BIANCA CEPOLLARO
Scuola Normale Superiore (Pisa)/Institut Jean Nicod (Paris)
bianca.cepollaro@gmail.com

BUILDING EVALUATION INTO LANGUAGE[1]

abstract

In this paper I spell out the conditions for a uniform analysis of thick terms and slurs, presented in Cepollaro and Stojanovic (2016). Our claim is that thick terms and slurs convey evaluations via presupposition and represent a device through which language implicitly conveys linguistically encoded evaluations. I introduce the presuppositional account (section 2) and elaborate on the conditions that need to be fulfilled for slurs and thick terms to be analyzed along similar lines (section 3). I discuss the predictions that this approach offers about the issues of reference and extension (section 4). I conclude with some considerations about the role and functions of slurs and thick terms with respect to moral systems (section 5).

keywords

evaluatives, presuppositions, reference, slurs, thick terms

Phenomenology and Mind, n. 11 - 2016, pp. 158-168
DOI: 10.13128/Phe_Mi-20116
Web: www.fupress.net/index.php/pam

ISSN 2280-7853 (print) - ISSN 2239-4028 (on line)

1. Introduction

The aim of the present paper is to spell out the conditions for a uniform analysis of thick terms and slurs, that represent a device through which language can convey evaluations in a way that is linguistically encoded and implicit. In Cepollaro and Stojanovic (2016) we presented a presuppositional account of "hybrid evaluatives", a class of terms including slurs and thick terms. Slurs are usually defined in philosophy of language and linguistics as derogatory terms targeting individuals and groups on the basis of their belonging to a certain category. Prototypical examples in English are "chink", "faggot", "kike", "nigger", "wop", etc. Thick terms, on the other hand, have drawn the attention of scholars mainly in metaethics rather than philosophy of language and linguistics. They are often introduced by means of examples (typically: "chaste", "courageous", "generous", "lewd", etc.), rather than through a canonical definition. Roughly, thick terms are expressions that combine descriptive content and evaluative content; unlike slurs, the evaluative component can display different polarities (i.e. it can be positive or negative) and they often lack a single-term counterpart: their descriptive content usually corresponds to a paraphrase. The main claim put forward in Cepollaro and Stojanovic (2016) is that hybrid evaluatives systematically convey evaluations through presuppositions. After briefly introducing the account (section 2), I elaborate on the conditions that need to be fulfilled for slurs and thick terms to be analyzed along similar lines (section 3) and I discuss the predictions that this presuppositional approach can offer about the issues of reference and extension (section 4). In section 5, I conclude by showing how the presuppositional account brings up some general considerations about the role and the functions of hybrid evaluatives with respect to our moral systems[1].

1 I would like to thank the organizers of the San Raffaele Spring School of Philosophy (SRSSP) 2016 on Emotions, Normativity, and Social Life for the great event they put together. Thanks to all the participants for their interesting talks, stimulating discussion and helpful comments. Thanks also to Claudia Bianchi, Robin Jeshion, Uriah Kriegel, Isidora Stojanovic and an anonymous referee for their insightful suggestions. This work was supported by the Labex and Idex grants: anr-10-labx-0087 iec, anr-10- idex-0001-02 psl*, and project mineco ffi2012-37658.

2. A uniform analysis of slurs and thick terms

In Cepollaro and Stojanovic (2016) we analyze slurs and thick terms as belonging to the same kind of expressions that we call "hybrid evaluatives". Our proposal is to treat both of slurs and thick terms as presuppositional triggers. Hybrid evaluatives have a descriptive content at the level of truth conditions. In the case of slurs, it usually amounts to their neutral counterpart ("German" for "boche", "Jewish" for "kike", "Italian" for "wop" and so on). For thick terms we usually lack a single-term counterpart, but we can formulate a paraphrase for the descriptive content. So, for example, the descriptive content of "lewd" is something like "sexually explicit"; the descriptive content of "chaste" is "abstaining from sexual relations", etc. In addition to this descriptive content, hybrid evaluatives also convey an evaluative content, which we analyze in terms of presuppositions: "wop" presupposes something like "Italians are bad for being Italian" and "lewd" presupposes something like "sexually explicit people and things are bad for being sexually explicit", etc.
The main argument in favor of a presuppositional analysis of slurs and thick terms is their projective behavior: the evaluative content survives semantic embedding like presuppositions. Presuppositions are known for projecting out of certain embeddings, such as negation, question, antecedent of a conditional and modal, a.k.a. the S-family (Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990, Simons *et al.* 2010). The presupposition triggered by "stop" amounts to something like (π_1) and survives all the following embeddings:

(1) Madonna stopped smoking.
(2) Did Madonna stopped smoking?
(3) If Madonna stopped smoking, it will be good for her health.
(4) Madonna might have stopped smoking.
π_1. Madonna used to smoke.

Thick terms display the same pattern: all these embedded and non-embedded occurrences of "lewd" presuppose (π_5) (see *i.a.* Gibbard 1992 and Väyrynen 2009, 2013)[2]*:*

(5) Madonna's show is lewd.
(6) Madonna's show isn't lewd.
(7) Is Madonna's show lewd?
(8) If Madonna's show is lewd, I wouldn't like to go to her concert.
(9) Madonna's show might be lewd.
π_5. People and things that are sexually explicit are bad as such.

This projection phenomenon is typically acknowledged also for slurs (see *i.a.* Croom 2011, Richard 2008, Jeshion 2013):
(10) Madonna is a wop.
(11) Is Madonna a wop?
(12) If Madonna is a wop, I wouldn't like to go to her concert
(13) Madonna might be a wop.
π_{10}. Italians are bad in some relevant respect because of being so.
The criterion to establish whether an expression counts as a hybrid evaluative or not is the following:

2 Examples (5)-(13) are from Cepollaro and Stojanovic (2016).

> In addition to a descriptive content, hybrid evaluatives systematically convey an evaluative content that scopes out when embedded under negation, conditionals, modals and questions (Cepollaro and Stojanovic 2016).

One important prediction of the presuppositional account is that when presuppositions like (π_1), (π_5) or (π_{10}) are triggered and are not rejected in a conversation, they become common ground. Imagine that in a conversation someone says: "Bianca? She's a wop". The presuppositional account that I have just sketched predicts that if the participants to such a conversation do not protest, they become somehow complicit in the discriminatory attitude of the person who uttered the slur. The phenomenon is often label as "complicity" in the literature about slurs:

> just hearing (...) *[the slur 'nigger']* can leave one feeling as if they have been made complicit in a morally atrocious act (Croom 2011: 343).
> slurs make recalcitrant hearers feel complicit in the speaker's way of thinking (Camp 2013: 333).
> In some cases, merely overhearing a slur is sufficient for making a non-prejudiced listener feel complicit in a speaker's slurring performance (DiFranco 2014).

Note that in order to account for complicity, it is crucial to establish what is exactly being presupposed; in the literature, two options were put forward, that we can call the "objective" and "subjective" option (see Predelli 2010 and Cepollaro 2015). For "wop" and "lewd", the objective and subjective options would be respectively:

(W_o) Italians are worthy of contempt for being Italian.
(W_s) *The agent believes that* Italians are worthy of contempt for being Italian.
(L_o) People and things that are sexually explicit are bad for being sexually explicit.
(L_s) *The agent believes that* people and things that are sexually explicit are bad for being sexually explicit.

The "subjective" option, proposed in Schlenker (2007) for slurs, has no *direct* way to explain the complicity phenomenon: if the presupposed content is not about targets (Italians, or sexually explicit things), but it is about the beliefs of the speaker, it is slightly more difficult to explain why the participants to a conversation have any responsibility to say something when they do not endorse certain evaluations. On the other hand, the "objective" version of the presuppositional account that I favor has a fairly direct answer: if the presupposed content is about targets, rather than the speaker's state of mind, then everyone is somehow responsible for the evaluation that is taken for granted. Note however that it is not impossible for the "subjective" option to explain complicity. I can think of two lines of explanation, none of which I find completely convincing. The first one is to claim that people are in certain ways responsible for the beliefs endorsed by the people they deal with; in this sense, avoiding challenging the use of a slur would be endorsing the attitude associated to the slur, even if all the slur was doing was to inform about the mental state and dispositions of the slur-user. The second strategy would be to rely on the notion of "presupposition of commonality", that is, the expectation that the conversation participants are all alike under relevant respects. The notion is used by Lopez de Sa (2008: 304) to talk about predicates of taste: "the relevant expression (...) triggers a presupposition of commonality to the effect that the participants of the conversation are all alike in the relevant respects". If we admit an extension from the taste domain to the moral dimension, we would have the following account: a slur like 'wop'

activates the presupposition that "the speaker despises Italians *qua* Italians" and in addition it also triggers the presupposition that the conversation participants feel in the same way about Italians.

3. Conditions sine quibus non

In order for the approach I just sketched to be viable, that is, in order for slurs and thick terms to be analyzed along similar lines, a few issues should be settled. I will consider three aspects that in my opinion have prevented slurs and thick terms from being treated in the same way: (i) the descriptive content of slurs and the notion of "group"; (ii) the wrongness of slurs and (iii) the negativeness of slurs. Finally, I will consider what I take to be the relevant differences between slurs and thick terms.

(i) The target group

First, I would like to dwell on the notion of "group" that seems to be involved when dealing with slurs. We have seen already that slurs are taken to denigrate groups or individuals on the basis of their belonging to a certain class. However, scholars do not usually specify what counts as a target class; instead, they present some examples involving ethnic or geographical origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation. Nunberg (forthcoming) calls these categories "the deep fatalities that have historically been the focus of discrimination or social antagonisms that we see as rents in the fabric of civil society". As a result, there is no consensus whether certain terms, especially those that are not about the listed typical categories, can count as slurs. Take for example "foureyes" for people wearing glasses, or "stinkpotter", for owners of a motorized boat[3]. Nunberg claims that it was a sign of methodological incuriosity on the side of scholars to focus on a restricted set of examples exclusively including the worst slurs like "faggot" and "nigger". Such a restriction put at the center of the debate certain features (the unforgivable wrongness and moral sordidness of epithets) that do not seem to *necessarily* characterize slurs as a class.

> Someone says "That building is full of flacks [publicists]" or "*Mes collègues sont tous fachos*[4]". (...) I don't think many people would want to argue that those utterances aren't truth-evaluable, or that they're purely expressive, or that they're useless[5] to us, all claims that people have made about words like nigger. Not that the claims about the use of that word are wrong—that's another question—but they seem to apply only to words that convey unfounded or indefensible contempt for the members of a racial or ethnic group, which make for a poor candidate for a universal linguistic type (Nunberg forthcoming).

I agree with Nunberg on this and my proposal predicts that pejorative terms like "flack" for "publicist" and "facho" for "fascist", just like "foureyes" and "stinkpotter", can in fact count as slurs, even if the categories they target are not prototypical. This brings up a very important issue concerning the descriptive content of slurs, namely what categories can count as a target group. Scholars have attempted to define what could count as a target group. By observing existing slurs in English, we can already discard the hypothesis that for a property to determine a target group, there must be some kind of self-identification among the people instantiating such a property. It is probably true for properties like "being Italian" or "being

3 "Sailing enthusiasts deprecate the owners of motor craft as 'stinkpotters' but we probably wouldn't call the word a slur" – Nunberg (forthcoming).

4 In Italics in the original.

5 The allusion is to Hornsby (2001), who talks about slurs as useless words.

Jewish" targeted by the slurs "wop" and "kike", but epithets like "gook" do not involve a property with which people can self-identify: "gook" was used to call all natives of the regions occupied by the US army (Nicaraguans, Costa Ricans, Filipinos, Vietnam), who do not identify with each other (see Jeshion, 2016: 135). Hom and May (forthcoming) have formulated three options to establish what counts as a group G, the target of a pejorative:

> I) There are no restrictions on G; it can be instantiated by any group whatsoever. This is in effect the claim that group membership is not something that is morally evaluable.
> II) There is a restriction on G supplied by a theory of natural groups. This theory would isolate racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation, etc. as natural groups, and hence as targets of pejoration.
> III) There is a restriction on G provided by ideologies that are active in sociocultural contexts. A group could be a value of G only insofar as there is a discriminatory cultural norm that supports it (Hom and May forthcoming).

The authors embrace option (III), while keeping the idea expressed in option (I) that group membership is *not* a morally evaluable feature:

> What are the criteria for choices of G such that there will be a pejorative term with the meaning (sense) PEJ(G)? – (...) it is reserved for groups that for whatever odious reasons have associated with them an unjust, hateful or discriminatory ideology that is culturally ingrained within society (*Ibidem*).

I agree with the authors about rejecting option (II) as a non-starter[6], but I do not embrace their solution. In my account *any* property can individuate a target group, as long as there are some speakers who find it interesting or relevant to pick out such a property and convey an evaluation about the objects instantiating it. Once we admit that the target class of a slur could be any (it does not necessarily have to do with nationality, ethnicity etc.), it is easier to conceive a unified analysis of slurs and thick terms. Hybrid evaluatives can trigger evaluations on *any* descriptive property, that is instantiated by people or things.

(ii) The wrongness of slurs

Note that in the above discussion about what counts as a target group there is no requirement on whether the evaluation is appropriate or not. My criterion to define a slur differs from most accounts of slurs in that slurs do not have to be wrong *by definition*, in the sense that it's not part of how I define a slur that the triggered evaluation is unjust. According to Predelli (2010):

> notwithstanding the confused and unpleasant attitude apparently conveyed by uses of slurs of that sort (...) racist and xenophobic attitudes are empirically incorrect: there is no conceptual (and, more importantly, no meaning-encoded) difficulty in supposing that membership in an ethnic or national group provides satisfactory motivation for a hostile attitude (Predelli 2010: 180).

And he adds:

6 About the controversial analysis of notions such as gender and race in terms of natural kinds, see *i.a.* Haslanger (2000), Diaz Leon (2012), Spencer (2012).

> It is a lamentable historical accident that bigots and racists have taken the lead in the production of 'lexically encoded' slurs. Still, exceptions abound: 'pigs' may well have been an eminently usable derogatory term for typical police officers in the sixties (or at least for individuals belonging to certain repressive institutions). Moreover, the statistical prominence of racial, sexist, and xenophobic simple English slurs is easily compensated by the 'expressive compositionality' partially discussed above: 'damn fascist' and 'fucking racist' are as subjectively expressive and linguistically non-defective as xenophobic slurs, but presumably eminently usable by at least some readers of this essay (*Ibidem*: 184).

I leave room for the possibility that certain hybrid evaluatives might trigger an appropriate evaluation; however, this mainly concerns certain non-objectionable thick terms such as 'courageous', presumably not slurs[7]. So I shall in a sense endorse Hom and May's claim that the properties that slurs pick out are *typically* not morally evaluable (being Italian, being homosexual, etc.), but I do not maintain that it holds for every hybrid evaluative: I am with Predelli in saying that the fact that certain hybrid evaluatives (most slurs) target people on the basis of incorrect assumptions is a "lamentable historical accident", not an essential feature of evaluatives in general. In other words, it is not *essential* to slurs that they presuppose unjust and unjustifiable evaluations, only that they convey evaluations. In the case of thick terms, it is particularly clear that the appropriateness is a variable parameter. As a matter of fact, scholars distinguish objectionable and non-objectionable thick terms (Eklund 2011, 2013, Harcourt and Thomas 2013, Kyle 2013, Väyrynen 2013): in the former case, speakers endorse the conveyed evaluation; in the latter, they do not.

(iii) The negativeness of slurs

Lastly, slurs do not have to convey a necessarily negative "hateful" evaluation; it's conceivable that a slur might convey an evaluation with a positive polarity. An example of what a slur with a positive polarity might look like is "Aryan": it was used by Nazis to talk about Indo-Europeans, while conveying some positive evaluation, supporting the idea that being Indo-European is good in itself. While it is a debated topic for slurs, it is quite clear that thick terms can convey a positive evaluation: it is the case for "chaste", "courageous", etc. Note that the question of polarity is completely orthogonal to the issue of objectability: for example, a speaker may well share the negative evaluation conveyed by "brutal" while rejecting the negative evaluation conveyed by "lewd" and, on the other hand, one might endorse the positive evaluation conveyed by "generous", but reject the one conveyed by "chaste". Unlike the objectionable/non-objectionable distinction, the polarity of the evaluation is a lexically encoded feature, independent of the set of values endorsed by speakers.

In sum, once we acknowledge that the target class of a slur could be any (it does not necessarily have to do with nationality, ethnicity etc.), and in principle also the polarity of the evaluation could be any and it could be appropriate or not, it is easier to conceive a unified analysis of slurs and thick terms. Yet, what needs to be stressed is that slurs are usually both unjust and negative, as they typically convey a negative evaluation of their targets on the basis of characteristics that in no way ground or justify derogation, exclusion etc. However, I shall underline once more that the basic linguistic mechanism through which slurs encode evaluative content does not *require*

7 An anonymous reviewer of Phenomenology and Minds has suggested to me a very interesting comparison to the possibility for non-verbal pejoration to be morally justified, such as the depiction of the Nazis as pigs in the graphic novel *Maus* by Art Spiegelman.

that the evaluation conveyed by the slur is unjust, nor that it is negative.
I take the crucial differences between slurs and thick terms to concern their descriptive content. In the case of slurs, the descriptive content amounts to predicates like "Italian", "German", "homosexual", etc., that are not typically context-sensitive. In the case of thick terms, on the contrary, we find gradable adjectives (see *i.a.* Kennedy and McNally 2005; Kennedy 2007). Take for example "lewd", that in my analysis would mean something like "sexually explicit" while triggering an evaluative presupposition. What counts as "sexually explicit" varies from context to context. It is reasonable, for example, to suppose that what counts as "sexually explicit" in a monastery is different from what counts as "sexually explicit" at a Carnival party: different thresholds on possibly different scales. Such gradability of the descriptive content gets inherited by the thick term: a "lewd"-user, namely someone who uses the term "lewd", will apply it or not according to contextually determined parameters. On the contrary, slurs tend not to display the same gradability and to typically have a simpler and more determined descriptive content.

4. Reference and extension

One of the most debated question for slurs and thick terms concerns reference: to what do they refer, if they refer *at all*? Consider slurs. Take the following utterance:
(14) Bianca is a wop.
Authors like Christopher Hom and Robert May (Hom and May 2013; 2014; forthcoming) take slurs to be terms with a necessarily empty extension, as they roughly mean something along the lines of "worthy of negative moral evaluation for being G", where "G" refers to a discriminated group (we saw already that for Hom and May belonging to a group cannot under any circumstance ground the negative evaluation conveyed by slurs). Hom and May (forthcoming) suggest an analogy between slurs and fictional terms. So for example "Unicorns are white" is fictionally true, but materially false, whereas "Unicorns do not exist" is fictionally false, but materially true. According to them slurs work in a similar way. Suppose that the person to which "Bianca" refers is Italian. Compare:

(14) Bianca is a wop.
(15) Bianca is a boche.

In the fiction of racism targeting Italians and Germans, (14) is fictionally true, but materially false, whereas (15) is both fictionally and materially false. A problematic prediction of this approach is that "Bianca is not a wop" turns out to be necessarily true, whether the subject is Italian or not.
Other scholars claimed that slurs refer to the same objects as their neutral counterparts. In this case, (14) is true and (15) is false. This view has the controversial consequence that (14) turns out to be true, as well as utterances like "Italians are wops". The defenders of this approach advocate for a distinction between a *technical* sense of "true", that only involves truth-conditions, and a *folk* sense of "true" that takes into consideration pragmatic factors of various kind. In this spirit, "true" should not be confused with "assertable".
The presuppositional analysis offers a fairly direct answer to questions about reference: hybrid evaluatives refer to the same objects as their neutral counterpart, but, being presuppositional triggers, they are felicitous only if the evaluation they convey is correct. The presuppositional analysis accounts for the following intuition: if one does not endorse a certain moral perspective involved by a hybrid evaluative, an utterance featuring the term is not felicitous nor clearly evaluable. Consider:

(16) Is Bianca a wop?
(17) Is *La vie d'Adele* lewd?

A speaker that does not endorse the evaluations triggered by "wop" and "lewd", would not really know how to answer, as both a yes-answer and a no-answer would equally take for granted the presupposed content. In order to provide an answer at the descriptive level without accepting the presupposition, they might say something like "She is Italian, but there is nothing wrong with that" to (16) and something like "It is sexually explicit, but there is nothing bad in that" to (17).
Note that it is again crucial what is exactly presupposed here. Recall the two options: the "objective" option about the target class ("Italians are despicable because of being Italian") and the "subjective" option about the speaker ("the agent believes that Italians are despicable because of being Italian"). I favor the latter, which provides a better account for complicity. However, while the "subjective" presupposition is true whenever the speaker truly endorses the relevant attitudes, the "objective" option brings up a very complex question: what does it mean for an evaluative presupposition to be correct? Presumably, that the evaluation it conveys is correct. But how do we establish whether "Italians are bad for being Italians" is correct in the context of utterance? The answer to these questions crucially depends on what theory of value one favors. One of the most promising approaches comes from the fitting attitude theories (FA), that define "good" as "fitting object of a pro attitude" (Ewing 1947: 152), where "pro attitude" covers "any favorable attitude to something" (*Ibidem*: 149), such as "choice, desire, liking, pursuit, approval, admiration". Similarly, "(...) what is evil [is] a suitable object of anti-attitudes" (Ewing 1939: 9). However, the question of *how* to establish whether certain sentiments of approbation (or reprobation) are warranted remains unanswered and it is probably beyond the scope of the present work. For the time being, I will leave this "hot potato" to philosophers working in ethics.
Note, though, that these issues do not only concern ethicists, as they have important consequences for the theory of presuppositions in general. We say that for an utterance to be felicitous, its presuppositions must be true. However, since the presupposition can be evaluative rather than descriptive, either we add a clause that says "*when the presupposition is descriptive*", or we change the truth requirement into something like "appropriateness" or "correctness". Again, we still face the challenge of determining when a certain evaluation is correct[8]. In a nutshell: the interesting difference is between the objectionable and nonobjectionable hybrid evaluatives, i.e. between the evaluatives that convey appropriate evaluations and those that do not (namely, slurs and objectionable thick terms), rather than between slurs and thick terms. The criterion to establish whether a presupposition is correct (thus, whether an utterance featuring a hybrid evaluative is felicitous or not), depends on what kind of moral theory one endorses, which is still an open question. However, I hope I clarified a bit the theoretical options at stake.

5. The big picture

Part of the interest for evaluatives on the side of scholars in philosophy of language, linguistics and metaethics is due to the peculiar hybrid nature of these terms and to properties such as projection and the like. However, a bigger picture emerges from the linguistic analysis of these terms that I presented. Something about the *function* and the potential of hybrid evaluatives. As we have seen, my analysis of hybrid evaluatives relies on presuppositions, which are – in Chilton's words – "at least one micro-mechanism in language use which contributes to the

8 I thank Uriah Kriegel for helpful and insightful discussion about this topic.

building of a consensual reality". By employing these terms, we implicitly take for granted a certain moral perspective, certain sets of beliefs concerning what is good and what is bad. We implicitly apply a certain lens to the world and expect everyone else to do the same. As we noted in discussing complicity, because the presupposed content is presented as not open to discussion, if it is not objected it has the potential to shape contexts. In this sense, using hybrid evaluatives is a powerful tool through which language not only encodes evaluation, but is also able to impose it. Talking about the stereotypes evoked by slurs, Nunberg appeals to the notion of "shortcut": "Stereotypes, negative and positive, are among the cognitive shortcuts we rely on to make sense of the world and to guide our responses to it." I argue that this is true not just for stereotypes, but for hybrid evaluatives in general, as they are devices through which language can convey evaluations in a way that is both linguistically encoded and implicit.

REFERENCES

Camp, E. (2013), "Slurring Perspectives", *Analytic Philosophy*, Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 330-349;
Cepollaro, B. (2015), "In Defense Of A Presuppositional Account Of Slurs", *Language Sciences*, Vol. 52, pp. 36-45;
Cepollaro, B. and Stojanovic, I. (2016), "Hybrid Evaluatives", *Grazer Philosophische Studien*, Vol. 93, No. 3, pp. 458-488;
Chierchia, G. and McConnell-Ginet, S. (1990), *Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics*, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA;
Chilton, P. (2004), *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*, Routledge, London and New York;
Croom, A. (2011), "Slurs", *Language Sciences*, Vol. 33, pp. 343–358;
Diaz-Leon, E. (2012), "Social Kinds, Conceptual Analysis, and the Operative Concept: A Reply to Haslanger", *Humana.Mente Journal of Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 22, pp. 57-74;
DiFranco, R. (2014), "Pejorative Language", *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://www.iep.utm.edu/pejorati/;
Eklund, M. (2011), "What are thick terms", *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 41, No. 1, pp. 25-49;
Eklund, M. (2013), "Evaluative Language and Evaluative Reality", In Kirchin, S. (ed.), *Thick Concepts*, Oxford University Press, Oxford;
Ewing, A. C. (1939), "A Suggested Non-Naturalistic Analysis of Good", *Mind*, Vol. 48, pp. 1-22;
Ewing, A. C. (1947), *The Definition of Good*, MacMillan, London;
Gibbard, A. (1992), "Thick Concepts and Warrant For Feelings", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volumes, Vol. 61, pp. 267-283;
Harcourt, E. and Thomas, A. (2013), "Thick Concepts, Analysis, and Reductionism", in S. Kirchin (ed.), *Thick Concepts*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 20-43;
Haslanger, S. (2000), "Gender and race:(What) are they?(What) do we want them to be?", *Noûs*, Vol 34, No. 1, pp. 31-55;
Hom, C. and May, R. (2013), "Moral and Semantic Innocence", *Analytic Philosophy*, Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 293-313;
Hom, C. and May, R. (2014), "The inconsistency of the identity thesis", *Protosociology*, Vol. 31, pp. 113-120;
Hom, C. and May, R. (forthcoming), "Pejoratives as Fiction", in D. Sosa (ed.) (forthcoming), *Bad words*, Oxford University Press, Oxford;
Hornsby, J. (2001), "Meaning and Uselessness: How to think about derogatory words", *Midwest Studies in Philosophy: Figurative Language*, Vol. 25, pp. 128-141;
Jeshion, R. (2013), "Expressivism and the Offensiveness of Slurs", *Philosophical Perspectives*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 231-259;

Jeshion, R. (2016), "Slur Creation, Bigotry Formation: the Power of Expressivism", *Phenomenology and Mind*, 11, pp. 130-139;
Kennedy, C. (2007), "Vagueness and grammar: The semantics of relative and absolute gradable adjectives" *Linguistics & Philosophy*, Vol. 30, pp. 1-45;
Kennedy, C. and McNally, L. (2005), "Scale structure, degree modification and the semantics of gradable predicates", *Language*, Vol 81, pp. 345-381;
Kyle, B. G. (2013), "How Are Thick Terms Evaluative?", *Philosophers' Imprint*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 1-20;
López de Sa, D. (2008), "Presuppositions of commonality: An indexical relativist account of disagreement", in M. García-Carpinterol, and M. Kölbel (2008), *Relative truth*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 297-310;
Nunberg, G. (forthcoming), "The Social Life of Slurs", in D. Fogal, D. Harris & M. Moss, (eds.), *New Work on Speech Act*, Oxford University Press, Oxford;
Predelli, S. (2010), "From the Expressive to the Derogatory: On the Semantic Role for Non-Truth-Conditional Meaning", in S. Sawyer (ed.), *New Waves in Philosophy of Language*, Palgrave-MacMillan, New York, pp. 164-185;
Spencer, Q. (2012), "What 'biological racial realism' should mean", *Philosophical studies*, Vol. 159, No. 2, pp. 181-204;
Richard, M. (2008), *When Truth Gives Out*, Oxford University Press, Oxford;
Schlenker, P. (2007), "Expressive presuppositions", *Theoretical Linguistics*, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 237-245;
Simons, M., Tonhauser, J., Beaver, D. and Roberts, C. (2010), "What projects and why", in N. Li, and D. Lutz (eds.), *Semantics and linguistic theory*, (SALT) 20, CLC Publications, Ithaca, NY, pp. 309-327;
Väyrynen, P. (2009), "Objectionable Thick Concepts in Denials", *Philosophical Perspectives*, Vol. 23, pp. 439-469;
Väyrynen, P. (2013), *The lewd, the rude and the nasty: A study of thick concepts in ethics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.