

Knowledge guaranteed*

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What is the relationship between saying ‘I know that Q’ and guaranteeing that Q? John Austin, Roderick Chisholm and Wilfrid Sellars all agreed that there is some important connection, but disagreed over what exactly it was. In this paper I discuss each of their accounts and present a new one of my own. Drawing on speech-act theory and recent research on the epistemic norms of speech acts, I suggest that the relationship is this: by saying ‘I know that Q’, you represent yourself as having the authority to guarantee that Q.

1. Introduction

What is the relationship between saying ‘I know that Sarah won’ and guaranteeing that Sarah won, or more generally between saying ‘I know that Q’ and guaranteeing that Q? John Austin, Roderick Chisholm and Wilfrid Sellars all agreed that there is some important connection, but disagreed over what exactly it was. In this paper I discuss each of their accounts and present a new one of my own.

Austin said the relationship between ‘I know’ and guaranteeing amounts to this: when you say ‘I know that Q’, you thereby guarantee that Q. Chisholm said the relationship is this: sometimes, but not always, when you say ‘I know that Q’, you thereby guarantee

* Forthcoming in *Noûs*.

that Q. Sellars said the relationship is this: ‘I know that Q’ means the same thing as ‘Q, and I have reasons good enough to guarantee Q’. I say the relationship is this: by saying ‘I know that Q’, you represent yourself as having the authority to guarantee that Q.

Here is the paper’s plan. Section 2 covers Austin’s view. Section 3 covers Chisholm’s view. Section 4 covers Sellars’s view. Section 5 presents my view. Section 6 concludes the discussion.

I will be relying on our shared pretheoretical understanding of guaranteeing. Below I will explain more precisely what guaranteeing involves, when discussing its practical significance (section 2) and its place within a broader class of speech acts that includes guessing and asserting (section 5).¹ In the meantime, it is a harmless oversimplification to think of guaranteeing as an especially em-

¹ For those who would prefer to know more *right now* about how I’m thinking of guaranteeing, I can locate it more precisely by reference to some of the “significant dimensions of variation” for illocutionary acts, identified by Searle (1979: ch. 1). Guaranteeing belongs to the class of *assertives*, which also includes guessing, hypothesizing, asserting, and the like. The illocutionary point of guaranteeing is to describe or represent the way the world is. Guaranteeing has a “word-to-world direction of fit.” In these respects, guaranteeing is like asserting, except that it has greater “strength,” just as ordering is like suggesting, except that the former has greater strength. (This point about comparative strength resurfaces in section 5 below, when comparing the knowledge account of assertion and the KK account of guaranteeing.) The perlocutionary intent of a guarantor is to convince or reassure one’s audience that the guaranteed claim is true. Guaranteeing seems to not be a pure assertive, though, since it also has some features of a *commissive*. Whereas assertives commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition, commissives commit the speaker to a course of action. As noted in the main text below, guaranteeing that Q is true seemingly commits you to undertaking responsibility for other people’s actions based on your words. So guaranteeing seems to be something of a hybrid on Searle’s classification, what we might call an *assertive commissive*. This is not unprecedented, since Searle himself acknowledges that his classification system produces hybrids, one class of which he calls “assertive declarations” (1979: 19–20).

phatic assertion, by which you undertake heightened responsibility for the truth of the proposition guaranteed. Just as asserting Q is more emphatic than guessing Q, so is guaranteeing Q more emphatic than asserting Q. Relatedly, someone who guarantees and turns out to be wrong is, to borrow Austin's memorable phrase, "liable to be rounded on by others" in a way that someone who merely asserts or guesses isn't when they turn out wrong. It is of course uncontroversial that there is such a speech act as guaranteeing. Paradigm cases of guaranteeing occur when we say things like 'I guarantee that meeting started at 4 pm' or 'I guarantee that we have enough money in the account for the check to clear'. One main motivation for making guarantees is to provide others with enough assurance that they're willing to proceed with a course of action, in contexts where they aren't satisfied with a mere assertion.

2. *Austin*

Austin thought that the relationship between 'I know' and guaranteeing amounts to this: when you say 'I know that Q', you thereby guarantee that Q.

Austin likens 'I know' to 'I promise'. 'I promise' is a performative utterance. Let 'A' name an action type. In a normal situation, if you say 'I promise to A', then you thereby promise to A. Your aim in saying 'I promise' is not to describe or report anything, but to make a promise. Its purpose is not descriptive, but performative. Says Austin,

[W]hen I say “I promise” . . . I have not merely announced my intention, but, by using that formula (performing this ritual), I have bound myself to others, and staked my reputation, in a new way. Similarly, saying “I know” is taking a new plunge. But it is *not* saying “I have performed a specially striking feat of cognition, superior, in the same scale as believing and being sure, even to being merely quite sure”: for there is nothing in that scale superior to being quite sure. Just as promising is not something superior, in the same scale as hoping and intending, even to merely fully intending: for there is nothing in that scale superior to fully intending. When I say “I know [that Q]”, I *give others my word*: I *give others my authority for saying* [“Q”]. (Austin 1946: 171)

Austin denies that ‘I know’ is “a descriptive phrase” (1946: 174). To say ‘I know that Q’ is not to “*describe*” some special cognitive achievement of mine regarding Q.² Instead, it is *to do something*, namely, to “give others my word” that Q is true, thereby authorizing them to repeat ‘Q’, including, presumably, in their own practical reasoning. And since Austin considers ‘give my word’ and ‘guarantee’ to be interchangeable in these matters (see the dagger (†) footnote on p. 173, and the surrounding discussion), we can put his position quite simply: to say ‘I know’ is to guarantee.

² Here one is reminded of what is perhaps Sellars’s most famous line: “The essential point is that in characterizing an episode or a state as that of *knowing*, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says” (Sellars 1963: 169).

Austin's evidence for this hypothesis is phenomenological. He points to *the way we feel* about uttering 'I know'.

We all *feel* the very great difference between saying even "I'm *absolutely* sure" and saying "I know": it is like the difference between saying even "I firmly and irrevocably intend" and "I promise". If someone has promised to do A, then I am entitled to rely on it, and can myself make promises on the strength of it: and so, where someone has said to me "I know", I am entitled to say *I know* too, at second hand. (Austin 1946: 172)

Here Austin goes beyond what he said in the previous quote. Previously he spoke of guaranteeing others the right to say 'Q'. Here he speaks of guaranteeing others the right to say 'I know that Q'. But that subtle difference is beside the main point. His main point is to extend the analogy between 'I know' and 'I promise'. Saying 'I promise to A' feels a certain way, and guarantees that A will be done. Saying 'I know that Q' feels that same way, and so by analogy likewise guarantees that Q is true.

The "linguistic phenomenology" of guaranteeing tracks the practical consequences of guaranteeing.³ If I assert that I know that the meeting starts at four, then if I turn out to be wrong, I am "liable to be rounded on by others" more severely than if I had simply asserted that the meeting starts at four. By guaranteeing that it starts at four, I "undertake" certain responsibilities, including re-

³ The phrase 'linguistic phenomenology' is Austin's, and although it's from a different paper (Austin 1956/7: 8), it fits the present context perfectly.

sponsibility for others acting on the basis of what I've guaranteed to be true. I have "entitled" them to rely on me in this way. And they are liable "insult me in a special way by refusing" to accept as true what I've guaranteed.

In the next section we'll consider Chisholm's critique of Austin, in light of which Chisholm's own view takes shape.

3. *Chisholm*

Chisholm thought that the relationship between 'I know' and guaranteeing amounts to this: sometimes, but not always, when you say 'I know that Q', you thereby guarantee that Q.

Chisholm's main criticism of Austin's view is that it overlooks an important difference between performative utterances "in the strict sense" and "in the extended sense."⁴ We can perform certain speech acts by simply saying that we are performing them. For example, in normal circumstances, by saying 'I promise', you thereby promise; by saying 'I apologize', you thereby apologize; by saying 'I request', you thereby request; and so on. When you perform a speech act in this way, your utterance is *a performative utterance in the strict sense*. Compare 'I request you to pass the salt' to 'I want the salt'. By saying 'I want the salt', you do not thereby want the salt — any suggestion to the contrary is ridiculous. And yet, as Chisholm (1966: 16–17) notes, 'I want' "is often used to accomplish what one might accomplish by means of the strict performative 'I request'."

⁴ Compare Searle's (1979) distinction between "direct" and "indirect" speech acts, or "primary" and "secondary" illocutionary acts.

That is, often you can request me to pass the salt by saying ‘I want the salt’. In virtue of this, we can consider ‘I want’ to be *a performative utterance in the extended sense*. Other phrases similarly qualify. For instance, whereas ‘I apologize’ is a strict performative, ‘I’m sorry’ can often be used to apologize.

Chisholm then remarks,

Clearly, “I know” is not performative in what I have called the strict sense of the term, for knowing is not an “act” that can be performed by saying “I know.” To say “I *promise* that *p*,” at least under certain circumstances, *is* to promise that *p*; but to say “I know that *p*” is not itself to know that *p*. (One may say “I hereby promise,” but not “I hereby know.”) “I know” is related to “I guarantee” and “I give you my word” in the way in which “I want” is related to “I request.” For “I know” is often used to accomplish what one may accomplish by the strict performative “I guarantee” or “I give you my word.” Hence, “I know” may be performative in an extended sense of the term. (Chisholm 1966: 17)

‘I want’ can still describe a state of mine even though it’s also being used performatively, to make a request. ‘I’m sorry’ can still say something about me even though it’s also being used performatively, to make an apology. Likewise ‘I know’ “may serve both to say something about me and to provide you with guarantees” (Chisholm 1966: 17). Chisholm also notes that there are perfectly ordinary situations in which to say ‘I know’ is not to guarantee. I might, for instance “confess or boast to you” that I know something

you thought only you knew, even though “you neither need nor want my guarantee.”⁵

4. Sellars

Sellars thought that the relationship between ‘I know’ and guaranteeing amounts to this: ‘I know that Q’ *means the same thing as* ‘Q, and I have reasons good enough to guarantee Q’.

Sellars considered Chisholm’s critique of Austin compelling, as far as it went. But Sellars also suspected that Chisholm’s own answer didn’t capture the full extent of the relationship between ‘I know’ and guaranteeing. Says Sellars,

I think that Chisholm is quite right about [the weakness of Austin’s account]. On the other hand, it seems to me that [Chisholm] overlooks the possibility of a connection between “I know” and “I guarantee” other than the one he considers. “I know that-*p*” might be related to “I guarantee that-*p*” not

⁵ In fairness to Austin, he could handle this latter criticism by pointing out that, generally speaking, performatives “come off” only against certain background conditions. ‘I promote you’ can be used to promote you, but only if you’re eligible for the promotion. Likewise, Austin might say, ‘I know’ can be used to provide you with a guarantee only if you’re eligible for the provision. But this response, while plausible as far as it goes, does not address Chisholm’s more fundamental point, which is that ‘I know’ is a performative only in the extended sense, and so cannot *just* be a way of guaranteeing, and also plausibly has a “descriptive” function as well. Wittgenstein (1975: §12) suggests a view similar to Austin’s, but which could accommodate Chisholm’s insistence that ‘I know’ serves a descriptive function. Says Wittgenstein, “For ‘I know’ seems to describe a state of affairs which guarantees what is known, guarantees it as a fact.” In short, Wittgenstein suggests that by saying ‘I know’, you guarantee *by describing*. See also §§433, 575; but compare §243.

just as an autobiographical description which on occasion performs the same role as the latter[,] but as one which contains a reference to guaranteeing in its very meaning. Is it not possible to construe “I know that-*p*” as essentially equivalent to “*p*, and I have reasons good enough to support a guarantee” (i.e., to say “I guarantee” or “You can rely on my statement”)? (Sellars 1975: 100)

Sellars mentions four points in favor of his semantic hypothesis (1975: 100). First, it allows us to “recognize a performative element in the very meaning of the verb ‘to know’,” while allowing for Chisholm’s point that ‘to know’ is not a strict performative. Second, it preserves the “pre-analytic datum” that there is a “symmetry” among first, second, and third-person uses of ‘to know’. Third, it allows us to “appreciate the *context dependence* of the adequacy involved” in saying ‘I know’. Finally, the account explains why our ‘knowledge’-thoughts are essentially interpersonal.

I’ll now discuss each of Sellars’s four points in turn, and then present a more direct criticism of his semantic hypothesis.

Beginning with Sellars’s first point, it’s not clear that we ought to recognize a performative element *in the meaning* of ‘know’, even if we acknowledge that ‘know’ is a performative in the extended sense. We don’t think there’s a performative element in the meaning of ‘want’, even though ‘want’ is a performative in the extended sense. We don’t think that ‘I want X’ means ‘X is desirable, and I desire it enough to support a request’, or any such thing. So there is nothing in the profile of an extended performative to make us sus-

pect that the meaning of ‘know’ should reflect its performative potential. Setting that aside, even if there is some pretheoretical pressure to recognize a distinctive illocutionary force in ‘know’, there are competing accounts of its illocutionary force. On one such account, to say ‘Smith knows that Q’ is to *credit Smith for having a true belief that Q*, as opposed to forming a true belief by luck (Greco 2003). On another account, to say ‘Smith knows that Q’ is to *approve of Smith as an informant about Q* (Craig 1990). We would need to adjudicate among all these theories before settling on Sellars’s proposal.

Moving on to Sellars’s second point, which is somewhat obscure, I do not detect the “symmetry” Sellars says he finds among first, second and third-person knowledge attributions. To help us understand the symmetry he has in mind, he says,

“He knows that-*p*” would entail “He has reasons good enough to support a guarantee that-*p*”. (Sellars 1975: 100).

But it does not seem correct that the truth of ‘he knows’ entails the truth of ‘he has reasons good enough to support a guarantee’, especially if we keep in mind that Sellars here refers to good enough *ethical* reasons to support a guarantee. This connects with my main positive criticism of Sellars’s semantic proposal, on which more shortly.⁶

⁶ Just to clarify, I don’t deny that there is an interesting connection between first-person and third-person knowledge ascriptions. My main critical point here is that Sellars’s remarks on the connection are cryptic and unconvincing. My own view is, roughly, that by saying ‘She knows that Q’, you thereby assert that she knows that Q, and by asserting that she knows that Q, you thereby represent yourself as knowing that she knows that Q, which

As for Sellars's third point, while it is certainly true that the propriety of saying 'I know' often depends on context, it's not clear how this tends to support Sellars's semantic proposal about the meaning of 'know'. Sellars says,

R1: "Reasons which might be adequately good to justify a guarantee on one occasion might not be adequate to justify a guarantee on another" (1975: 100).

This seems correct — the practical and ethical implications of guaranteeing are context-dependent. But compare:

R2: Reasons which might be adequately good to justify a request on one occasion might not be adequate to justify a request on another.

This also seems correct — the practical and ethical implications of requesting are context-dependent. But this should not lead us to believe that 'I want X' means 'X is desirable, and I have reasons adequate to support a request'. And if the truth of R2 doesn't support the semantic hypothesis about 'I want', then the truth of R1 doesn't support Sellars's semantic hypothesis about 'I know' either.

Moving on to Sellars's fourth and final point, it again does not seem true, at least by my lights. That is, it does not seem true that "we rarely" think to ourselves 'I know this', or wonder 'do I know this?', unless "the question of a possible guarantee to someone oth-

in turn requires that *you* also know that Q, because knowledge is obviously factive. By saying 'She knows that Q', you are thus committed to *your also knowing that Q*. So while I agree that there is a connection, it's not to be understood, as Sellars would have it, immediately in terms of the meaning of 'know'.

er than ourselves has arisen” (Sellars 1975: 100). On the one hand, when making plans, whether in concert with others or in isolation, we often wonder whether we know things, or affirm that we do indeed know them. Suppose I live alone in a small house in the country. I wonder to myself, “should I leave the furnace on while I’m gone for the week?” Then I think, “Well, I know the forecast said to expect sub-zero temperatures here this week, so I should leave it on to prevent the pipes from cracking.” This seems perfectly natural and a common enough phenomenon, though no question has arisen about a possible guarantee to another person. On the other hand, many of us often wonder whether we know this or that out of sheer curiosity, not because we’ve been prompted to consider offering someone a guarantee.

So I’m not persuaded by any of the four points Sellars offers in support of his semantic hypothesis. Aside from that, the hypothesis seems doubtful in its own right, for two reasons. First, competent speakers do not recognize it as true, which would be surprising if it were true. Second, it rules out *by definition* non-reason-based knowledge. But many serious philosophical proposals about knowledge contemplate non-reason-based knowledge (e.g. Wittgenstein 1975: §§166, 253; Williams 1992; Sosa 2011: ch. 6). If these accounts are wrong, it does not seem to be due to a semantic error.

5. *A different approach*

I propose that the relationship between ‘I know’ and guaranteeing

amounts to this: by saying ‘I know that Q’ you represent yourself as having the authority to guarantee that Q.

I have two primary motivations for making this proposal. First, like Sellars, I suspect that Chisholm’s suggestion, although correct as far as it goes, does not fully capture the relationship between saying ‘I know’ and guaranteeing. I suspect that the relationship goes deeper than its sometimes being the case that saying ‘I know’ is a way of guaranteeing. But, unlike Sellars, I don’t aim to redeem this suspicion by *defining* ‘know’ in terms of guaranteeing. Instead I aim to redeem it by positing a normative connection between *asserting that you know* and *having the authority to guarantee*. Second, the proposal coheres seamlessly with an independently attractive view about the epistemic norm of assertion, and the relationship between asserting and guaranteeing.

My account proceeds from four assumptions. I’ll begin by explaining the assumptions, and then show how they support my proposal.

My first assumption concerns the relationship between *uttering a declarative sentence* and *making an assertion*. The “default use” of a declarative utterance is to make an assertion (Williamson 2000:258). And the primary way we make an assertion is by uttering a declarative sentence. I assert that Sarah will win by uttering ‘Sarah will win’. Of course, there are other ways of asserting, such as writing or typing the sentence.⁷

⁷ It isn’t always the case that uttering the grammatically declarative sentence ‘S’ amounts to asserting that S. For example, if I recite ‘Sarah will win’ as one of my lines in a play, I do not thereby assert that Sarah will win. And

My second assumption is that when you (purport to) perform a speech act for which authority is required, you thereby represent yourself as having the authority to do so — that is, you represent yourself as satisfying the norms governing such an act. By inquiring on your behalf with the tax office, I represent myself as having the authority to inquire on your behalf. By pronouncing a couple married, the justice represents herself as having the authority to marry the couple. By declaring that I promote you, I represent myself as having the authority to promote you. And so on. Of course you needn't *explicitly claim* that you have the authority in order to represent yourself as having it. Such representation is most often implicit and automatic.⁸

there are other ways in which asserting can come apart from uttering a grammatically declarative sentence. We can set aside this complication for present purposes.

⁸ That such representation does occur is widely accepted, and informs not only the foundations of speech act theory, but also the seminal discussions of the norms of speech acts. See Austin 1946: 170 ff, Moore 1962: 277, Searle 1969, Searle 1979, Unger 1975: 250 ff, and Williamson 2000: 252 n. 6. It is because you represent yourself as satisfying the relevant norms that you can mislead people in various ways by performing the relevant speech acts.

One indication that such representation occurs is the fact that it is “linguistically unacceptable,” in a peculiar sort of way, to explicitly perform certain speech acts, while in the same breath denying that you're in a particular condition (Searle 1979: 4). Moore's paradox is a good example of this: it strikes us as distinctively odd to say, for example, ‘Dogs bark, although I don't believe that they do’, or ‘I went to the cinema last night, but I don't know whether I did’. It strikes us as similarly odd to say things like ‘I promise to come to the reception, although I have absolutely no intention of doing so’.

The standard explanation for the unacceptability of such sentences is that they send “mixed signals,” as it were: you suggest or imply one thing by performing a speech act, but then you explicitly say the opposite. By asserting Q, you represent yourself as believing and knowing Q, so if you as-

My third assumption is the well supported *knowledge account of assertion* ('KA' for short): you may assert Q only if you know Q. The 'may' here designates epistemic permission — knowledge is essentially the requisite *epistemic* relation for assertion. It does not follow that you morally or prudentially may assert Q only if you know Q. The case for KA consists in a cumulative explanatory argument from conversational patterns (see Unger 1975: esp. 260 ff; Slote 1979; Williamson 2000: ch. 11; Reynolds 2002, DeRose 2009: ch. 3, Turri 2011, and Benton forthcoming). I emphasize that my purpose here is *not* to recount this argument, canvass objections, respond to objections, or evaluate competing proposals. That can-

sert Q, but in the same breath deny that you believe or know Q, you contradict the way you just represented yourself. Searle (1969: ch. 3; 1979: 4 ff) says that you represent yourself this way because belief is a "sincerity condition" on assertion. Moore (1962: 277) says that by asserting Q you "positively imply" that you know Q; Williamson (2000), DeRose (2002), Turri (2011), Benton (forthcoming) and others explain this by positing that knowledge is the constitutive norm of assertion. Similarly, by promising to A, you represent yourself as intending to A, so if you promise to A but in the same breath you deny that you intend to A, you contradict the way you just represented yourself. Searle (1969: ch. 3) says that you represent yourself this way because intention is a "sincerity condition" on assertion; compare Austin 1946: 170 ff.

More evidence that such representation occurs is found in the default propriety of certain challenges to speech acts. 'How do you know that?' and 'Do you really believe that?' are normally appropriate in response to an assertion, even when the assertion's content has nothing to do with you or what you know or believe. Similarly, 'Do you really intend to do that?' and 'You don't even intend to do that!' are felt as questioning or challenging the propriety of a promise, even when the promise's content has nothing to do with your intentions. One good explanation for the propriety of these responses to assertions and promises is that, by performing the speech act, you represent yourself as satisfying the norms governing it, and these norms involve believing and knowing, on the one hand, and intending, on the other.

not responsibly be done here. For present purposes, I simply assume that KA is true, resting content with the considerable body of scholarship supporting it. (For critical discussion of KA see, e.g., Weiner 2005, Douven 2006, Lackey 2007, Hill and Schechter 2007, Levin 2008, Kvanvig 2009, and Brown 2010.)

My fourth and final assumption derives from the relationship between asserting and guaranteeing. Other things equal, insofar as an assertion is true, it is good *qua* assertion; insofar as it is false, it is bad *qua* assertion. In virtue of this, let's say that assertion *aims at truth*. Other speech acts also aim at truth, such as guessing, conjecturing and guaranteeing. Call speech acts aimed at truth *alethic speech acts*.⁹ Alethic speech acts differ in two important, closely related ways. First, some place more credibility on the line than others. Guessing extracts little if any of your credibility. Conjecturing extracts more credibility than guessing, asserting more than conjecturing, and guaranteeing more than asserting. Second, the more credibility an alethic speech act extracts, the stricter the epistemic norms governing it. Guessing requires virtually nothing by way of evidence or epistemic standing: arguably you may guess Q whenever you'd like, even if the evidence doesn't support Q. Conjecturing requires that you have at least some evidence favoring Q, and perhaps that Q be the most probable alternative given your evidence.¹⁰

⁹ What I call "alethic speech acts" correspond largely with what Searle (1975: section 4) calls "assertives."

¹⁰ Henry Jekyll suggests as much when he writes to Utterson: "I must here speak by theory alone, saying not that which I know, but that which I suppose to be most probable." See the final section of Stevenson 1886: "Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case."

Asserting Q requires that you know Q. Guaranteeing extracts more credibility than asserting, so guaranteeing has a correspondingly stricter requirement — it requires more than knowledge. A natural candidate for the epistemic norm of guaranteeing is knowledge of knowledge: you may guarantee Q only if you know that you know Q. Call this *the KK account of guaranteeing* (‘the KK account’ for short).¹¹

With these four pieces in place — that is, the relationship between declarative utterance and assertion, the relationship between performing a speech act and representing yourself as authorized to do so, the knowledge account of assertion, and the KK account of guaranteeing — we are positioned to explain the relationship between saying ‘I know’ and guaranteeing. Here it goes:

When you say ‘I know that Q’, you thereby assert that you know that Q. When you make an assertion, you represent yourself as having the authority to make the assertion. So since knowledge is the norm of assertion, when you assert that you know that Q, you represent yourself as *knowing that you know that Q*. And since *knowing that you know* is the norm of guaranteeing, you thus represent yourself as *having the authority to guarantee that Q*. Putting that all together, we get the following: when you say ‘I know that Q’, you represent yourself as having the authority to guarantee that Q. That is the relationship between ‘I know’ and guaranteeing.

We can present my proposal in the form of a hypothetical syllogism.

¹¹ I defend the view sketched in this paragraph more fully in Turri 2010.

1. When you say ‘I know that Q’, you assert that you know that Q. (Premise)
2. When you assert that you know that Q, you represent yourself as having the authority to assert that you know that Q.
3. When you represent yourself as having the authority to assert that you know that Q, you represent yourself as knowing that you know that Q. (Premise)
4. When you represent yourself as knowing that you know that Q, you represent yourself as having the authority to guarantee that Q. (Premise)
5. So when you say ‘I know that Q’, you represent yourself as having the authority to guarantee that Q. (From 1–4, hypothetical syllogism)

My proposal is not only perfectly consistent with Chisholm’s proposal, but it helps to explain why Chisholm’s is true. It helps us understand why saying ‘I know’ can be, and sometimes is, used as a way of guaranteeing. My account also entails that ‘I know that Q’ is descriptive and not merely performative, since by uttering it you say something that is either true or false.

My proposal improves on Sellars’s while retaining its spirit. Although ‘I know that Q’ doesn’t mean ‘Q, and I have reasons good enough to guarantee Q’, *by saying* ‘I know that Q’ you do *represent yourself* as having the authority to guarantee Q. Semantic equivalence or entailment seem to be too strong a connection between ‘I know’ and guaranteeing. Representation is a weaker, but nevertheless still intimate, connection. So my proposal ties ‘I know’ to guar-

anteeing more closely than Chisholm's does, but not as closely as Sellars's does. Moreover my proposal accomplishes this without essentially tying knowing to having reasons; it is perfectly consistent with (though it does not entail) the hypothesis that non-reason-based knowledge is possible.

6. *Conclusion*

In closing, let me say a word about my fourth assumption, namely, the KK account of guaranteeing. My other three assumptions are well established in the literature on either speech acts or epistemic norms, or at least well enough established to make it reasonable to assume them for present purposes. The KK account of guaranteeing is a comparative newcomer on the scene. I do find the KK account intuitively very plausible, especially when considered in light of the evidence favoring the knowledge account of assertion, the phenomenological evidence that guaranteeing *feels* more demanding than asserting, and the heightened responsibility that guaranteeing brings with it. But I'm not reduced to simply appealing to intuition here. Instead we may view my discussion as providing evidence for the KK account, in the following way.

Suppose along with Austin, Chisholm and Sellars that there is some important connection between 'I know' and guaranteeing. And suppose that my other three, well established assumptions from section 5 are correct (i.e. the relation between declarative utterance and assertion, the relation between acting and representing

yourself as authorized, and the knowledge account of assertion). Now *if* the KK account of guaranteeing is correct, then it enables an improved explanation of the connection between ‘I know’ and guaranteeing. And that provides some support for the KK account.¹²

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