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MORAL LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE OF ETHICS: CONSTRUCTIVIST RESPONSE TO THE EMOTIVIST POSITION

Abstract: Metaethics is an ethical branch concerned with the status of morality in language. Firstly, we would have to define moral linguistics itself. Moral linguistics is a branch concerned with the question of semantic function and context of moral discourse. We would first start with an emotivist position which belongs in the non-cognitivist branch and states that there are no moral facts and no moral values; thus, the definition of moral language is an emotional reaction towards certain events, deeming them acceptable or unacceptable in relation to our subjective self. Furthermore, this would mean that there would be no way of finding a link between two contradictory moral statements ("stealing is good" or "stealing is bad") stated by two different subjects and also two different moral statements stated by a single subject ("democracy is good", "stealing is bad"). This also means that there will be no space for language context since our moral statements would be immediate and proximate. However, is it truly the case that there is no place for language context in our use of moral language? Our paper examines the problems emotivism encounters and offers an alternative view, constructivism, which states that we form our moral language not only on emotion, but also rationality. Having said that, our paper will have the following structure – elaboration of normative and descriptive statements in our moral language, arguments for and against emotivism and providing an alternative view: constructivism.

Key Words: Constructivism, Contextualization, Emotivism, Metaethics, Moral discourse

1. Defining the concepts

Let us start by imagining a situation in which we are debating a friend over the act of eugenics, a topic which seems to be quite widespread even in fields not concerned with questions of ethics and politics. Now, consider that subject X (our friend) holds a position which defends the act of eugenics, while subject Y (us) holds a position explicitly against eugenics. Of course, debating over that question is in the realm of the ethical, however, when we start contextualizing that debate, the very arguments that X and Y give, we are in the realm of metaethics. The stage is now to formalize the arguments held by X and Y:

Argument 1:

P1. We should always maximize the overall good.

P2. Eugenics is about improving humanity by preventing diseases, suffering and genetic abnormalities.

C1. Thus, Eugenics is right.
Argument 2:

P1. Using humans as experiments for promoting scientific discovery goes against their autonomy and dignity, thus is ethically condemned.

P2. Eugenics is known to be used in the sense of killing off or sterilizing people with unrequired genes, thus attacking their autonomy and dignity.

C1. Thus, Eugenics is wrong.

Having said that, let us first elaborate on the difference between cognitivism and non-cognitivism in this sense, for it will prove very helpful throughout this paper. Cognitivism holds the view that "Eugenics is wrong" is the same as saying "The grass is green" or "Humans need air to survive". On the other hand, non-cognitivism opts for a more subjective (or a quasi-objective) approach. By stating "Eugenics is wrong", we simply have an emotional reaction or a prescriptive imperative towards that very act that would result in us simply stating "Boo to eugenics" or "I prescribe that eugenics is wrong, thus do not do it!". Simply put, cognitivism assumes moral judgments have truth value, while non-cognitivism holds a view that moral judgments do not because they express emotions or desires. This differentiation is taken from one of the most famous introductions to metaethics which was written by Alexander Miller (Miller, 2003). For the rest of this paper, we shall be taking into account the popularity of this book and use the terminology introduced by it.

We believe that it would also be wise to introduce the distinction between facts and values, as well as the distinction between beliefs and attitudes. By getting back to the already formalized argument, it is worth noting that there could be two types of disagreement between subject X and subject Y. The disagreement in fact could be the result of Y not knowing of the contemporary concept of *liberal eugenics* which tends to be in line with supporting the view with respect to moral autonomy. On the other hand, X might not be aware of the horrific history of some eugenics experiments. However, let us suppose that both X and Y are in the ideal situation in which both of them know all of the facts that are linked to the current argument. Value disagreement comes when a party holds a different moral principle to have a higher value than the other. For example, we have made X hold a utilitarian position by arguing for the beneficence principle, while Y is arguing the deontological principle of autonomy. The second distinction is presented in Stevenson's *Ethics and Language*. Namely, Stevenson argues that we have various moral disagreements, both interpersonal and personal (when two or more subjects disagree on some moral question, or when we are not certain on the moral judgment ourselves) (Stevenson, 1944, pp. 8-19). It is within these interpersonal disagreements that we find two reasons for disagreeing

– disagreement in belief and disagreement in attitude. Disagreements in belief are often interpreted as already mentioned fact-based norms, however, Stevenson takes beliefs in a much broader sense; namely, beliefs incorporate knowledge, facts and subjective convictions (for there can also be personal uncertainty in beliefs[1]). Disagreement in attitudes is taken as a broad sense of a value-based norm. However, in the same manner as the case was with the relation between fact-based norms and beliefs, Stevenson takes attitudes to be a psychological tendency (again, we can also be uncertain of our attitude on a personal level[2]) to be for something or against it, that is to say, take value-based norms in the broadest sense possible.

Having said all of this, we believe that the stage is set for us to present our main goal of this paper, which is to tackle a position of emotivism (which is under the non-cognitivist branch of metaethics and a position which will be discussed in the next section) and argue that this theory has yet to incorporate the full context of an ethical deliberation. By stating this, we believe that metaethical constructivism incorporates the context of deliberation in a much broader sense and can, as such, give an answer to more cases than emotivism. In this sense, our overall claim makes context the central concept.

2. Situation without a contextual basis – Emotivist position

Following the overview presented in the introductory section, we begin with the simplest version (as well as the first version) of emotivism. That is, the position that Ayer has provided in his book *Language, Truth, and Logic*. Before we start elaborating on the position itself, we need to provide the situation in the paradigm under which this work was written. After the theoretical downfall of the absolutist idealism in philosophy, there came another extreme, a position of logical positivism. The need for extreme systematic construction was replaced by the rigid theoretical deconstruction which resulted in naïve empiricism. Taking that into account, it is safe to conclude that ethics was not spared from theoretical deconstruction. Of course, it is also critical to mention that logical positivism has been very much influenced by Wittgenstein and his linguistical model in *Tractatus*. With that in mind, this model of ethics actually resides in our language, not in normativity. Therefore, according to this paradigm, ethical sentences are key to our understanding of our everyday moral lives. As Ayer puts it, ''with regard to ethical statements, there is, on the absolutist or intuitivist theory, no relevant empirical test" (Ayer, 1971, p. 109). If our ethical statements cannot be empirically examined, according to Ayer they have no use in our philosophical systems. One of the solutions, it seems, is to psychologize our emotive response to certain occurrences.

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[1] For example, let us consider the case in which we are watching a movie of a court case. During the movie we are constantly being given evidence and counter evidence before the final trial. At that very moment, we can imagine ourselves as uncertain whether our beliefs about the case are correct or incorrect.

[2] An example for this can be linked to the already mentioned example above. Imagine that during the trial, even if we have all the evidence revised and are certain that it is correct, we are still unsure whether we are for or against the prosecution.

Ayer gives an example of Y stealing money from X (Ayer, 1971, p. 110). If X states that Y was wrong to steal the money from him/her, Ayer argues X wouldn't state anything more than providing a description of Y stealing the money from X. In adding that Y was wrong to do so, the situation does not change. It only gets the dimension of moral disapproval given by the psychological status of X. It is the same as when X states that Y stole the money in a tone of horror or in a higher pitch… Having said that, normativity which is derived from "wrong", is simply there to show an expression of X. Therefore, moral and ethical judgments cannot be anything more than mere psychological expositions of approval and disapproval.

The question arises: what if X states that an action conducted by Y is wrong, and Y states that it is permitted or morally justifiable? By the very premise of Ayers claim, it would be quite bizarre to argue about that. It would only show that X and Y do not feel the same about one action, and thus, there is simply no reason to argue. It would affirm that old statement – *we agree to disagree*. This, of course, would not suffice. There isn't anything that gives our moral lives any compass. And, of course, our empirical lives often affirm our use of moral values which are superordinate to the situation at hand.

This is, of course, a very scarce position. Ayer has been given much credit for his critique of naturalism and cognitivism, however, when it comes to developing his own position, it falls short of explanatory power. If we were to pose stronger positions, we should turn to Charles Stevenson and Richard Hare. It is through Stevenson's theory that emotivism gained so much theoretical power over the years, and through Hare's theory that emotivism has been transcended and given a new shape – prescriptivism.

2.1. Stevenson and Hare – Persuasion and Prescription

In the opening section, we mentioned the key distinction that Stevenson uses, a distinction that is alien to Ayer. Just to recapitulate, Stevenson states that there are personal and interpersonal moral disagreements in attitude and belief. Keeping in mind that there are disagreements in which X is deliberating with X and in which X is deliberating with Y (or a certain class of participants), there must be a certain logic to moral deliberation. Thus, as Ayer puts it, moral terms in one sentence do not give any value to its empirical status. However, Stevenson finds two different dimensions of our moral language; a descriptive part, and an emotive part. For example, let us repeat the example that Ayer used in his work and let us observe the descriptive and emotive parts in it.

> X states "it is wrong for Y to steal money".
> "Y stole the money" – descriptive dimension
> "Boo to stealing money!" – emotive response from X which, when transformed in our moral language, becomes "wrong".

Now, it is important to recognize the key element Stevenson puts in his dualistic approach – something that resolves our moral conflicts and something every moral

term is used for. As Stevenson puts it, ''the resolution of an ethical argument requires a resolution of disagreement in attitude, and so requires that the attitudes of one party or the other (or both) be changed or redirected" (Stevenson, 1944, p. 139). Thus, Stevenson proposes a persuasive dimension of our language. It is used in a way so that helps resolve conflicts. This has much more explanatory power than Ayers's position, however, it still leaves a lot to be desired. On the one hand, the consequence is the same, there is no morally just action. It all comes down to the persuasive power of a person who is better at influencing other people's sentiments. The consequences from this are atrocious. On the other hand, as McIntyre puts it, ethics is deprived of any value and it becomes morally neutral (Makintajer, 2000, p. 283). This also opens the way for extreme relativism, something that is taken with much skepticism in contemporary ethics. The third problem with this position is quite interesting as well. There cannot be moral logic if emotivist sentences are not taken as propositions.

Since we have covered much of what has been said, we believe that it would be quite useful to mention Hare's instrumental contribution that changed the way we think about emotivism. In that regard, Hare's position has changed (prescriptivism) and we cannot call him an emotivist. However, he is a non-cognitivist that has started from the expansion of emotivism. Hare's contribution is the prescriptive dimension in moral language. Namely, even though Hare was a utilitarian in the normative sphere of ethics, he was mesmerized by the Kantian ethical system which is diametrically different from his own. Therefore, he has done a theoretical symbiosis which is best seen in his metaethics. Stevenson has also proposed a dualism of moral language in the descriptive and emotive dimensions. However, Hare disagrees. Hare's dualism is based on descriptive and prescriptive dimensions of our language (Hare, 1952, p. 3). Let us use the same example in this context:

> X states "it is wrong for Y to steal money".
> "Y stole the money" – descriptive dimension
> "Do not steal money!" – prescriptive response from X which, when transformed in our moral language, becomes "wrong".

Now, we see that when X uses a moral term "right" or "wrong", he/she is not simply saying "yay for Z" or "boo for Z", he/she is stating "I approve of Z, let us all act like Z" or "I disapprove of Z, let us never act like Z". Thus, he/she gives an imperative central to the use of our prescriptive language. The same imperative is taken from Kantian philosophy. In the same manner, imperatives are also value judgments, both singular and universal. That is why we have used "let us all do/let us never do" in the earlier examples. When we state that something is "right" or "wrong" we are committing to others, as well as ourselves in the practical sense. Having said that, it is easy to see how Hare expands his metaethical theory to the point at which it can also be used as a normative theory of value. Not only that, but with this expansion, moral arguments can also be subjects of moral logic. We can debate with others based on the starting values that we hold.

However, we still believe that the central problem is still present here as well. Emotivism (and some of the other versions of non-cognitivism that were created

by expanding the emotivist position) does not show anything "in the background", it cannot explain the certain moral unity that we have at the start of psychological/ prescriptive reactions to certain events. It takes for granted that we have some kind of unity of moral norms. Thus, emotivism cannot explain the overall context under which particular cases occur. We would like to propose the answer to that problem which is given by another metaethical position: a constructivist one.

3. Contextualizing the cases, a constructivist answer

Here our central claim comes into play. We have already mentioned some key problems with emotivism in the second section, thus, we are proposing a position which has something that the previous one lacked – an aspect of contextualization. In this section we would like to consider metaethical constructivism as a whole, although it has significantly grown as a field of metaethics in recent years (that is to say, constructivism was very influential in the fields of normative ethics and is one of the leading branches even today, however, through the rest of this paper, we shall note *metaethical constructivism* merely as *constructivism*) and has been a subject of many readings and interpretations (some even have considered philosophers such as Hume, Aristotle and Wittgenstein to be constructivist thinkers in this field, although they were not writing in the field of metaethics per se). Through the consideration of this field, our goal is to point out how the nature of constructivism has broader explanatory power than emotivism. Thus, our impression is that Rawls's framework, with Scanlon's and Copp's versions of constructivism, can very well provide the necessary proof for our claim.

3.1. Beginning of constructivism – Rawls's reading of Kant

Let us start by establishing a conceptual framework for this view. During the 1980s, John Rawls proposed the constructivist reinterpretation of Kant's moral theory, and by doing so, has addressed a problem present in moral and political debates. Namely, Rawls was concerned with the fact that one could not reach some agreement with another, a problem that emotivism seems to embrace. If we are debating the example that we set out in the first part of this paper, we can both "agree to disagree" by bringing up some necessary moral principle that person X firmly believes in, and person Y does not (which is quite common in the pluralistic societies that are something Rawls firmly stands by). Thus, as Carla Bagnoli puts it, ''the need for objectivity, according to Rawls, is practical: it arises in contexts in which people disagree about what to value and need to reach an agreement about what to do'' (Bagnoli, 2011, p. 2). This very sentence explains the whole purpose for the claim we are making in this paper; the very problem that Rawls is concerned with is something that needs to be answered by giving the very morally contextualized framework over specific contexts which are particularly judged. Now, before we step towards the argument that Rawls gives for his version of constructivism, we must note the

Kantian concept of the categorical imperative, for it is central to the claim that Rawls gives us. ''The categorical imperative would be that one which represented an action as objectively necessary for itself, without any reference to another end''. That is to say, our will is motivated to take some action not because of some goal, but because of the action itself. By elaborating his CI[3] procedure, Kant takes situations he deems plausible to incorporate his principle. For example, situations such as ending one's life, giving false promises, helping others, developing our talents, etc., demonstrate that behind every particular act there is a certain principle that unites them, a principle that, in reference to the topic of our paper, gives them unifiable context.

Now, at this instance, we have set the stage to elaborate on Rawls's constructivist reading. ''An essential feature of Kant's moral constructivism is that the particular categorical imperatives that give the content of the duties of justice and virtue are viewed as specified by a procedure of construction'' (Rawls, 2000, p. 237). Rawls derives this principle of construction from Kant's philosophy of mathematics and ethics, thus deeming it to be synthetic a priori, that is to say, it is a necessary and general principle which is both pure and empirical; it is connected to the objective transcendental source (our reason) and the empirical realm (particular cases). Having said that, Rawls thinks that three question arise: What is that which is constructed? Is the CI procedure itself constructed? What exactly does it mean to say that following the CI procedure is reasonable and rational? By answering these questions, Rawls creates the foundation for constructivism. The first question is answered in a fashion specific to Rawls himself; he states that it is content, or, in this case, context which is constructed which holds the totality of categorical imperatives that pass the test of the CI procedure. This CI procedure is the process of construction which gives moral principles to every rational person under the constraints of the procedure itself. However, the very CI procedure is not a construct of any kind, by answering a second question, Rawls concludes that the CI procedure is the very power of moral reasoning of an individual and something that allows reasonable beings to find themselves as free moral agents. To answer the third question – what makes following a CI procedure rational – Rawls also notes that every reasonable being is an end to itself, and thus, in one society which is constituted of such beings, following the procedure and its constraints will result in a much-needed objectivity which, as we have stated earlier, is a practical goal. Having stated all of this, we can derive a definition of metaethical constructivism often considered an alternative to the already mentioned cognitivism/non-cognitivism dualism. Constructivism affirms moral facts that are not metaphysically dependent, but are constructed by rational agents under a shared constitutive procedure and its constraints, while moral value is determined by the criteria in the procedure itself.

3.2. Agent-based and society-based constructivism

As mentioned above, we believe that our case against emotivism can be elaborated in the most efficient manner by contrasting it to the constructivist positions offered by Thomas Scanlon and David Copp. However, we shall not argue for either of these positions, nor any particular position of constructivism, but for

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[3] CI stands for for categorical imperative, commonly referenced in modern texts on Kant's ethics.

the very nature of that position. Now, constructivism can be in a two-way relation; a relation from society to an agent, or a relation from an agent to society.

Kenneth Westphal, one of the contemporary philosophers who defends the notion of constructivism, also has a similar method of comparing the ethical differences between subject-based and society-based constructivism. In this manner, he takes David Gauthier's theory of contractarianism and compares it to Scanlon's view on contractual constructivism (Westphal, 2016, p. 144). However, even if this comparison resides in the field of normative ethics and political theory, the similarity between their bases is clear. On one hand, we have social institutions and practices which validate themselves only in the relation from one person to others, that is to say, the role of agreement is to gain acceptance of others for one's actions; while on the other hand we have social norms that give rise to practices that enlarge the horizon of ends, and thus everything that is available to the individual is dependent on the society itself. Now, let us take this political approach to the metaethical level; the first position would claim that moral facts originate from a subject-dependent procedure, while the second one would argue that the origin of moral facts is the very society constituted by various individuals.

Scanlon is, without a doubt, one of the most influential philosophers on the topics of political theory and ethics. We can say, without a doubt, that he continued the legacy left by his mentor, the already mentioned John Rawls. The reason why this is important is that, in a way, Scanlon is continuing in Rawls's footsteps and incorporates the Kantian constructivist philosophy. While talking about Scanlon's theory, it is impossible not to mention two distinct concepts that he committed quite a large amount of his writings to – the concepts of right and wrong[4]. Also, by giving the background of the constitution of the constructivist position itself in the earlier part of this paper, we believe that there is no need to further introduce the particularities of the theory; Scanlon's argument can be elaborated with the premise of the importance of what is right and what is wrong, as well as the premise constituted by the previously given constructivist framework. Now, we believe that the simplified version of a metaethical stance that Scanlon offers can best be elaborated by consulting one of his famous papers – *The Appeal and Limits of Constructivism*. He (among other things) contrasts his version of constructivism with Rawls's and gives a procedure which results in judgments of right and wrong having a particular form of objectivity, that is to say, an objectivity not independent of us (Scanlon, 2012, p. 236). Firstly, all metaphysical and independent moral principles must be eliminated from our moral reasoning for, even if they exist and are independent of us, what use are they to our practical deliberation? Now, how do we get to the objectivity of our moral acts between the dualism of rightness and wrongness? In this instance, the test of rejectability is introduced, a test that puts rational agents under a hypothetical position in which they deliberate whether some action, under certain circumstances, can be acceptable or unacceptable. That very deliberation produces certain standards which constitute rightness and wrongness of one moral system and, thus, constitute moral facts.

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[4] *An act is wrong if its performance under the circumstances would be disallowed by any set of principles for the general regulation of behavior that no one could reasonably reject as a basis for informed, unforced, general agreement.* (Scanlon, 1998, p. 158) An act that is right would be, in Scanlon's theory, an act that is not wrong.

Now, the same thing can be said about Copp's constructivism; the Kantian principles are still used as basis of his theory, however, it is worth noting that, if society-based constructivism is to be understood at the key level, four key concepts need to be explained. The key idea, as Copp puts it, is quite appealing to intuitions; "we need to live in societies, and societies need to be governed by shared norms or standards in order to facilitate beneficial cooperation and coordination among their members. In light of this, it is plausible that morality has the function of making society possible by providing rules governing our lives that, when they have currency in society, enable society to meet its needs" (Copp, 2007, p. 13). What Copp has in mind is actually best elaborated in his earlier writings, namely, the first two concepts out of the already mentioned four are presented there. Copp, in his *Morality, Normativity and Society*, starts by considering the famous either-or choice between individualism and organicism. The key instance in which these two concepts are discussed is about preference; that is to say, the first one suggests that only individual persons are beings equipped with preference, while the other suggests that the collective structure has an independent entity of value ordering, that is to say, its own preference (Copp, 1995, p. 148). However, Copp declines both of these views and makes a dialectical turn: he argues for the *middle ground*, that society can very well have the properties of choosing and preferring one thing over another and that is because it has properties that are not independent of individuals, but constituted by them. Thus, from this, we can constitute the principle of society preference[5]. Now, the second question is about the truth grounding of our moral propositions, thus, Copp also considers two principles key to understanding this position. First is the standard-based account, and the other is the society-centered account (Copp, 2007, p. 14). What allows these propositions to have certain standards of truth? The standard-based account offers a schema both pure and basic[6], and as such, can an applicability to particular impure cases. This is something that was proposed by the constructivists mentioned before Copp. On the other hand, we have a society-centered account of truth grounding which rests upon the citation we have presented from Copp; that is to say, we need a moral code to have an authoritative standard that rests upon truth value. An authoritative standard is important, Copp argues, because it enables our moral deliberation to start not only in relation to subject-moral norms, but to subject-society norms as well. It is only then that we can form a practical society that has a shared context of morality within the debates that constitute its very being.

4. Overall critique and the conclusion

In his capital work, while criticizing relativism, Scanlon argues that "moral appraisals of actions, insofar as they are to make sense and be defensible, must be understood not as

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[5] One of the examples that Copp offers is the very constitution of one society. American society chose a democratic system over another, thus, it was the preference of the society as a whole, a society that is constituted by individuals who are fit to choose (Copp, 1995, p. 147).

[6] For example, consider two propositions: P1. Stealing is wrong; P2. It was wrong for Robert to steal Bob's wallet. The first one is pure and basic, while the second one is impure and basic. Pureness in this sense is without content, while basicness is linked to the simplicity of a normative proposition.

judgements about what is right and what is wrong absolutely, but about what is right and what is wrong relative to the particular standards that are made relevant by the context of the action in question, or by the context of judgment itself". This is something that relativism is not, but what tends to be parametric universalism. The reason why this is important is that basic and rudimentary emotivism often leads to relativism because of the lack of moral norms provided for a certain context. Now, based on the constructivist account offered by Copp, this would lead to a community, to a social structure that has no context or linking points within everyday moral and political debates. This would result in social disorder, in which the very idea of the social preference would be in danger. Having said that, we believe that Rawls's claim that the need for moral objectivity is practical could very well be expanded in this instance as well.

4.1. Conclusion

In the end, we would like to summarize everything written. At the beginning, we discussed a certain problem facing emotivism. To illustrate that problem , we explored various versions of emotivism and came to a conclusion that none of them have the power to explain the whole context in which our moral norms reside. That is to say, there is no contextual basis from which we can liberate particular cases. The solution, we think, is found in the constructivist thesis based on the revolutionary reading of Kant, proposed by John Rawls. It shows that the need for objectivity is practical, thus we start from a certain basis constructed by various procedures. Those procedures are performed constantly in everyday cases trough a constant reevaluation of values. This is something that we use to distance ourselves from moral relativism and move closer to what Scanlon calls parametric universalism, a view which suggests that moral norms indeed do exist, but they are constantly being reevaluated. Thus, this basis, which holds all of those norms together is something that gives a moral context to our everyday cases and occurrences. Having in mind this summary, it is now safe to present the main thesis of this paper. Namely, emotivism (and many other versions of non-cognitivism) cannot explain the background of the moral judgments we make during ethical deliberations. The context (or that background) can be explained by the position of constructivism, which explains how the procedure gives rise to the certain values that guide our moral judgment.

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MORALNA LINGVISTIKA I JEZIK ETIKE: KONSTRUKTIVISTIČKI ODGOVOR EMOTIVISTIČKOJ POZICIJI

Rezime

Metaetika je etička grana koja se bavi statusom morala u jeziku. Prvo, morali bismo definisati samu moralnu lingvistiku, odnosno, moralna lingvistika je grana koja se bavi pitanjem semantičke funkcije i konteksta moralnog diskursa. Na početku bismo krenuli sa elaboracijom emotivističke pozicije koja pripada nekognitivističkoj grani i koja tvrdi da ne postoje moralne vrednosti, ni moralne činjenice; stoga, definicija moralnog jezika jeste emocionalna reakcija na određene događaje, smatrajući ih prihvatljivim ili neprihvatljivim našim subjektivnim ja. Dalje, to bi značilo da ne postoji način da se pronađe veza između dva kontradiktorna moralna suda („krasti je dobro" ili „krasti je loše") koja su navela dva različita subjekta, a takođe i dva različita moralna suda koje je izrekao isti subjekt („demokratija je loša" „krađa je dobra"). Ovo takođe znači da neće biti prostora za naš jezički kontekst jer bi naše moralne izjave bile neposredne. No, da li je zaista slučaj da u upotrebi našeg moralnog jezika nema mesta za kontekst? Naš rad ispituje probleme na koje nailazi emotivizam i nudi alternativnu poziciju, konstruktivizam koji kaže da se naš moralni jezik ne oblikuje samo na osnovu emocija, već i na osnovu racionalnosti. Uzevši to u obzir, naš rad će imati sledeću strukturu – elaboracija normativnih i deskriptivnih sudova unutar našeg moralnog jezika, argumenti za i protiv emotivizma, te pružanje alternativnog gledišta, konstruktivizma.

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