I

EXPRESSING

by WILLIAM P. ALSTON

Professor of Philosophy, University of Michigan

The family of linguistic acts grouped under the term 'express'—expressing interest, conviction, sympathy, approval, intention, delight, enthusiasm, indignation, annoyance, disgust, appreciation, determination, belief, and so forth, has figured heavily in recent philosophical discussion. But most of these discussions have been seriously maimed through proceeding, explicitly or implicitly, on the basis of quite inadequate notions of what it is to express something in language. An examination of some of these inadequacies will point the way to a more adequate analysis.

I

Moral philosophers who are themselves 'emotivists', or who are discussing that position, will often make a sharp distinction between expressing a certain feeling or attitude, and asserting (stating, saying, telling someone) that one has a certain feeling or attitude. And it is said that if we maintain that moral judgements are *expressions* of attitudes or feelings we will get a very different ethical theory from the one we get if we maintain that moral judgements are *assertions* that one has certain attitudes or feelings. Consider the following passages from A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic*.[1]

> For in saying that a certain type of action is right or wrong, I am not making any factual statement, not even a statement about my own state of mind. I am merely expressing certain moral sentiments. (107)
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> On our theory . . . in saying that tolerance was a virtue, I should not be making any statement about my own feelings or about

[1] Second edition, London 1946.

anything else. I should simply be evincing my feelings, which is not at all the same thing as saying that I have them. (109)

For whereas the subjectivist holds that ethical statements actually assert the existence of certain feelings, we hold that ethical statements are expressions and excitants of feeling which do not necessarily involve any assertions. (109)

At first glance this looks clear enough. But the stark lines of the contrast begin to soften when we ask what Ayer would take as a clear case of asserting that I have a certain feeling or attitude. I suppose that if I uttered any of the following sentences in normal circumstances, we would have clear cases of such assertions.

I am very enthusiastic about your plan.

That interests me very much.

I am disgusted.

You have my whole-hearted approval.

That annoys me no end.

And yet in all these cases it would be perfectly correct to report what went on by using 'express', that is, by saying that *S* (speaker) expressed his enthusiasm for *H*'s (hearer's) plan, that *S* expressed his interest in *X*, that *S* expressed his disgust with *X*. I can express my enthusiasm for your plan just as well by saying 'I'm very enthusiastic about your plan', as I can by saying 'What a tremendous plan!', 'Wonderful', or 'Great!' I can express disgust at *X* just as well by saying 'I'm disgusted', as by saying 'How revolting!', or 'Ugh'. I can express approval as well by saying 'I completely approve of what you are doing' as I can by saying 'Swell', or 'Good show'. And I can express annoyance as well by saying 'That annoys me no end' as by saying 'Damn'.

This shows that expressing and asserting are not mutually exclusive in the way commonly supposed. Of course we can have one without the other. For example, when we use interjections like 'Damn', 'Ugh', or 'Bully', we are expressing annoyance, disgust, or enthusiasm but not saying that we are annoyed, disgusted, or enthusiastic. But examples like those in the preceding paragraph show that in a large proportion of the cases in which one can be said to have asserted that one has a certain feeling, what went on can equally well be reported by saying that one expressed this feeling, and vice versa.

Why has this point been missed so consistently? I suspect that it

is largely because philosophers have thought of expressing feelings and attitudes as something which is primarily done by cries, groans, squeals, writhings, looks, and tones of voice. It is these kinds of behaviour which are taken as paradigmatic. A linguistic performance could be regarded as expression only if it were very similar to them. The utterance of interjections but not the utterance of declarative sentences was thought to qualify on these grounds. It seems to me that this often unspoken but none the less influential conviction—that saying 'Ugh' is essentially the same thing as having a certain look on the face, while saying 'I'm disgusted' is something fundamentally different—constitutes the deepest root of the misconceptions we are seeking to remove. As against this conviction I wish to argue (1) that squeals, looks, and tones of voice do not express feelings in anything like the sense in which they are expressed by interjections;[1] (2) that it is in just the same sense of 'express' that a feeling is expressed by an interjection and by a declarative sentence in the first person present tense; (3) that there are only minor differences between expressing a feeling (linguistically) and asserting that one has it.

II

I say to you 'When I approached Jones on the matter, he expressed real enthusiasm for my plan'. You ask 'What did he say, exactly?', and I reply, 'Oh, he didn't say anything about it, but there was a definite glow in his eyes while I was talking'. It is clear that I misrepresented the situation when I said that Jones *expressed* enthusiasm for my plan. One does not express enthusiasm for something by throwing his hat in the air, dancing a jig, emitting squeals of delight, or 'lighting up' one's eyes. If the only reaction to a suggestion is of this character, one might be said to have shown, demonstrated, evinced,[2] or betrayed enthusiasm, but not to have *expressed* it. Again, if my only response to your helping me carry a heavy box was a gracious smile, I would not be said to have expressed appreciation for your help, though I might be said to

[1] This thesis is subject to a qualification which will be made explicit later. See p. 27.

[2] Note Ayer's implicit equation of evincing and expressing in the quotation on pages 15–16.

have shown that I appreciated it. In fact I might well be taken to task for not having expressed appreciation.

These examples suggest that there is a fundamental difference between *expressing* a feeling by saying something (interjectional or declarative), and showing, demonstrating, or manifesting a feeling by a 'facial expression'. To be sure, it would be an act of folly to place too much reliance on the word 'express' in this connection. We can, in cases of this sort, speak of facial expressions and the like as expressing something or other. Thus: 'Her face expressed great determination'; 'His every movement expressed his indignation at what was going on'. But note that in these cases we would not go from this to saying '*She* expressed great determination' and '*He* expressed his indignation at what was going on'. The presence of a certain facial expression or a certain demeanour is not a sufficient ground for saying that *the person* expressed determination or indignation, while having said something of an appropriate sort would be. If we are going to infer anything about what the person did from 'Her face expressed great determination', it will be that she showed, manifested, or displayed great determination.

Even if this is admitted, Ayer and those of like mind might take the position that there is a single sense of 'express' in which feelings are expressed both by looks and interjections—but not by declarative sentences in the first person singular present tense—even though this sense is not the one embodied in the ordinary use of phrases of the form 'He expressed his *F* for *X*'. The position would be that the distinctions marked by the use of this phrase are relatively superficial ones, and that underlying these distinctions is a much more fundamental identity. We are then faced with the question of whether any such sense can be specified.

Writers of this persuasion have done precious little to specify such a sense. Such suggestions as have been made take one or the other of two forms, both of which are adumbrated in the following passage from C. L. Stevenson's *Ethics and Language*.[1]

> The emotive meaning of words can best be understood by comparing and contrasting it with the expressiveness of laughs, sighs, groans, and all similar manifestations of the emotions, whether by voice or gesture. It is obvious that these 'natural' expressions are direct behaviouristic symptoms of the emotions or feelings to

[1] New Haven, Conn. 1944.

which they testify. A laugh gives direct 'vent' to the amusement which it accompanies, and does so in such an intimate, inevitable way that if the laugh is checked, some degree of amusement is likely to be checked as well. In much the same way a sigh gives immediate release to sorrow; and a shrug of the shoulders integrally expresses its nonchalant carelessness. . . . Interjections . . . are *like* sighs, shrieks, groans, and the rest in that they can be used to 'give vent' to the emotions or attitudes in much the same way. The word 'hurrah', for instance, serves much the same purpose as any simple cry of enthusiasm, and releases the emotions with equal directness. (37–38)

The use of terms like 'release' and 'vent' suggests, in the absence of any further explanation, a sort of steam engine model, in which expressing is something like the opening of a relief valve. In expressing a feeling by an appropriate gasp, facial contortion, or interjection, one is working off steam, relieving the emotional tension involved in the feeling. But it does not seem that this is what always, or even typically, goes on when one expresses something by an interjection. It is simply not the case that one generally feels less disgust, enthusiasm, annoyance or indignation after expressing it than before. Of course, the above quotation also contains the opposite suggestion that expression serves to nourish or heighten the emotional state rather than to reduce it. But even if we construe expression as either a reduction or a heightening of emotional tension, it will not cover all cases of the verbal expression of feelings and attitudes by interjections. In general, when I express admiration, sympathy, approval, or satisfaction, there is no noticeable emotional tension involved. I am not thinking of insincerity, of expresssing feelings one does not have. The point is that in such cases one is not *expected* to be in a state of emotional tension. The steam engine model is much too crude to fit the facts.

A more promising suggestion might be extracted from the following sentence in the above quotation. 'It is obvious that these "natural" expressions are direct behaviouristic symptoms of the emotions or feelings to which they testify.' One might claim that what is common to all cases of 'expression' is that the agent is doing something which will provide an *indication* (to a properly trained observer) that he is in a certain psychological state. This

position is hinted at more broadly in C. K. Ogden's and I. A. Richards' *The Meaning of Meaning*.[1]

> Besides symbolizing a reference, our words also are signs of emotions, attitudes, moods, the temper, interest or set of the mind in which the references occur. They are signs in this fashion because they are grouped with these attitudes and interests in certain looser and tighter contexts. Thus, in speaking a sentence we are giving rise to, as in hearing it we are confronted by, at least two sign-situations. One is interpreted from symbols to reference and so to referent; the other is interpreted from verbal signs to the attitude, mood, interest, purpose, desire, and so forth of the speaker, and thence to the situation, circumstances and conditions in which the utterance is made. (223)

This suggestion is reinforced by a consideration of the etymology of 'express': to press out. We can easily get from this to: to externalize, to exhibit to public view.

There is no doubt that such a concept could be employed. We could use 'express' for anything I do which would be a reliable indication of some feeling or attitude. But although this would give us a sense of 'express' which applies equally to grimaces and interjections, it applies just as clearly to declarative sentences like 'I'm disgusted'. It cannot be doubted that one way of providing someone with a reliable indication of my disgust is to tell him that I am disgusted. But no doubt the way in which saying 'I'm disgusted' is an indication of disgust is very different from the way in which a facial expression is an indication of disgust. Let us explore this difference, and try to determine on which side interjections fall.

III

To say that x is an indication of y is to say that from x one can (fairly safely) infer the existence of y. If this is what is common to all cases of indication, differences of kind will come from differences in the bases on which such inferences are made. Let us ask how one would support an inference from 'I'm disgusted', on the one hand, and from a facial expression on the other, to the person being

[1] New York 1923.

disgusted. To put the matter shortly, in the first case one would appeal to a general practice of *using* the sentence in a certain way, whereas in the second case nothing of the sort is involved; there we would appeal to a *de facto* correlation between a certain kind of facial expression and being disgusted. This latter exhibits basically the same structure as any case of taking one thing to be a natural sign of another, for example taking a certain noise in an engine to be an indication of an improperly seated valve. If it is the case that when people look a certain way they generally feel disgusted with something, then one can take that look as a sign of disgust, whether or not people are generally conscious of looking that way when they are disgusted and whether or not such looks are something which can be consciously controlled. The mere fact of the frequent correlation is sufficient. But in the other case the basis of the inference is not just that it is generally true that when a person says 'I'm disgusted' he is disgusted; although if this were not the case we would undoubtedly stop taking the utterance as a reliable indication of disgust. More fundamentally it is the fact that in the English language community there exists a practice of using the sentence in a certain way.[1] And to say that there exists such a practice is not to say that in fact the sentence is (often) used in that way; it is to say that there are rules in force in the community which assign the sentence to that use.

Within the limits of this paper I cannot give an adequate account of what it is for rules to be in force and what it is for a certain practice to exist. I can only say enough to bring out some crucial differences between a mere *de facto* regularity in behaviour and a rule governing behaviour. A clear case of the former would be my habit of waving my arms whenever I hear a Mozart piano concerto: a clear case of the latter would be the rule of tennis that the server must stand on the side of the court opposite to that into which he is serving. In both cases there is a by-and-large regularity; that there is something more in the latter case but not in the former is

[1] Thus one way of bringing out the difference is this. The fact that a certain look is an *expression* of disgust is constituted by the fact that it can be taken as a reliable indication of disgust. But with 'I'm disgusted' the dependence is in the opposite direction. One takes an utterance of 'I'm disgusted' as an indication of a feeling of disgust only because there exists a practice of using that sentence to express disgust. Hence the last use of 'express' cannot be explicated in terms of the notion of a reliable indication; on the contrary the reliability of the sentence as an indication presupposes its expressive function.

shown by what happens when an exception comes up. A case of my remaining immobile during a Mozart concerto has no particular significance, except as showing that the correlation is not invariable. But when a tennis player stands on the left side when serving into that forecourt, typical reactions ensue on the part of other players, umpires, and spectators. His serve will not be counted as valid, he may be upbraided, the necessity of standing in the proper position may be stressed to him, and so on. This is something more than a mere regularity; it is important for a certain area of social activity that this regularity hold as much as possible. Therefore, various social mechanisms are brought into play to train participants to exhibit the regularity, and deviations from it are met with various sorts of reactions designed to call attention to the deviation and to make it less likely that such deviations occur in the future. These are the hallmarks of the operation of a rule. Although *qua* regularity it may not be invariably true that tennis players *do* stand on the opposite side when serving, still one can say unqualifiedly that there is a rule of tennis which *requires* this in every instance.

It seems clear that the *utterance of 'I'm disgusted'—feeling of disgust* tie-up belongs on the rule side of this contrast. If in a particular case it turns out that the speaker did not in fact feel disgusted, we do not just take this as showing that the correlation is not invariable. We respond in ways which we have seen to be typical of the operation of rules. If the deviation issues from one who is learning the language—an infant or a foreigner—we do what we can to get it across to him that this sentence is not *to be uttered* unless the speaker feels disgusted. If the speaker can be presumed to have already mastered this stretch of the language, we take him to task, more or less sharply depending on the circumstances, for not having his mind on what he was saying, for insincerity, or for whatever else was responsible for the lapse. The way we treat the exceptional cases shows clearly that there is a rule in force in the English language community which stipulates that 'I'm disgusted' is not to be uttered, in certain sorts of situations,[1] unless the speaker feels disgusted.

[1] This qualification is necessary because of the fact that there are situations in which the sentence can be legitimately employed without this condition holding, for example, being ironical and giving examples (as I have just been doing). I am supposing that one can find marks for distinguishing those contexts in which this condition is required (that is, those contexts in which the sentence

It may not be equally clear that the *look on the face—feeling of disgust* connection is a mere regularity, but we shall be forced to that conclusion on reflection. The chief difficulty in separating this from rules lies in the fact that there are cases of deviation from this regularity in which we would upbraid the person for deception. 'Natural expressions' of feelings can be simulated; the art of drama depends on this possibility. And such simulation can be engaged in for purposes of deception. I can contrive to look disgusted when I am not, in order to get you to think that I am. But the possibility of deception does not itself mark a fundamental difference between rules and mere regularities. For I can deceive you into thinking that x is present, either by contriving to produce something which is in fact usually present only when x is present,[1] or by doing something which is tied by a rule to the presence of x. Therefore the possibility of deliberately looking a certain way in order to get you to think that I am disgusted does not itself settle the question as to what kind of connection this is. We have to determine whether any other indications of rules are present. It is evident that none are. Deception is the only sort of lapse from the regularity for which the indication-producer will be taken to task. There is no such thing here as instructing the novice in the proper use of a certain facial expression, or reproving someone for not having his mind sufficiently on what he is doing. Apart from the case of deception, a deviation from the regularity will simply be taken to show that the correlation is not an invariable one, and, perhaps, that we have not made fine enough discriminations between types of facial expression. Apart from the case of deception, when the inference does not work we do not blame the agent for having misused the indications; we 'blame' ourselves for placing too much reliance on a rough generalization. And the possibility of deception is, as we have seen, perfectly compatible with the supposition that it is a mere regularity which is involved.

Reflection on the possibility of deliberately deceptive facial expressions can lead us to a very simple way of showing the difference between our two cases. With facial expressions, deception (or the possibility of deception) comes in when one deliber-

can be legitimately used only in a straightforward way) from those contexts in which it can properly have derivative uses.

[1] This can be done with natural signs which are not themselves aspects of behaviour. I can put a room into disarray in order to get you to think that there has been a fight there.

ately sets about producing a certain look. We ordinarily take the look to be an indication of disgust because we suppose it to be a 'natural', spontaneous manifestation of being disgusted. As soon as we learn that someone is contriving to look that way, we properly suspect deception. Just the opposite is true of 'I'm disgusted'. Here we will take the utterance of the sentence to be a reliable indication of disgust only if we suppose it was done intentionally with the agent realizing what he was doing.[1] If we think the sentence was uttered in a fit of abstraction, its indicative value will be impaired if not altogether lost. We might well take this differential force of deliberateness on the reliability of the indication as a way of distinguishing signs, based on mere regularities, from 'symbols', the significance of which is based on rules.

In calling a facial expression a 'natural sign' of a feeling, we are not implying that it is natural or innate, as opposed to learned or acquired as a result of conditioning. It may well be that correlations between a certain look and a certain state of feeling differ from culture to culture; so that what in our culture would be a look of contempt would be a look of affection among the Kwakiutl. In that case it would seem obvious that the members of a society are somehow conditioned to 'express' their feelings by one facial configuration rather than another. What we are implying is that these regularities in behaviour were not set up through any explicit training, and, more importantly, that deviations from them are not corrected in the way in which deviations from rules are corrected. It is the distinction between the presence or absence of the operation of rules which is crucial, not the distinction between what is innate and what is acquired in the course of one's interaction with one's environment.

IV

We have seen that facial expressions of disgust and saying that one is disgusted are indications (or expressions) of disgust in radically different senses of these terms. It is the contention of philosophers like Ayer that what we do in expressing feelings by uttering inter-

[1] I hope it is not necessary at this hour of the day to point out that I am not using expressions like 'intentionally', 'realizing what he is doing', and 'with his mind on what he is doing' in such a way that they apply only if the overt activity is accompanied by a covert mental commentary or preceded by a conscious act of resolution.

jections is to be classed with the former rather than with the latter. But having come thus far we can see that this is not the case. An interjection like 'Ugh', 'Damn', or 'Bully' is an indication of disgust, annoyance, or approval, by virtue of certain rules holding, just as much as declarative sentences like 'I'm disgusted', 'That annoys me no end', or 'I fully approve of that'. Again we get a crucial test by seeing what happens when we encounter an exception to the regularity. When we discover that someone who said 'Bully!' really has no enthusiasm for what was under discussion, we will respond either by giving him further instruction in the language, reprimanding him for insincerity, or taking him to task for not having his mind on what he is saying, depending on the circumstances of the misuse, just as we do in the case of a deviant utterance of 'I am very enthusiastic about that', and just as we do not do with what we (incorrectly) take to be a look of enthusiasm.

Again, in expressing enthusiasm for your suggestion by saying 'Bully!' (but not in manifesting enthusiasm for your plan by the way I look), I am setting up relations of implication, presupposition, and incompatibility with other linguistic acts, or the products thereof, just as much as if I had said 'I'm very enthusiastic about your idea'. In saying 'Bully!' in those circumstances, I imply that I understood what you said, I presuppose that you have put forward something to which one might react either favourably or unfavourably, and I rule out the possibility that I consider your plan to be completely without merit. For if having said 'Bully!' in those circumstances I were to go on to say 'I didn't understand a word you were saying', or 'Your plan is completely without merit', then there would be something logically, and not just psychologically, odd about what I was doing. Adding these remarks would render my discourse unintelligible in just the same way as that in which it would become unintelligible, if I were to add to 'I'm trying to sell my car', something like 'I don't have a car' or 'My car has already been sold'. In both cases the additions would make it impossible to attach the usual sense to 'Bully' or 'I'm trying to sell my car', and we would be at a loss to understand what was being said. Thus an expression of enthusiasm by use of an interjection has at least some of the logical relations enjoyed by admitted cases of assertions. This is the other side of the coin exhibited in the last paragraph. It is because the use of interjections is made the sort of action it is by the operation of certain

rules that the expression thus engendered can have logical relations.

It cannot be denied that there are some respects in which an utterance of 'Damn' is more like a frown than it is like an utterance of 'I am terribly annoyed by that'. In contrast with the latter the interjection is typically more spontaneous, less deliberate, more explosive; it more often carries with it an exhibition of annoyance. But these differences in degree cannot compare in importance with the common features we have just brought out. Interjection-utterances and declarative-sentence-utterances stand together as distinctively linguistic modes of activity. Thus the vernacular is justified in drawing a line between expressing a feeling on the one hand and evincing, betraying or manifesting a feeling on the other, and in drawing the line where it does. For this cut coincides with the distinction between behaviour which is an indication of feeling by being subject to certain rules, and behaviour which is an indication of feeling by virtue of mere regularities; and with the associated difference between indications which enter into logical relations and those which do not. And this is the most important line which can be drawn through this territory. This completes the defence of my first two theses, that feelings are expressed by interjections in just the same sense of the term in which they are expressed by declarative sentences, but in a different sense of the term from that in which they are expressed by facial expressions and demeanour.

The above discussion could be summed up by saying that to express one's F for x in language is to utter a sentence (or produce a sentence-surrogate) while recognizing that one's utterance is governed by a rule requiring that the speaker have F for x. It is the operation of such a rule which makes an utterance of any sort a case of expressing one's F for x. It is worthy of note that this account applies to expressions of intention, belief, and desire in just the same way as that in which it applies to expressions of annoyance or approval. What makes saying 'I am going to the meeting' an expression of intention is that one utters the sentence while recognizing that one's utterance is governed by a rule requiring that the speaker have an intention to go to the meeting in question. And what makes saying 'In all likelihood Jane has withdrawn' an expression of one's belief that Jane has withdrawn is the fact that one utters the sentence while recognizing that one's utterance is

subject to a rule requiring that the speaker believe that Jane has withdrawn.[1] One of the merits of this account of expressing is that it reveals the basic identity between expressions of quite different sorts of items. This identity will be obscured by assimilation of linguistic expressions of feelings to grimaces and groans.

And now for the qualification which was promised on page 17. The distinction between expression which takes place via rules and expression which takes place via mere regularities does not quite coincide with the distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic expression. For it seems that there are pieces of non-linguistic behaviour which have the status of expressing feelings or attitudes by the operation of rules in just the way in which sentences do. Thus in a certain society it may be the case that a shrug of the shoulders in a certain kind of situation is assigned by rule to the expression of indifference, or a raising of the hand in a certain kind of situation is assigned by rule to the expression of approval. That is, it may be the case in some society that shrugging the shoulders in such a situation when one is not indifferent will be regarded as a misuse just as much as saying 'What difference does it make?' without really being indifferent. The question as to the extent to which such rule-governed non-linguistic communication exists in our society and in other societies is a largely unanswered question of considerable interest. But the bare possibility of this sort of thing is enough to inhibit us from construing our basic distinction as a distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic expression. It might be claimed that all such cases are derivative from linguistic expression in something like the way in which the Morse code and the notations of symbolic logic are derivative from saying things in language. In that case we could regard shrugs which have a rule-governed status as 'sentence-surrogates'. But it is not clear that they can all be so regarded.

In the preceding discussion we have repressed awareness of this phenomenon in order to concentrate on the difference between linguistic expression of feelings and the *manifestations* of feeling by looks and bearing, which are (normally) things one simply *has* rather than things which one does. We permitted ourselves this

[1] For an exposition and defence of this way of construing acts like expressing feelings, beliefs, and intentions, making requests, promises and predictions, and so forth, see W. P. Alston, 'Linguistic Acts', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 1 (1964).

emphasis partly because we were specifically interested in expressing as a linguistic act, and partly because linguistic expression is the clearest case of that kind of expressing which is constituted as such by the fact that rules are in operation. But having nailed down the difference between the extremes, we would be remiss if we did not explicitly recognize the existence of a large, unexplored intermediate area. This area *may* include things other than those just mentioned. For example, consider the case of a man who during a Catholic service deliberately stands up when others are sitting, leans back in a relaxed fashion when others are kneeling, and so forth. Here we might say that *he* expressed his contempt for the service by doing these things, as well as saying that he showed or displayed his contempt. Are these actions fitted to express contempt by virtue of a rule? It is difficult to say. Or again consider the statement 'In the Ninth Symphony Beethoven expressed his sense of triumph over his deafness'. Here it is clear that we want to say that he *expressed* his sense of triumph, rather than displayed, showed, or evinced his sense of triumph. But it seems equally clear that the Ninth Symphony does not have the status of an expression of such triumph by virtue of the operation of rules, in anything like the way in which a sentence would. We are unable to deal with such cases in this paper. But the fact that such problems are left dangling does not shake the conclusion that expressing a feeling by uttering a sentence (any sentence which is fitted for this job) is sharply distinguished from manifesting a feeling by something like a facial expression, in terms of the distinction between rules and regularities.[1]

V

Let us turn to our third thesis, that there is no *important* difference between expressing one's F for x and asserting that one has F for x. So far we have made explicit no basis for *any* distinction. The above account of expressing would seem to hold good of the corresponding assertions as well. To see this let us consider what it is, on this analysis, to make a certain assertion. To assert that one's car is stalled is to utter a sentence while recognizing that one's

[1] I am indebted to my colleagues, Frithjof Bergmann and Abraham Kaplan, both for forcing me to attend to these complexities and for furnishing me with useful examples.

utterance is governed by a rule requiring that the speaker's car be stalled (together with whatever is presupposed by this, for instance, that the speaker have a car). More generally, to assert that *P* is to utter a sentence while recognizing that one's utterance is governed by a rule requiring that *P*. But if this is so, then to assert that one has *F* for *x* is to utter a sentence while recognizing that one's utterance is governed by a rule requiring that one feel *F* for *x*. But it is the operation of just this kind of rule that makes an utterance a case of expressing one's *F* for *x*. Thus with respect to the rules which are operative—and this is what gives an utterance its content—the expression and the assertion are indistinguishable. It is this basic identity which brings it about that normal utterances of sentences like 'I am annoyed' can be characterized either as expressing one's annoyance or as asserting that one is annoyed.

Nevertheless there are cases of the one which are not also cases of the other. When we express a feeling by an interjection, we are not also asserting that we have the feeling. There are also, more rarely, cases of the assertion which are not cases of expression. Consider the following. You are trying to conceal your feelings, but I, for some reason, am determined to find out how you are reacting to the situation. I badger you until finally you very reluctantly say, in a flat tone of voice, 'Well, I am somewhat annoyed'. In this case you would not be said to be expressing annoyance. We have not fully understood expressing until we have brought out those features which distinguish it from asserting.

The latter difference is the easier to understand. The laboriously extracted report is not a case of expressing simply because we do not say that someone is *expressing* a feeling unless his performance is relatively spontaneous, unless the verbal utterance issues directly from the feeling and takes on a coloration therefrom. It is in this respect that there is a real continuity between facial expression and expressing as a linguistic act.

The attempt to say why one cannot assert that he is annoyed by using an interjection will get us into deeper water. First off we can see that one has not made an assertion unless one has uttered a sentence which could be used in a specification of the assertion in question. More precisely, one cannot be said to have asserted that *P* unless he has uttered a sentence which could replace '*P*' in 'He asserted that *P*'. This limits us to declarative sentences, for only declarative sentences fit into that slot. But if the only feature which

attaches to asserting that one is annoyed, but not to expressing one's annoyance, is this restriction to a certain grammatical form of sentence, then the former is not a significantly richer concept. In that case this would be no more important a difference than that between expressing one's annoyance in English and expressing one's annoyance in Swahili. Surely the fact that, in a given linguistic community, a given kind of linguistic act can be performed by the utterance of some sentences and not others is a matter of convention in the most trivial sense. It seems clear that we could radically change the conventions assigning certain grammatical types of sentences to certain linguistic acts without thereby altering the role of those linguistic acts in thought and communication. But of course the matter would be altered if there were deeper differences behind this grammatical restriction.

One thing which would seem to give a declarative-sentence-utterance a fundamentally different status from any interjection-utterance is the way in which it invites certain responses. If I say 'I am enthusiastic about your plan', you could reply 'Oh, no you're not', 'I don't believe it', 'Why should I suppose that you really are?', 'Are you quite sure?', or 'But you haven't been acting that way'. Whereas none of these responses would be appropriate to 'Bully!', 'Capital!', or 'Swell!'. Thus in saying 'I'm enthusiastic about your plan', I am asserting a proposition, which can be said to be true or false, which can be contradicted, doubted, or denied, the grounds for which can be questioned, positive or negative evidence for which can be adduced; whereas in employing an interjection no proposition is being put forward, and so doubt, denial, contradiction, and the assembling of evidence are all out of place. It is because declarative sentences fit onto responses of this sort that the grammatical restriction is not trivial; what lies behind it is the notion of making a claim which can be evaluated as true or false, grounded or ungrounded, and which enters into logical relations, such as contradiction and implication, which go along with this status.

Before exploring this difference I must pause to take account of some recently prevalent doubts that even declarative-sentence-utterances of the sort we have been considering constitute real assertions. It has been suggested[1] that utterances like 'I am annoyed' differ in crucial respects from clear cases of assertion, for

[1] See, for example, G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, London 1949, p. 102.

instance, in not admitting the responses 'How do you know?', or 'Surely you are mistaken'. It is claimed that it makes no sense to think of the speaker being mistaken in these cases, that requests for grounds of his 'statement' are out of place, and that one can reject what he says only if one doubts his truthfulness. Now it is not clear to me that a person cannot be mistaken in saying how he feels about something. Perhaps those who hold that it makes no sense to say that he is mistaken are overlooking the human capacity for self-deception. Granted that one can't make a mistake here in some of the ways he can in other matters, for example through not having gathered enough data or through not being able to get a close enough look, still one might make a mistake through not being willing to admit to oneself what one's real feelings on the matter are. But even if it is an *a priori* truth that mistake is impossible in these matters, there is still enough continuity with admitted assertions to give ample ground for so classifying these cases. Even if the speaker cannot be mistaken, another can reject or contradict his statement, doubt whether it is so, and look for supporting evidence, and this would seem to be enough to make what he is saying an assertion, though the philosophical use of 'assertion' is too loose to permit a definitive decision.

As John Austin has pointed out,[1] we should take the traditional distinction between assertions and other linguistic acts with more than a grain of salt. Whenever I say anything, my utterance carries certain claims which can be evaluated as true or false, founded or unfounded. If I ask you to unlock my car, what I say carries the claims that I have a car and that it is locked; if I advise you to accept an offer from Stanford, my act of advising carries the claims that you have received an offer from Stanford and that you are in a position to accept it; if I congratulate you on your presidential address, I am committing myself to the proposition that you have delivered a presidential address. And all of these claims are subject to the same evaluations, the same reactions, as any assertion. No doubt in all these cases there is a real point to distinguishing the linguistic performance involved from making an assertion; this stems from the fact that asking, advising, and congratulating involve something more than committing oneself to the propositions mentioned. To *ask* you to unlock my car goes beyond asserting that I have a car, that it is unlocked, that you are capable of unlock-

[1] *How To Do Things With Words*, London 1962, esp. Section XI.

ing it, and so forth; just as advising you to accept an offer from Stanford goes beyond asserting that you have received an offer from Stanford, that you are in a position to accept it, and so on. (Unfortunately the limits of this paper do not allow us to go into what the additional feature is in these cases.) Since we focus our attention on the respects in which linguistic performances of these sorts go beyond making assertions, we would say that the propositions mentioned in each case are presupposed rather than explicitly asserted. But as a corrective to the traditional assumption that assertions differ from other linguistic actions by virtue of possessing something very important which the others lack, it is worth while emphasizing the point that assertions are poorer, not richer, than their relations. The defining features of assertion-making pervade linguistic performances throughout; linguistic actions which are not assertions are those which go beyond these.

To return to our problem, there is much less reason to distinguish expressing one's enthusiasm (by an interjection) from asserting that one is enthusiastic than there is for distinguishing asking you to open my car from asserting the propositions we saw to be involved in that request. For here the extra dimension is lacking. This can be seen by the following considerations. To the request to unlock my car one *can* respond by 'But it isn't locked', 'What makes you think it's locked?', or 'It was unlocked two minutes ago'. That is, one *can* respond in any way which is appropriate to the assertion, 'My car is locked'. And so for the other propositions involved in the request. But over and above these there are responses like 'No, I won't,' 'All right', 'Why should I?', 'I'm too busy', and so forth. And it is these responses which are distinctive of requests and other 'imperative' actions. The existence of such responses shows that there is an extra dimension to the request, over and above the presupposed assertions. But we will search in vain for a class of responses which would distinguish the interjectional expression from its assertive correlate. The interjectional expression of enthusiasm, as much as the assertion that one is enthusiastic, can give rise to such reactions as denials or doubts that one is really enthusiastic, and the citing of positive or negative evidence. It is true that they will have to take a different verbal form.[1] If the utterance is 'Splendid!' the retort will have to be

[1] Presumably it is this which leads people to take the position that they cannot give rise to the same reactions.

'You're not really enthusiastic' rather than 'No, you're not', 'But you haven't been acting enthusiastic' rather than 'You haven't been acting as if you are', or 'It's not true that you are enthusiastic' rather than 'That's not true'. That is, the claim is spelled out in the declarative sentence, 'I'm very enthusiastic about your plan' in such a way as to allow for more elliptical responses than are possible to 'Splendid!' But this can hardly be supposed to affect the substance of the responses. There are many factors which force us to spell something out more explicitly on one occasion than on another. It is still the case that anything which can be appropriately said in response to 'I'm terribly enthusiastic abour your plan', can be said in response to 'Splendid!', and vice versa. The triviality of the difference in grammatical requirements for the responses nicely mirrors the triviality of the difference in grammatical requirements for the original utterance.

Thus it is a mistake to think that the concept of asserting that one has F for x is significantly richer than the concept of expressing one's F for x. The restriction to declarative sentences for the asserting turns out to be trivial. It carries with it no associated difference in logical status, no difference in the force of what is being said. It is a carry-over from other areas, like the assertion-request distinction, where the difference in grammatical form does mirror significant differences in the role of the utterances in communication. The only difference which is at all noteworthy is the one, mentioned briefly above, that 'express', unlike 'assert', is restricted to those cases in which the utterance is relatively spontaneous and in which the feeling is exhibited in the way one's words are uttered. (The latter part of this requirement applies only to expressions of feelings and, perhaps, attitudes. It is nonsense to speak of a belief or an intention being exhibited in the way one utters one's words.) And this difference carries with it no difference in the logical or epistemological status of what one is saying.

VI

One thing shown by this discussion is that several widely held views about the difference between asserting and expressing are totally without foundation.

(1) Assertion is 'cognitive', expression 'non-cognitive'.

(2) Assertions stand in logical relations, expressions only in causal relations.

(3) Assertions present propositions which can be evaluated as true or false, expressions do not.

The sooner it is realized that such contrasts are spurious the sooner we can get down to the job of giving an adequate account of the relation of expressions of feelings and attitudes to moral judgements, value judgements, factual generalizations, and affirmations of religious faith.