

# Factivity versus factuality

## Attitudes and contents

Carlotta Pavese

9.4.14

# Outline

- 1 Factive versus factual
- 2 Attitudes versus content
- 3 Back to the factive/factual distinction
- 4 Factivity

# Outline

- 1 Factive versus factual
- 2 Attitudes versus content
- 3 Back to the factive/factual distinction
- 4 Factivity

# Factive versus factual

- 1 Knowledge is a **factive** attitude.

# Factive versus factual

- 1 Knowledge is a **factive** attitude.
- 2 Being **factive** is different from being **factual**!!!!

# Attitudes versus Contents

- 1 Attitudes are the sort of things that can be factive.

# Attitudes versus Contents

- ① Attitudes are the sort of things that can be factive.
- ② But only the content of those attitudes can be factual.

# Outline

- 1 Factive versus factual
- 2 Attitudes versus content**
- 3 Back to the factive/factual distinction
- 4 Factivity



# Examples of attitudes

- 1 Knowledge, belief, desire, fear are all examples of different **attitudes** one may have towards a proposition.

# Examples of attitudes

- 1 Knowledge, belief, desire, fear are all examples of different **attitudes** one may have towards a proposition.
- 2 Different attitudes can have **the same content**.

# Contents

- 1 We call the **content** of an attitude the proposition that is expressed by a that-clause.

# Contents

- 1 We call the **content** of an attitude the proposition that is expressed by a that-clause.
  - For example, the content of my believe *that it is raining* is the proposition that it is raining.

# Contents

- ① We call the **content** of an attitude the proposition that is expressed by a that-clause.
  - For example, the content of my believe *that it is raining* is the proposition that it is raining.
  - The content of my fear that it is raining is also the proposition that it is raining.

# Contents

- 1 We call the **content** of an attitude the proposition that is expressed by a that-clause.
  - For example, the content of my believe *that it is raining* is the proposition that it is raining.
  - The content of my fear that it is raining is also the proposition that it is raining.
  - The content of my knowledge *that my name is Carlotta* is the proposition that my name is Carlotta.

# Examples of contents

- 1 Different attitudes can have **the same content**: for example, if I believe that it is raining, whereas you fear that it is raining, my belief-attitude and your desire-attitude have the same content.

# Examples of contents

- 1 Different attitudes can have **the same content**: for example, if I believe that it is raining, whereas you fear that it is raining, my belief-attitude and your desire-attitude have the same content.
- 2 On the other hand, one may have the same attitude towards different contents: as when I believe that it is raining and I believe that it is 3am.



# Outline

- 1 Factive versus factual
- 2 Attitudes versus content
- 3 Back to the factive/factual distinction**
- 4 Factivity

# Factive versus factual

- 1 In other words, only attitudes can be factive, and only their contents can be factual.

# Factive versus factual

- 1 In other words, only attitudes can be factive, and only their contents can be factual.
- 2 So it does not make sense for an attitude to be factual, or for its content to be factive.

# Factive versus factual

- 1 A lot of our beliefs are factual—i.e., concern facts!

# Factive versus factual

- ① A lot of our beliefs are factual—i.e., concern facts!
- ② However, belief is not a factive attitude!!!

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- 1 Attitude verbs are verbs that embed *that*-clauses.

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- ① Attitude verbs are verbs that embed *that*-clauses.
  - ① I believe that Mary is coming.

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- ① Attitude verbs are verbs that embed *that*-clauses.
  - ① I believe that Mary is coming.
  - ② I fear that I may fail the exam.



# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- ① Attitude verbs are verbs that embed *that*-clauses.
  - ① I believe that Mary is coming.
  - ② I fear that I may fail the exam.
  - ③ Mary worries that she is not prepared for the exam.

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- 1 “am”, “be”, “have” are not attitude verbs!!! They cannot embed that-clauses:

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- ① “am”, “be”, “have” are not attitude verbs!!! They cannot embed that-clauses:
  - ① # I am that Mary is coming.

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- ① “am”, “be”, “have” are not attitude verbs!!! They cannot embed that-clauses:
  - ① # I am that Mary is coming.
  - ② # I have that ....???

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- ① “am”, “be”, “have” are not attitude verbs!!! They cannot embed that-clauses:
  - ① # I am that Mary is coming.
  - ② # I have that ....???
  - ③ ??? be that it is raining ???

# Only attitude verbs can be factive!

- ① “am”, “be”, “have” are not attitude verbs!!! They cannot embed that-clauses:
  - ① # I am that Mary is coming.
  - ② # I have that ....???
  - ③ ??? be that it is raining ???
- ② So it does not make sense to wonder whether those verbs are factive or not!!!

# Outline

- 1 Factive versus factual
- 2 Attitudes versus content
- 3 Back to the factive/factual distinction
- 4 Factivity**

# Factivity

- 1 So only attitudes are the sort of things that can be factive or non-factive.



# Factivity

- 1 So only attitudes are the sort of things that can be factive or non-factive.

## Factivity

An attitude  $V$  is factive just in case if a subject  $s$  bears  $V$  toward a proposition  $p$ , then  $p$  must be true.

# Factivity, continued

- 1 Another way of saying the same thing is:

## Factivity, continued

- 1 Another way of saying the same thing is:

### Factivity

An attitude  $V$  is factive just in case, *if* it is true that  $s$   $V$ s that  $p$ , then  $p$  must be true.

# Factivity, examples

- 1 If one knows that it is raining, then it must be raining.

# Factivity, examples

- 1 If one knows that it is raining, then it must be raining.
- 2 If one acknowledges that it is raining, then it must be raining.

# Factivity, examples

- 1 If one knows that it is raining, then it must be raining.
- 2 If one acknowledges that it is raining, then it must be raining.
- 3 But if one merely believes that it is raining, one may very well be wrong about it!

# Factivity, examples

- 1 If one knows that it is raining, then it must be raining.
- 2 If one acknowledges that it is raining, then it must be raining.
- 3 But if one merely believes that it is raining, one may very well be wrong about it!
- 4 In other words, knowledge and acknowledgement are factive. Belief is not factive!

# The factual/non-factual distinction

- 1 when we say that my believe is factual or not, we are really talking about whether its content is about some factual matter.



# The factual/non-factual distinction

- 1 when we say that my believe is factual or not, we are really talking about whether its content is about some factual matter.
- 2 Certain domains are not obviously factual: for example, aesthetics/ethics are not obviously factual.

# The factual/non-factual distinction

- ① when we say that my believe is factual or not, we are really talking about whether its content is about some factual matter.
- ② Certain domains are not obviously factual: for example, aesthetics/ethics are not obviously factual.
- ③ For example, my belief that steaks are delicious is not obviously about some fact of the matter over which if we were to disagree, one of the two would have to be wrong.

# The factual/non-factual distinction

- 1 when we say that my believe is factual or not, we are really talking about whether its content is about some factual matter.
- 2 Certain domains are not obviously factual: for example, aesthetics/ethics are not obviously factual.
- 3 For example, my belief that steaks are delicious is not obviously about some fact of the matter over which if we were to disagree, one of the two would have to be wrong.
- 4 My believe that steaks are delicious is not obviously factual because it is not clear that there is such a fact as that steaks are delicious (or that they are not).

# The rule of thumb

- 1 In class, I suggested that if you want to find out whether a certain content is factual or not, try to see whether, *if* two people were to reasonably disagree about it, one would have to be right and the other wrong.

# The rule of thumb

- 1 In class, I suggested that if you want to find out whether a certain content is factual or not, try to see whether, *if* two people were to reasonably disagree about it, one would have to be right and the other wrong.
- 2 The **disagreement test** is a good rule of thumb to discriminate between factual and not factual beliefs.