

Manner-in-disguise vs. intensifying WELL

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1 Introduction

- Three readings of *well* (and its counterparts in other languages; henceforth WELL):
 - Discourse particle (in the beginning of a sentence, usually with comma intonation) (1-a)
 - Manner (with verbs, including participles) (1-b)
 - Degree (with adjectives, including adjectivised participles) (1-c)

- (1) a. **Well**, this idea is very interesting.
b. He has written the article **well**.
c. They are **well** acquainted.

THIS PAPER: manner and degree readings of WELL

- The manner reading seems to be uniformly available: WELL as an event predicate in the verbal domain.
 - What has been identified as ‘degree’ WELL does not correspond to a uniform phenomenon.
 - The examples to illustrate ‘degree’ WELL generally involve participles, as in (1-c) (e.g. Bolinger 1972; Kennedy and McNally 2005; McNally and Kennedy 2013).
 - In English, it is not possible to use *well* as a ‘degree’ modifier of genuine adjectives (2-a) (unlike degree modifiers like *very* etc.); similarly for German (2-b).
- (2) a. *The train is well blue / long / beautiful.
b. *Der Zug ist gut blau / lang / schön.
the train is well blue long beautiful
- In Catalan (and some varieties of Spanish, cf. González-Rodríguez 2006; Hernanz 2010; González-Rivera and Gutiérrez-Rexach 2012; Gutiérrez-Rexach and González-Rivera 2014), this is possible (3).
- (3) El tren és ben blau / llarg / bonic.
the train is well blue long beautiful
‘The train is very / rather / quite / extremely blue / long / beautiful.’
- ⇒ English and German WELL is not an adjectival degree modifiers, but exclusively a VP modifier (a predicate of events, in the broadest sense, to include states).
- ⇒ Catalan and (standard) Spanish WELL has similar uses as other degree modifiers (e.g. *very*, *rather*; cf. the translation of (3)).

- **Our claim about ‘degree’ WELL: Two different phenomena**

1. **‘Manner-in-disguise’ WELL**, e.g. (1-c) (event modifier, just like manner WELL, e.g. (1-b))
2. **(Degree-)‘intensifying’ WELL**, e.g. (3) (absent in Eng/Ger, present in Span/Cat)
 - ⇒ Intensifying WELL expresses the speaker’s approval of a property ascription.

¹This research has been supported by project FFI2012-34170 (MINECO) and by the Ramón y Cajal program (RYC-2010-06070).

2 ‘Degree’ WELL in English (McNally and Kennedy 2013) (McN&K)

(see also Kennedy and McNally 1999; Kennedy and McNally 2005)

- Degree ‘well’ arises with past participles, not with genuine adjectives (recall (2)).²
- Three conditions on the degree interpretation of *well*:
 1. It requires a gradable adjective [adjectivized past participle].
 2. It requires a totally closed scale (diagnostics: modifiability by *half/mostly*) (6).
- (6) a. The truck is well / partially / fully loaded.
b. ??Marge was well / partially / fully worried when she saw the flying pig.
- 3. The standard of comparison cannot be the maximum, given the assumption that ‘degree’ *well* boosts the standard; cf. (7) vs. (8).
- (7) ‘degree’/manner:
 - a. They are well acquainted.
 - b. The truck is well loaded.
- (8) *manner only*:
 - a. The book is well written.
 - b. The hay is well loaded.
- The standard with deverbal adjectives is determined by the scale structure derived from the underlying event/argument structure.
 - When the argument is an incremental theme (8): What counts as a loaded/written incremental theme can only be such that the maximum standard is met (it is completely loaded/written). → The ‘degree’ reading is not available.
 - With other arguments (e.g. (7)), the standard is not necessarily the maximum (e.g. a truck can also be partially loaded). → The ‘degree’ reading is available.
- ⇒ The degree interpretation is possible only if the argument of the modified participle is a non-incremental theme argument of the source verb.
- ‘Degree’ *well* cannot be a true degree modifier, though:
 - True degree modification does not allow additional degree modification (9-a).
 - ‘Degree’ *well*, however, does (9-b).
- (9) a. *{completely very / very completely} red
b. very well acquainted

²Kennedy and McNally (2005, 375) provide the following examples for ‘genuine’ adjectives with ‘degree’ WELL:

- (4) a. We are well aware of the difficulties.
b. They are well able to solve their own problems.
c. The bud was well open. (Bolinger 1972, 43)

We are not sure that (4-a,b) should be treated as genuine adjectives; (4-c) could be like a truncated participle. Similar marginal cases also exist in German, in which genuine adjectives usually do not combine with WELL; cf. (5).

- (5) Das Glas ist gut voll.
the glass is WELL full
‘The glass is quite / fairly full.’

We leave these marginal cases for future research.

- General idea of the analysis (McNally and Kennedy 2013):
 - ‘Degree’ WELL is a special case of manner WELL; both denote properties of events.
 - It denotes a measure function on events (a relation between events and degrees).
 - This measure function is the same as that denoted by the adjective *good*: it maps an event onto a(n open) scale of goodness.
 - The first two requirements above are built into the lexical semantics of ‘degree’ *well*.
- ‘Degree’ vs. manner readings: Participles come with a telic and an agentive quale (building on Pustejovsky 1995, and his analysis of *fast cake* vs. *fast car*).
 - When *well* applies to the event in the agentive quale (via selective binding), we get the manner reading (the process of the event is assigned a value on a scale of goodness - approval of objective aspects of the event).
 - When *well* applies to the event in the telic quale, we get the degree reading (assignment of a value on the goodness scale to the result state).
- ‘Degree’ reading with *loaded-with* vs. *loaded-on*:
 - A state of being loaded with something can truthfully obtain as soon as the smallest loading event has occurred.
 - There are result states of different degrees of loadedness that can be qualified with respect to the goodness scale.
 - A state of being loaded on some container (with incremental themes) will only truthfully obtain when the loading has been completed.
 - All result states are identical in degree and it does not make sense to try to qualify them with respect to the goodness scale.
- Arguments in favor of a polysemy and against a lexical ambiguity account:
 - The two readings are difficult to distinguish (see also Bolinger 1972).
 - The degree reading is a proper subset of the contexts in which the manner reading appears.
- **Problems of the account:**
 - Even though McN&K aim at deriving the degree reading from the manner reading, they actually do not do that (they do not provide an account of manner *well*).
 - The only thing that ‘degree’ and manner *well* have in common is that they denote properties of events; but McN&K build the conditions above directly into the lexical semantics of *well* (and thus they have a lexical entry for ‘degree’ *well* only).
- Same problems for Kennedy and McNally (2005):
 - ‘Degree’ *well* takes a closed-scale adjective and returns a new gradable adjective meaning based on the relative adjective *good* (10).
 - The derived predicate measures the goodness of the event that is related to the degree to which the subject has the property named by the adjective.
 - With deverbal adjectives: the degree to which the object possesses the relevant property as a result of participating in the event.

$$(10) \quad \llbracket \text{well} \rrbracket = \lambda G_{[0,1]} \lambda d \lambda x. \mathbf{good}(\varepsilon(\iota d' [G_{[0,1]}(d')(x)])) = d$$

- **What we will use:** WELL denotes a measure function on events under both readings.

3 'Degree' vs. manner WELL in German

- Some of the properties identified for English 'degree' WELL hold for German as well:

– Closed-scale adjectives (participles) are compatible with 'degree' WELL (11).

- (11) a. Die Tür ist {halb / gut} geschlossen.
the door is half WELL closed
'The door is half / well closed.' 'DEGREE'/MANNER
- b. Der Lastwagen ist {halb / gut} beladen.
the truck is half WELL AT-loaded
'The truck is half / well loaded.' 'DEGREE'/MANNER

– Open-scale ones [?] are incompatible with 'degree' WELL (12) (but see (20-a)).

- (12) *Er war gut gelangweilt / überrascht.
he was WELL bored surprised

– 'Degree' WELL allows additional degree modification, as well as negation (13).

- (13) a. Die Tür ist {sehr / ziemlich / nicht} gut geschlossen.
the door is very rather not WELL closed
'The door is {very / rather / not} well closed.' 'DEGREE'/MANNER
- b. Der Lastwagen ist {sehr / ziemlich / nicht} gut beladen.
the truck is very rather not WELL AT-loaded
'The truck is {very / rather / not} well loaded.' 'DEGREE'/MANNER

– The 'degree' reading is not possible with incremental themes (14).

- (14) a. Das Buch ist gut geschrieben.
the book is WELL written
'The book is well written.' ONLY MANNER
- b. Das Heu ist gut geladen.
the hay is WELL loaded
'The hay is well loaded.' ONLY MANNER

- However, we are not sure that the generalizations are completely on the right track:

– Incremental theme verbs do not have a result state in their lexical representation (= no telic quale), but denote an activity only (= have an agentive quale).

→ A scale to measure out the event can be added via an incremental theme (cf. Kennedy 2012).

→ A telic quale might be part of the incremental theme, but WELL does not modify the theme.

– Out of context, these verbs are not good inputs to adjectival passivization, precisely because they lack a stative component (cf. Gehrke to appear, and literature cited therein).

→ They can only have a 'job-is-done' reading (in the sense of Kratzer 2000).

→ Additional manner modification (in this case WELL) can render the adjectival passive construction acceptable.

⇒ The underlying verbs only have a process (activity component) for WELL to measure.

⇒ If we want to take the idea seriously that 'degree' WELL is an event predicate, we ought to ask which **verbs** are compatible with 'degree' WELL.

Idea: Verbs that have a stative component and (can) lack agents allow for ‘degree’ WELL.

- The restrictions on the ‘degree’ reading of WELL are the same in the verbal domain (here: with verbal passives³); cf. (15) vs. (16).

- (15) a. Die Tür wurde gut geschlossen.
the door became WELL closed
‘The door has been closed well.’ ‘DEGREE’/MANNER
- b. Der Lastwagen wurde gut beladen.
the truck became WELL AT-loaded
‘The truck has been well loaded.’ ‘DEGREE’/MANNER
- (16) a. Das Buch wurde gut geschrieben.
the book became WELL written
‘The book has been written well.’ ONLY MANNER
- b. Das Heu wurde gut geladen.
the hay became WELL loaded
‘The hay has been loaded well.’ ONLY MANNER

- Even verbs that do not derive adjectival passives allow for it, as the stative verbs in (17).

- (17) a. Sie kennen einander gut.
they know each other WELL
‘They know each other well.’ ‘DEGREE’
- b. Sie passen gut zusammen.
they fit WELL together.
‘They fit well together.’ ‘DEGREE’

- Other verbs do not, as the necessarily agentive verbs in (18).

- (18) a. Er tötet gut.
he kills WELL
‘He kills well.’ ONLY MANNER
- b. Sie ist gut in den Baum geklettert.
she is WELL in the.ACC tree climbed
‘She has climbed into the tree well.’ ONLY MANNER

→ The fact that we only get a manner reading here might be due to the fact that the manner (activity/volitional) component of these verbs (or verb uses) cannot be absent (e.g. they do not participate in the causative-inchoative alternation).

- **Generalization:** Whether or not we get a ‘degree’ reading of WELL depends entirely on the nature of the event denoted by the (underlying) verb.

- With verbs that only have an activity component (e.g. (16)), or whose manner/activity component cannot be absent (e.g. (18)), we only get the manner reading.
- With verbs that have a stative component (resultative and stative verbs) the ‘degree’ reading is possible (e.g. (15), (17)).

⇒ **‘Degree’ WELL is an adverbial modifier, an event predicate: ‘manner-in-disguise’.**

- It is predicated over the stative (sub)event of non-agentive verbs.

³In German, adjectival participles combine with the copula *sein* ‘be’, whereas verbal participles combine with the auxiliary *werden* ‘become’ (cf. Rapp 1997; Kratzer 2000; Maienborn 2007a, among many others). For manner modification with adjectival participles, see Gehrke (to appear) and literature cited therein.

- Remaining issue: Not all verbs with stative components allow for ‘degree’ WELL; cf. (12), (19).

(19) Die Tür ist gut geöffnet.
 the door is WELL opened
 ‘The door is well opened.’

ONLY MANNER

- However, we do not think that this is due to the scale structure, since these participles seem to be compatible with *partially* etc. (thus displaying properties of closed scale adjectives):

(20) a. Er war {teilweise / halb / ganz} gelangweilt / überrascht.
 he was partially half whole bored surprised
 ‘He was {partially / half / totally} bored / surprised.’
 b. Die Tür ist {teilweise / halb / ganz} geöffnet.
 the door is partially half whole opened
 ‘The door is {partially / half / totally} opened.’

- This could be a blocking effect; cf. (21).

(21) a. Die Tür ist weit geöffnet.
 the door is wide opened
 ‘The door is widely opened.’
 b. Er war sehr gelangweilt / überrascht.
 he was very bored surprised

Alternatively, we could assume that these participles are directly derived from the verbal root (not containing a VP) (cf. lexical adjectivization in Kratzer 2000).

- Adverbial modifiers (like WELL) cannot access a VP but only the AP.
- However, APs cannot be modified by WELL in German (recall (2)).
- In Catalan, they can, and we only get the intensifying reading (22).

(22) Estava ben avorrit / sorprès.
 was WELL bored surprised
 ‘He was WELL bored / surprised.’

ONLY INTENSIFYING

4 Degree-intensifying WELL in Catalan

- Unlike what McN&K claim for English ‘degree’ *well* (but see German), Catalan intensifying WELL does not exhibit restrictions on the scale structure of the adjective or its standard.

- It can combine with open scale adjectives (23-a).
- It can combine with closed scale adjectives that have maximum standards (23-b).

(23) a. open scale: ben a prop ‘WELL close’, ben amunt ‘WELL up’, ben sonat ‘WELL nuts’, ben simpàtic ‘WELL kind’, ben trist ‘WELL sad’, ben viu ‘WELL alive’, ben idiota ‘WELL idiotic’
 b. closed scale, maximum standard: ben tancat ‘WELL closed’, ben buit ‘WELL empty’, ben recte ‘WELL straight’, ben pla ‘WELL flat’

- It cannot be further modified by degree modifiers (24-a):

(24) En Pere és (*molt) ben simpàtic.
 the Peter is very WELL nice

- It cannot occur under negation:

(25) *En Pere no és ben simpàtic.
the Peter not is WELL nice

- It cannot be questioned:

(26) *En Pere és ben simpàtic?
the Peter is WELL nice

(Similar restrictions hold for Spanish; cf. González-Rodríguez 2006; Hernanz 2010)

- No such restrictions hold for English or German ‘degree’ WELL; cf. (9-b), (13), (27).

(27) Ist die Tür gut geschlossen?
is the door WELL closed
‘Is the door WELL closed?’

- Intensifying WELL shows some contextual restrictions:

– It cannot be the answer to a question such as *how is x?* (28).

(28) A: Com és en Carles?
how is the Charles
‘What is Charles like?’
B: És {molt / #ben} intel·ligent i {molt / #ben} generós.
is very WELL intelligent and very well generous
‘He is {very /#WELL } intelligent and {very /#WELL } generous.’

– Rather, it is felicitous when it is under discussion whether or not *x* is ADJ (29), (30).

(29) A: Ahir m’ho vaig passar molt bé amb en Pere. És tan divertit!
yesterday me-it have.1SG passed very well with the Peter is so funny
‘I had such a blast yesterday with Peter. He is so funny!’
B: Doncs jo el trobo ben avorrit.
actually I him find WELL boring
‘Actually, I find him WELL boring.’

(30) La Mar porta un barret ben bonic. M’ha sorprès que tingui tan bon gust.
the Mar wears a hat WELL pretty me-has surprised that has.SUBJ that good taste
‘Mar is wearing a WELL pretty hat. I am surprised that she has such good taste.’

- German and English would not even use WELL in such contexts.

– Depending on the context, German might use the adverb *ganz schön* ‘(lit.) totally beautiful(ly), pretty’, or the contrastive particle *schon* ‘(lit.) already’:

(31) Peter ist ganz schön nett.
Peter is totally beautiful nice
‘Peter is pretty nice.’
a. *Peter ist sehr ganz schön nett.
Peter is very totally beautiful nice
b. *Peter ist nicht ganz schön nett.
Peter is not totally beautiful nice
c. *Ist Peter ganz schön nett?
is Peter totally beautiful nice

- (32) A: Wie ist Karl?
 how is Charles
 ‘What is Charles like?’
 B: Er ist {sehr / ganz schön / ??schon} intelligent.
 he is very totally beautiful SCHON intelligent
 ‘He is very / pretty intelligent.’
- (33) A: Gestern hatte ich einen tollen Abend mit Peter. Er ist so lustig!
 yesterday had I a great evening with Peter he is so funny
 ‘Yesterday, I had a great evening with Peter. He is so funny!’
 B: Also ich finde ihn {ganz schön / schon} langweilig.
 CONTRAST-PARTICLE I find him totally beautiful SCHON boring
 ‘I actually {find him rather boring / do find him boring}.’
- (34) Marta trägt {einen ganz schön / schon einen} hübschen Hut. Es überrascht mich, dass sie einen
 Marta wears a totally beautiful SCHON a pretty hat it surprises me that she a
 so guten Geschmack hat.
 such good taste has
 ‘Marta is wearing quite a pretty hat. I am surprised that she has such good taste.’

⇒ We leave the analysis of these items for future research.

5 The proposal

- The adverb WELL is a VP modifier that has the same lexical semantics as the underlying adjective GOOD (approval by some judge of something; we will not specify this here) (inspired by the prose in McNally and Kennedy 2013).
 - We follow the degree approach to gradable adjectives (e.g. Kennedy 1999) and treat **good** as a measure function (a relation between degrees and individuals) (35-a).
 - Combining this with the standard treatment of manner modifiers (= VP modifiers) as predicates of events (e.g. Parsons 1990), we get the semantics of WELL in (35-b).

- (35) a. $\llbracket \text{good} \rrbracket = \lambda d. \lambda x [\text{good}(x) \geq d]$
 b. $\llbracket \text{well} \rrbracket = \lambda d. \lambda e [\text{good}(e) \geq d]$

(in the absence of additional degree morphology d gets bound by POS, which determines the standard with respect to some comparison class, as commonly assumed in degree approaches to gradability; we will not spell out the details here)

- All three types of WELL (manner, manner-in-disguise, intensifying) involve event modifying WELL (as in (35-b)). The differences result from the different kinds of events that are modified.

5.1 Manner and ‘manner-in-disguise’ WELL

- The manner reading of WELL is available with all verbs that allow manner modification.
 - These are usually all verbs that have an activity/process component.
 - Many stative verbs do not allow manner modification (Katz 2003, 2008; Maienborn 2007b; Mittwoch 2005).
 - Nevertheless we assume that also states have an event argument and that the reduced availability of manner modification with states is due to their being conceptually poorer (see, e.g., Geuder 2006).
- The ‘manner-in-disguise’ reading comes about when WELL modifies a state (the state of a stative verb or the result state of a resultative verb).

- Similar adverbs discussed in the literature:
 - ‘Degree-of-perfection’ adverbs (Eckardt 1998); e.g. *perfectly, beautifully, badly, well*
 - * These are a special case of manner adverbs (Schäfer 2005).
 - * These are possibly semantic blends of manner and result (Piñón 2008).
 - ‘Resultative’ adverbs (Geuder 2000) / ‘result-oriented’ adverbs (Eckardt 2003); e.g. *heavily, elegantly* (36) (from Geuder 2000, 69)

- (36) a. They decorated the room beautifully.
 b. She dressed elegantly.
 c. They loaded the cart heavily.

- Geuder (2000) discusses three different analyses (all treat them as predicates of events):
 - Result state modification (e.g. Parsons 1990)
 - Modification of the event in the telic quale of the verb (Pustejovsky 1995)
 - Geuder (2000): Predicate transfer (in the sense of Nunberg 1995)
- Geuder analyses resultative adverbs as event modifiers (on a par with regular manner modifiers); the resultative meaning comes about by predicate transfer which turns this event modification into indirect modification of resultant individuals that are hidden in a verb’s meaning as implicit (semantic but not syntactic) arguments, as in (37) (Geuder 2000, 81f.).

- (37) a. They decorated the room beautifully. → beautiful decoration
 b. She dressed elegantly. → elegant dress
 c. They loaded the cart heavily. → heavy load
 d. She wrapped the gift nicely. → nice wrapping

- We get the same effects with ‘degree’/manner-in-disguise *well*:

- (38) well decorated/dressed/loaded/wrapped

- At this point we remain agnostic as to the precise implementation of the restrictions on manner-in-disguise WELL (which we take to be an instance of Geuder’s resultative adverbs).
 - These restrictions have to do with the precise lexical semantics of the verbs involved.
 - We represent it simply as an event modifier, as in (35-b) and propose (following suggestions in Schäfer 2005) that different event-internal readings come about due to different comparison classes taken into account for determining the standard for GOOD.⁴

5.2 Intensifying WELL

- This WELL shares with the other two the lexical semantics of GOOD, here predicated of a property ascription.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>(39) a. Estava ben sorprès.
 was WELL surprised
 ‘He was WELL surprised.’
 b. surprised is well applied to he.
 c. ‘surprised(he)’ is a good property ascription.</p> | <p>(40) a. En Pere és ben simpàtic.
 the Peter is WELL nice
 ‘Peter is WELL nice.’
 b. nice is well applied to Peter.
 c. ‘nice(p)’ is a good property ascription.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

⁴Alternatively, we could add MANNER to the ontology and propose different kinds of manner that can play a role; cf. Dik (1975); Piñón (2007); Schäfer (2008), or Piñón’s (2013) expression manners in the following section.

- We build on Piñón’s (2013) expression manners, employed to account for the performative use of speech-act Advs like *frankly* (41).

- *Frankly* is analyzed as a predicate of expression manners.
- **expression**(*e*) ‘the expression-manner of *e*’ (choice of expression, manner of speaking).
- It self-describes the utterance of the context *C* as a saying event.

“[*frankly*] introduces the utterance of context *C*, the speaker and hearer of *C*, identifies the utterance with a saying event *e* that includes the present time (designated by **now**), identifies the speaker and the hearer with the agent *x* and the recipient *y* respectively, of *e*, and requires the expression of *e* to be frank.” (Piñón 2013, 8).

- (41) a. Frankly, facebook is overrated.
 b. **utterance**(*C*) = *e* ∧ **speaker**(*C*) = *x* ∧ **hearer**(*C*) = *y* ∧ **say**(*e*, ∃*s*(**overrated**(*s*, **facebook**)) **agent**(*e*, *x*) ∧ **recipient**(*e*, *y*) ∧ **frank**(**expression**(*e*))

- *Ben* is not a sentential Adv but an adjectival modifier ⇒ it does not evaluate a proposition, but a property ascription, (42), (43).

- (42) $[[\text{well}_{int}]] = \lambda P.\lambda z[\text{utterance}(C) = e \wedge \text{speaker}(C) = x \wedge \text{hearer}(C) = y \wedge \text{say}(e, P(z)) \wedge \text{now} \subseteq \tau(e) \wedge \text{agent}(e, x) \wedge \text{recipient}(e, y) \wedge \text{good}(\text{expression}(e))]$

- (43) a. En Joan és ben alt.
 the John is WELL tall
 ‘John is WELL tall.’
 b. **utterance**(*C*) = *e* ∧ **speaker**(*C*) = *x* ∧ **hearer**(*C*) = *y* ∧ **say**(*e*, [[tall]](*j*)) ∧ **now** ⊆ $\tau(e) \wedge \text{agent}(e, x) \wedge \text{recipient}(e, y) \wedge \text{good}(\text{expression}(e))$

- Incompatibility with negation and interrogation (cf. (25), (26)): performatives always have widest scope. The interpretations in (44) cannot be derived.

- (44) a. ‘**nice**(*p*)’ is not a good property ascription.
 b. Is ‘**nice**(*p*)’ a good property ascription?

Because of its syntactic position – and despite its wide scope semantics – *ben* will always have narrow scope under ¬ or ?

- *Ben* cannot access the saying event and yield the metalinguistic intensifying interpretation of WELL_{int} .
- In this syntactic position, *ben* could only yield the manner or manner-in-disguise interpretations.
- However, the adjective does not provide an event to modify.

- For the same reason, it cannot be further modified by degree expressions.

- Discourse constraints (cf. (28), (29), (30)): self-evaluation of an asserted content has an emphatic effect, so *ben* will be felicitous in contexts where such a redundancy is possible.

- When the property ascription $P(x)$ is challenged (cf. (29), (30)).
- Whenever $P(x)$ is not necessarily interpreted as new asserted information (cf. (28)).

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