

Expression and Meaning: Acts, Products and 'Normative' Language

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I have been interested in understanding the use and usefulness of expression in connection with three seemingly unrelated puzzles – about first-person authority, about motivational internalism, and about the origins of meaning. I begin with a brief review of the puzzles and well-known expressivist attempts to solve them, which have been often dismissed. In each case, opponents have appealed to an apparent incongruence between what is ‘merely expressive’ and what is linguistically meaningful. Highlighting the myriad ways in which the expressive and the linguistic interact, both in the origins of meaningful speech and in its current, everyday use, I sketch my own view of expression and expressive behavior, which (as I have argued elsewhere) allows us to articulate viable, *neo*-expressivist solutions to the puzzles. I conclude by offering some tentative reflections on consequences of the view I outline for the alleged distinctiveness of so-called normative language.