is stylistic or expressive, i.e., non-truth conditionally relevant. In any case, the distinction is semantic in the favored sense of stylistic

semantics. PSM is observed for the pairs of Roots *laburar* and *trabajar*. And in this case in particular, we are led to conclude that the difference is purely stylistic. At any rate, note that PSM is not a principle of synonymy blocking: *trabajar* and *laburar* are still synonymous (truth-conditionally equivalent). I think this is an important result, but I will not explore its consequences here.

The considerations made here must be taken as a general sketch of how a theory of stylistic semantics should look like according to my assumptions. My main aim in this essay is just to argue that there is preliminary evidence that a radical dissociation between truth-conditional and expressive meaning is needed. If the general sketch turns out to be correct, then an explicit theory of stylistic semantics can be developed on a formal basis. There are, of course, many questions opened by this general approach. A pressing one is how the conceptual-intentional cognitive system accesses to the information provided by the computational system of the language faculty. According to Chomsky (1995, 2000 and 2001) there are two cognitive systems that use the information provided by the PF and LF interfaces, namely, the sensorimotor, articulatory-perceptual system (S-M) and the conceptual-intentional system (C-I) related to systems of thought. In the classical Y model, the C-I system only uses information from the FL interface. According to Reinhart (2006), it seems that such a cognitive system relates lexical and syntactic information to a set of disparate interpretation processes, involving, at least, inference, context and concepts. Reinhart (2006) proposes, then, associating these processes to three distinct cognitive systems: context, concept and inference. For the purposes of this chapter the context system is the most relevant one and also the hardest to define:

The hardest to define given our present state of knowledge are the context systems that narrow the information transmitted through the derivation (coded in the relevant representation), and select the information that is useful for the context of use.

[Reinhart 2006, 4]

To be competent with a slur, for example, requires knowing the conditions that make it correct in a certain context of use. This requires manipulation of information other than purely inferential or conceptual. Both are required, yet. A pair of informal terms is constituted as such because the concept each member of the pair express and the inferential process they trigger are identical. Yet, they are used in different contexts for different purposes and that it is something that requires linking lexical and inferential content to particular contexts of use. It is in this sense that I assume here that the context system must have access both to the PF and LF interfaces. I leave these issues open and turn my attention to the empirical argument in favor of the proposed meaning division.

3. The argument from ellipsis

3.1. Expressive mismatches under ellipsis

For many sort of ellipses in natural languages, the following generalization seems to be relevant:

Vehicle Change Generalization (Barros and Saab 2016).ⁱⁱⁱ

- (12) Recoverability conditions in ellipsis make reference to content not character.

This observation generalizes over different types of well-known ellipsis mismatches, Vehicle Change and indexical mismatches being two prominent ones:

Classic Vehicle Change (Fiengo and May 1994 and Merchant 2001):

- (13) a. They arrested the man₃, but he₃ doesn't know why.
b. They arrested the man₁, but he₁ doesn't know why <they arrested *the man₁/him₁>.

Indexical mismatches (Thoms 2013, 2015):

- (14) A: Can you help me? [requesting help]
B: Yes, I can <help you>.

This type of mismatches follows if identity in ellipsis is stated in purely semantic terms. Merchant (2001) famously proposed a semantic condition based on the crucial notion of *e*(llipsis)-GIVENness. Here is Merchant's condition:

Focus condition:

- (15) A constituent α can be deleted only if α is *e*-GIVEN.
(16) An expression E counts as *e*-GIVEN iff E has a salient antecedent A and, modulo \exists -type shifting,
i. A entails the Focus closure of E (written F-clo(E)), and

ii. E entails F-clo(A)

(17) F-clo(α) is the result of replacing F-marked parts of α with \exists -bound variables.

Take as an example a simple case of VP-ellipsis in English like (16a) and its associated (and simplified) semantic derivation:

(18) a. [_F Ann] loves Peter and [_F Mary] does <love Peter> too.

b. F-clo($\llbracket A \rrbracket$) = $\llbracket \exists x. x \text{ loves Peter} \rrbracket$

F-clo($\llbracket E \rrbracket$) = $\llbracket \exists y. y \text{ loves Peter} \rrbracket$

Therefore, $\llbracket A \rrbracket$ entails F-clo($\llbracket E \rrbracket$) and $\llbracket E \rrbracket$ entails F-clo($\llbracket A \rrbracket$).

When it comes to the mismatches in (13) and (14), the crucial point is that descriptive properties of indexicals or R-expressions do not alter the mutual entailment relation under some variable assignment. If this is on the right track, then other mismatches should be allowed beyond indexicals and R-expressions. Consider, for instance, pairs of words opposed only by the bias they express. As I have already noted, in Argentinian Spanish, for instance, the “neutral” verb *comer* ‘to eat’ is semantically undistinguishable from the verb *morfar* ‘to eat’. This can be demonstrated by well-known substitution tests: any occurrence of the verb *comer* can be replaced (modulo metalinguistic and sociolinguistic tones) by an occurrence of the verb *morfar* and vice versa. The predictions for mutual entailment as formulated in (15) are more or less clear. In principle, register mismatches between A and E should be allowed, in a way such that modeling the following E(llipsis)-sites as indicated should be possible in fragments like the following ones:

- (19) A: Qué comiste?
 what ate.2SG.NEUTRAL
 ‘What did you eat?’
- B: Una pizza <morfē>.
 a pizza ate.1SG.INFORMAL
 ‘a pizza.’
- (20) A: Qué morfaste?
 what ate.2SG.INFORMAL
- B: Una pizza <comí>.
 a pizza ate.1SG.NEUTRAL

Of course, without any discursive clue it would be just impossible to know whether such E-sites are possible or not. Consider in this respect the following discourse:^{iv}

- (21) A: Qué morfaste?
 what ate.2SG.INFORMAL
- B: Una pizza <?>, pero no tolero cuando
 a pizza but not tolerate.1SG when
 hablás tan informalmente. Yo nunca lo hago.
 speak.2SG so informally I never it do
 ‘A pizza. But I don’t tolerate when you speak informally. I never do it’

At first sight, the metalinguistic comment introduced by B allows us to reject an E-site modeled as containing the informal counterpart of the verb *to eat*. Notice that a non-elliptical version of (22) is infelicitous here:^v

- (22) A: Qué morfaste?
 what ate.2SG.INFORMAL
- B: #Una pizza morfë, pero no tolero cuando
 a pizza ate.2SG.INFOR but not tolerate.1SG when
 hablás tan informalmente. Yo nunca lo hago.
 speak.2SG so informally I never it do
- ‘#I ate(informal) a pizza. But I don’t tolerate when you speak informally. I never do it’

The mutual entailment approach apparently provides the right answer to the problem, as the neutral form *comer* could take the informal form *morfear* as antecedent and outputs a legitimate E-site.

- (23) A: Qué [_{TP} *pro* morfaste *t*]?
 what ate.2SG.INFORMAL
- B: Una pizza <[_{TP} *pro* comí *t*]>, pero no tolero
 a pizza ate.1SG.NEU but not tolerate.1SG
 cuando hablás tan informalmente.
 when speak.2SG so informally

I call this phenomenon *Bias Vehicle Change*, cases where the change between A and E is produced in the particular bias of some lexical expression. For (21), and assuming that short answers are derived as cases of TP ellipsis (Merchant 2004), mutual entailment between A and E should be permitted under Focus Closure:^{vi}

- (24) a. $F\text{-clo}(\llbracket A \rrbracket) = \llbracket A \rrbracket = \exists x[g(1) \text{ morfar } x]$ entails $\llbracket TP_E \rrbracket = \exists y[g(1) \text{ comer } y]$
b. $F\text{-clo}(\llbracket E \rrbracket) = \llbracket E \rrbracket = \exists y[g(1) \text{ comer } y]$ entails $\llbracket TP_A \rrbracket = \exists x[g(1) \text{ morfar } x]$
c. $\llbracket A \rrbracket$ entails $F\text{-clo}(\llbracket E \rrbracket)$ and $\llbracket E \rrbracket$ entails $F\text{-clo}(\llbracket A \rrbracket)$.

On the basis of the grammaticality of (21), we can then state the following generalization:

Generalization 1 (G1):

- (25) Bias Vehicle Change is licensed under TP-ellipsis.

As far as I can tell, examples similar to (21) can be constructed for myriads of pairs of words contrasting only in register. Here is a non-exhaustive list of pairs of verbs from Argentinian Spanish:

	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Informal</i>	
(26)	tomar	chupar	‘to drink’
	sudar/transpirar	chivar	‘to sweat’
	eyacular	acabar	‘to ejaculate/to come’
	pagar	garpar	‘to pay’

trabajar	laburar	‘to work’
escapar	rajar	‘to escape’
defecar	cagar	‘to defecate/to shit’
delatar	buchonear	‘to betray’
molestar	joder	‘to bother’

However, G1 does not hold for every type of ellipsis. Consider in this respect Spanish NP-ellipsis (see Saab 2019 for detailed discussion on NP-ellipsis). In this language, words like *culo* ‘ass’ and *cola* ‘tail’ when applied to humans refer to the same body part, the difference being, once again, in the bias dimension of each word. Thus, *culo* is coarse language and *cola* is the polite form at least in some dialects (Argentinian Spanish, for instance). Interestingly, both nouns differ in gender: *culo* is masculine, but *cola* is feminine. This allows us to test their behavior in NP-ellipsis contexts. As shown below, bias mismatches are fully ungrammatical in any direction:

- (27) a. El **culo** de Juan es más grande
the.MASC.SG ass.MASC.SG of J. is more big
que el <**culo**> de María.
that the.MASC.SG ass.MASC.SG of M.
- b. La **cola** de Juan es más grande
the.FEM.SG tail.FEM.SG of J. is more big
que la <**cola**> de María.
that the.FEM.SG tail.FEM.SG of M.

- c. *El **culo** de Juan es más grande
 the.MASC.SG ass.MASC.SG of J. is more big
 que la <**cola**> de María.
 that the.FEM.SG <tail.FEM.SG > of M.
- d. *La **cola** de Juan es más grande
 the.FEM.SG tail.FEM.SG of J. is more big
 que el <**culo**> de María.
 that the.MASC.SG <ass.MASC.SG > of M.

Note that, as far as mutual entailment under focus closure is concerned, the fact that *culo* and *cola* differ in gender is irrelevant, since gender is semantically arbitrary here. We arrive then at our second generalization:

Generalization 2 (G2).^{vii}

- (28) Bias Vehicle Change is not licensed under NP-ellipsis.

Here is the problem: either we have a dissociated identity condition or one of the two generalizations is spurious. The impossibility of Bias Vehicle Change in Spanish NP-ellipsis casts doubts on the alternative of extending mutual entailment (or relatives) to this particular elliptical construction. We can of course dissociate the identity condition in one semantic condition for TP-ellipsis and one lexical-syntactic identity condition for NP-ellipsis, after all we already know that different types of ellipsis are subjected to different conditions beyond identity (e.g., parallelism conditions regulating the correlate/remnant distribution, discourse conditions

regulating the legitimacy of some types of ellipsis but not others, and so on). This would be compatible with Generalizations 1 and 2, but such a solution would be unappealing under uniformity considerations. Alternatively, we can make an attempt to solve semantic identity for ellipsis in general by adding some non-truth conditional conditions to the theory. In what follows, I argue that such an alternative cannot handle the entire set of facts and, then, I show that a uniform identity condition, with lexical identity as a necessary condition, plus my theory of expressivity accounts for why expressivity doesn't survive ellipsis sites in the TP-ellipsis cases. The NP-ellipsis cases are, in turn, ruled out as a simple failure of lexical identity.

2.2. A pragmatic alternative: No Telepathy

Let's assume that the choice of remaining silent (i.e., making use of ellipsis) nullifies the bias of whatever expression the silence is replacing. This would have obvious consequences for any theory of information recoverability in ellipsis involving the communicative force of non-elliptical expressions regarding bias, metalinguistic uses and register. By remaining silent, such information is unrecoverable, no matter what your favorite theory of identity is (semantic or syntactic). Put differently, we are not telepaths. Let's assume that the phenomenon under discussion falls under some No Telepathy Condition:

No Telepathy (NT):

- (29) Information regarding lexical choices is unrecoverable under ellipsis, without additional discourse clues.

By *lexical choices* I understand some competition among lexical items in the same semantic space (de Saussure's paradigmatic relations), where the selection of such and such lexical item would depend, among other things, on the speaker's attitude towards the content of the speech act. Such choices, arguably, also convey information regarding socio-economic, gender and age information about the speaker. No Telepathy then prevents us from introducing new lexical material in the E-site that would require some sort of telepathic activity. Crucially, NT correctly rules out standard cases of Vehicle Change like (13), repeated below:

(30) They arrested [Alex]₃, but he₃ doesn't know why <they arrested *Alex₃/him₃>.

One reasonable way to approach (30) under NT is just claiming that the use of the pronoun is unavoidable, i.e., there is no lexical choice to make, given that one of the possible choices provided by the paradigmatic space introduces a flagrant violation of Principle-C of Binding Theory (although see Johnson 2012). As for (23), the situation is different: we can guess a lexical choice made in the E-site on the basis of the metalinguistic comment made by B. So, NT seems to be sufficiently flexible as to allow some bias change between A and E and sufficiently constrained as to rule out mismatches in lexical choices.

Thus far, it seems that the NT is a good alternative theory that would account for Bias Vehicle Change. The NT Condition, however, would have to explain the impossibility of coarse mismatches in NP-ellipsis illustrated in (27). The question here is why gender information does not suffice to recover the missing information that the speaker has chosen the coarse *culo* or the polite *cola* in the relevant cases. The answer would be that gender information cannot resolve the issue of how to know whether or not in (27c), for instance, we are talking about María's nose

(*nariz* ‘nose’ is feminine in Spanish). Yet, this problem should be avoided by contextual and discursive factors. So, suppose we are walking behind Juan and María, and pointing out to Juan’s relevant body part, I say:

- (31) *El culo de Juan es grande pero...
 the.MASC.SG ass.MASC.SG of J. is big but
 [now pointing out to María’s relevant body part]
 la < cola > de María es más grande.
 the.FEM.SG tail.FEM.SG of M. is more big

Even when we are no telepaths, we should be able to recover the relevant information in this case, but we cannot. Compare with cases of pragmatic recoverability of empty nouns in general:

- [pointing to some toy; the word *toy*, *juguete*, is masculine in Spanish]
- (32) a. Yo quiero ese con rueditas.
 I want this.MASC with wheels
 ‘I want that one with wheels.’
- [pointing to a bike. The word *bike*, *bicicleta*, is feminine in Spanish]
- b. Cuando era chico, tenía una como
 when was.1P.SG boy had. 1P.SG one.FEM like
 esa.
 that.FEM
 ‘When I was a child, I had one like that.’

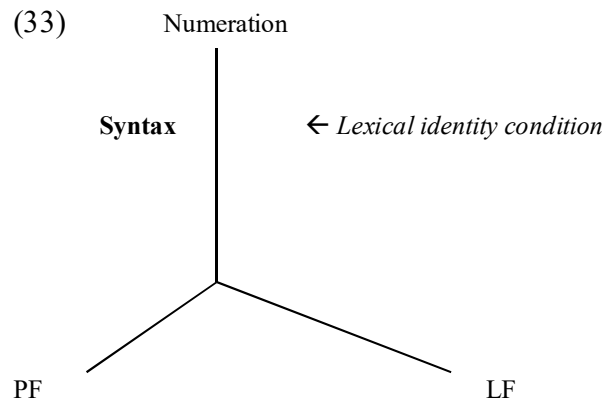
The contrast between (31) and (32) constitutes a strange state of affair under the NT Condition. It seems that some degree of telepathy should be permitted for (32) but not for (31). In other words, the addressee in (32) is able to guess that the speaker is talking about toys or bikes, but the same guessing capacity is impossible in (31). This is connected with the fact that recoverability conditions are different for surface and deep anaphora in Hankamer and Sag's (1976) terms. As Merchant (2010) has shown whenever ellipsis (i.e., surface anaphora) and deep anaphora compete, ellipsis is always preferred. This is exactly what seems to be happening in (31), where there is a linguistic antecedent for the E-site that blocks pragmatic recoverability. If this is on the right track, there is some basis to conclude that NT is a suspicious condition at least as a recoverability condition for surface anaphora.

As it stands, the entire paradigm discussed in this section remains as a puzzle for this attempt to formulate a uniform semantic identity condition supplied with a pragmatic constraint. Yet, in the following section I show that Generalization 1 is a spurious observation. I argue that lexical/syntactic identity is the right condition for several types of surface anaphora, in particular, for the type of ellipses I am concerned with.

3.2. A syntactic solution

Generalization 1 is spurious. Ellipsis does not allow for the type of mismatches that mutual entailment predicts. A uniform syntactic identity condition applying in narrow syntax plus the theory of expressivity I am defending are enough to make the right predictions. Let's assume that identity in ellipsis applies in narrow syntax and makes reference to the lexical

content of both roots and abstract morphemes, although other structural or semantic recoverability conditions must also apply:



If lexical identity is necessary condition for ellipsis to apply, then the impossibility of Bias Vehicle Change in NP-ellipsis follows without further ado as a general violation of lexical identity. In order to see this, let's reconsider the ungrammatical example in (27c) and assume that $\sqrt{38}$ is the index for *cola* and $\sqrt{83}$ for *culo*:

- (34) *El $[\text{NP } \sqrt{83} + \text{masculine}]$ de Juan es más grande
the.MASC.SG of J. is more big
que la $[\text{NP } \sqrt{38} + \text{feminine}]$ de María.
that the.FEM.SG of M.

The strong ungrammaticality of (27c) follows now as an extreme violation of the identity condition where both the abstract morpheme for gender and the Root in the E-site do not match the features of the corresponding phrases in the antecedent. We derive thus Generalization 2.

This analysis opens the question as to why TP-ellipsis in fragments seems to behave in the opposite way. Recall the analysis sketched in (23B) and its associated (putative true) empirical observation:

- (35) A: Qué [_{TP} *pro* *morfaste t*]?
 what ate.2SG.INFORMAL
- B: Una pizza <[_{TP} *pro* *comí t*]>, pero no tolero
 a pizza ate.1SG.NEU but not tolerate.1SG
 cuando hablás tan informalmente.
 when speak.2SG so informally

Generalization 1:

- (36) Bias Vehicle Change is licensed under TP-ellipsis.

It is clear now that taking for granted that the same identity condition is operative in TP and NP-ellipsis, such an analysis should be regarded as impossible, given that *comer* and *morfear* are the PF realizations of distinct Roots. So, (36) should be regarded as false. Under uniformity considerations, in the best case, we expect (37) to hold:

Bias Vehicle Change Generalization (Final):

- (37) Bias Vehicle change is neither licensed under TP-ellipsis nor NP-ellipsis.

Fortunately, the theory of expressivity I am defending here gives rise to an alternative analysis for (35) according to which the same Root for *morfear*, say $\sqrt{102}$, is generated both in the

antecedent and the elided TP. Given that all other syntactic features are identical *in the syntax* (agreement information being supplied at PF), we conclude that both TPs are strictly identical:

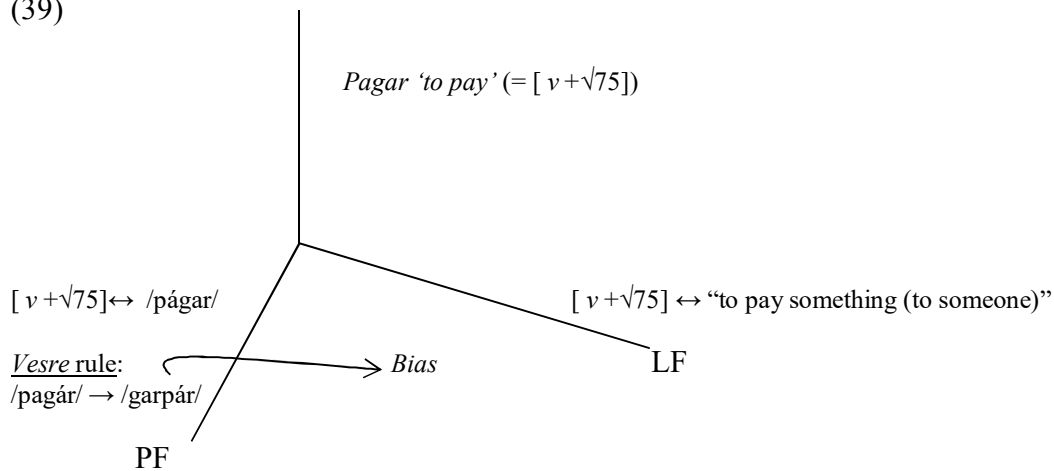
(38) A: Qué [_{TP} *pro* √102 *t*]?

B: Una pizza <[_{TP} *pro* √102 *t*]>...

Thus, bias mismatches in TP-ellipsis are just illusory, the surface reflex of the basic fact that bias requires phonological information.

Additional evidence comes from related facts. Other cases from the list in (15) point to the conclusion that, at least in some instances, the bias/conventional implicature of a given word is not present at LF. The relevant cases are the so-called *vesre* ‘reverse’ words illustrated in the list in (15) with words like *garpar* ‘to pay_{informal}’ and *sarparse* ‘to cross the limits_{informal}’. *Vesre* speech is an informal way to speak that consist of reversing the syllable structure of a given word. Thus, *pagar* is converted into a *vesre* word by inverting the two syllables it contains (e.g., *pa – gar* → *gar – par*). The phenomenon uses to be productive in informal registers in a way such that even non-lexicalized *vesre* words are subject to the rule (e.g., *mesa – same* ‘table’). From a DM perspective, *vesre* speech can only be obtained after syntax (see Bohrn 2019). A rough derivation for the verb *garpar* could be as follows:

(39)



If this analysis is on track a parallel example to (35) containing the verb *garpar* in the antecedent should be analyzed as in (40):

(40) A: Qué [_{TP} *pro* garpaste *t*]? (*garpar* = √75 in the syntax)

what payed.2P.SG.INFORMAL

'What did you pay?'

B: Una pizza <[_{TP} *pro* √75 *t*]>, pero no tolero cuando

a pizza but not tolerate. 1P.SG when

hablás tan informalmente. Yo nunca lo hago.

speak.2P.SG so informally I never it do

Like in the case of *morfar* 'to eat', we also have here the same syntactic Root both in the antecedent and in the E-site. It is only after a process of syllabic inversion applying at PF that we obtain informal register for the inverted *phonological* word. Such a process is obviously blocked by ellipsis.

4. Slurs

Paradigmatic slurs are expressions *prima facie* associated with the expression of a contemptuous attitude concerning a group of people identified in terms of its origin or descent ('spic'), race ('nigger'), sexual orientation ('faggot'), *ethnia* or religion ('kike'), gender ('whore'), etc. They meet the two criteria I use to determine the type of expressivity I am concerned with:

- (A) In the general case, expressives form doublets: *boliviano/bolita* 'Bolivian/Bolivian (pejorative)', *comer/morfar*, 'to eat'
- (B) These doublets contribute to a certain meaning dimension: style, tone or expressivity.

That the first criterion is satisfied is shared by most extant accounts of slurs. This comes in the form of the so-called *Identity Thesis*, the idea that the representational dimension of a slur is equivalent to the representational dimension of its neutral counterpart.^{viii} Thus, according to this conception, the two sentences in (41) are extensionally equivalent; they denote the set of Bolivians:

- (41) a. Juan es bolita.
J. is Bolivian_{PEJ}
'Juan is Bolivian (pejorative).'
- a. Juan es boliviano.
J. is Bolivian

‘Juan is Bolivian.’

In several accounts, the additional meaning slurs contribute is conceived of as independent of the at-issue content. This content is modeled as a bias on contexts of use (Predelli 2013), a stereotype for slurs (Orlando and Saab 2019), or a conventional implicature (McCready 2010). Regardless of particular implementations, the expressive meaning of slurs projects out of at-issues operators (see McCready 2010):

- (42) a. Juan no es bolita.
Juan not is Bolivian_{PEJORATIVE}
‘Juan is not Bolivian (pejorative).’
- b. Juan cree que Ana es bolita.
Juan believes that Ana is Bolivian_{PEJORATIVE}
‘Juan believes that Ana is Bolivian (pejorative).’
- c. Juan puede ser bolita.
Juan might be Bolivian_{PEJORATIVE}
‘Juan might be Bolivian (pejorative).’
- d. ¿Es bolita Juan?
is Bolivian_{PEJORATIVE} Juan
‘Is Juan Bolivian (pejorative)?’

Part of the debate is whether these projection effects are presuppositional or not.^{ix} The problem is subtle as it is not easy to construct the relevant tests. Yet, I think that the behavior of

slurs under ellipsis favors a non-presuppositional account of slurs at the same time it favors the particular approach to stylistic semantics I am pursuing here. In order to see how the argument works, let's consider an example of NP-ellipsis in Spanish for which we have enough evidence that the ellipsis site contains a full-fledged NP structure which is deleted at PF:

- (43) A: ¿A cuántos bolitas viste en la fiesta?
to how-many Bolivians_{PEJORATIVE} saw.2SG in the party
‘How many Bolivians_{PEJ} did you see at the party? ’
- B: Vi a tres <bolitas>, pero podrías evitar
saw.1SG to three Bolivians_{PEJORATIVE} but could.2SG avoid
ese modo de hablar de los bolivianos.
that way of speaking of the Bolivians_{PEJORATIVE}
‘Three, but you could avoid that way of speaking about Bolivians.’

By eliding the noun phrase, the speaker B provides the relevant information asked in A's question and, at the same time, objects A's xenophobic way to speak. Not eliding the noun, obviously, leads to infelicity, unless air quotations or a similar strategy is employed:

- (44) A: ¿A cuántos bolitas viste en la fiesta?
to how-many Bolivians_{PEJORATIVE} saw.2SG in the party
‘How many Bolivians_{PEJ} did you see at the party? ’
- B: #Vi a tres bolitas, pero podrías evitar
saw.1SG to three Bolivians_{PEJORATIVE} but could.2SG avoid

ese modo de hablar de los bolivianos.
 that way of speaking of the Bolivians_{PEJORATIVE}
 ‘Three, but you could avoid that way of speaking about Bolivians.’

This is an interesting state of affairs. On the one hand, it shows that ellipsis is an apt strategy to nullify the bias encoded in some lexical items. This follows from the present account that requires lexical insertion in order to make the expressivity salient in the discourse. Alternative accounts that encode the bias in the syntax don’t offer a good explanation for why B’s answer in (43B) is a non-biased answer. Recall that McCready (2010) proposes lexical entries as the following ones, where a conventional implicature is directly encoded on full lexical items which are manipulated by the syntax and LF:

$$(45) \llbracket \text{bolita} \rrbracket = \lambda x. \text{Bolivian}(x) \blacklozenge \text{Bad}(\cap \text{Bolivian}): \langle e, t \rangle^a \times t^s$$

Without further ado, ellipsis should not block the conventional implicature that B has a negative attitude towards Bolivians. In this respect, the proposal of deriving expressivity at PF gives better results. On the other hand, as I have already advanced, the facts in (43) also seem to give additional support for the hypothesis that the expressive dimension in slurs is non-presuppositional. In effect, standard presuppositions are not cancelled by ellipsis, as witnessed in cases like the following:

(46) A. Juan dejó de fumar
 J. stopped of smoking

B.	Pedro	también	<dejó	de	fumar>,
P.	too		stopped	of	smoking
	#aunque	nunca	fumó.		
	although	never	smoked		

In sum, slurs behave under ellipsis as predicted by the hypothesis of “late” expressivity. The moral to be extracted from this particular behavior of informal terms and slurs is that expressivity must be expressed (uttered). Putting the type of non-truth conditional meanings that these terms have in the syntactic-semantic derivation leaves this basic observation unexplained.

5. Conclusion

I have sketched a general project for what I have called *stylistic semantics*. The main goal of this research agenda is deriving Potts’ metalogic operator from architectural considerations, at least for a subset of expressive terms. I have proposed that this can be done to the extent the PF interface is capable of introducing stylistic meanings in the favored sense. I have conjectured that PSM, repeated below, is responsible for generating PF meanings on the basis of semantic vacuity at LF.

Principle of stylistic meaning (PSM): Given a pair of abstract nodes X and Y, taken from List 1, if X and Y are not semantically distinguishable at LF (list 3), they must be *semantically* distinguished at PF (List 2).

The proposal captures the basic properties of certain type of expressive terms, repeated below, and receives robust evidence from ellipsis and *vesre* speech:

- (A) In the general case, expressives form doublets: *boliviano/bolita* ‘Bolivian’, *comer/morfar*, ‘to eat’
- (B) These doublets contribute to a certain meaning dimension: style, color or expressivity.

The hope is that a proper and more explicit formulation of the conjectures I have discussed here will be extended to other empirical domains in the realm of stylistic semantics.

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ⁱ Even if I am only mentioning, not using, slurs and coarse language, I apologize in advance for any unintentional offense I might cause to the reader.

ⁱⁱ Notice that, in principle, (4) could be analyzed as a standard case of Vehicle Change, where the E-sites are modeled as *see it*. However, Thoms (2013) provides the following example that seems to rule out such a possibility:

- (i) A: You should ***fucking*** fire that asshole John!
B: I know you think I should, but I won’t as I like him.

Here, *fucking* is an adverbial modifier and, as such, it would not allow for Vehicle Change. However, I am not convinced that (iB) cannot be modeled as a special case of Vehicle Change, where the E-site is modeled as just *do it*. Whatever the right analysis, this is orthogonal for the main point I am making here.

ⁱⁱⁱ Following Kaplan (1989), we take the character of any expression E as a function from context to content and the content itself as function from circumstances of evaluation to truth values (i.e., to $\langle s, t \rangle$ objects under some accounts). Standardly, a Kaplanian context is a tuple consisting at least of the following parameters: $\langle w, t, a, h, l \rangle$, where *w* is a possible world, *t* is a time, *a* is the agent of the utterance, *h* the hearer, and *l* the location.

^{iv} This present test is modeled after Lipták (In press), who discusses a different type of putative mismatch in ellipsis. Here is one of her examples:

- (i) A: What are you devouring?
B: A pizza, but I am not devouring it.
B: # I am devouring a pizza, but I am not devouring it!

At first glance, this example does not parallel (21), as in (i) one is tempted to conclude that whatever verb one postulates within the E-site (e.g., *ate*) it should contribute a different truth-conditional profile than the verb in the antecedent.

^v Of course, (21B) improves if speaker B adds air quotations or other metalinguistic gestures/devices.

^{vi} The same results obtain in other semantic proposals, like Barros and Kotek's (2019) identity condition.

Redundancy reduction:

- (i) XP_E may be reduced (elided or deaccented) provided that it has a salient antecedent, XP_A , and $U[\llbracket XP_E \rrbracket]^f = U[\llbracket XP_A \rrbracket]^f$.

[Barros and Kotek 2019: 4]

And the same with more flexible approaches (Q-equivalence approaches in Barros and Kotek's terms). I use Merchant's condition just because of the influence it had in the last twenty years.

^{vii} Obviously, with nouns in which there is no gender mismatch we can have the illusion that NP-ellipsis allows bias mismatches (Muñoz Pérez, personal communication):

- (i) A. ¿Fuiste al laburo de Pedro hoy?
 went.2SG to.the work of P. today
 'Did you go to Juan's work (informal) today? '
- B. No, al <trabajo> de Juan, pero no tolero cuando
 No, to.the work of J. but not tolerate.1SG when
 hablás tan informalmente. Yo nunca lo hago.
 Speak.2SG so informally I never it do.1SG
 'No, to John's, but I don't tolerate when you speak informally. I never do it.

^{viii} This is the core thesis of Neutral Counterpart Theories, supported by Anderson and Lepore (2013a, 2013b), Jeshion (2013a, 2013b), Predelli (2013), Whiting (2013), and McCready (2010), among others. For objections to that thesis, see Hom (2008, 2010), Ashwell (2016), and Losada (this volume), among others. See also Díaz Legaspe

(2018) for insightful considerations in favor of restricting the thesis in the case of some kind of slurs, the so-called ‘normalizing’ ones. For a general defense of the Identity Thesis, see Caso and LoGuercio (2016).

^{ix} See Schlenker (2007), for a presuppositional account, and McCready 2007, for a non-presuppositional approach.