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### Intuition Talk and Reasoning Markers: A Corpus-Study from the Philosophy of Language

Vocabulario de intuiciones y marcadores del razonamiento: un estudio de corpus desde la filosofía del lenguaje

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### **Abstract**

Cappelen (2012) argues against the Thesis of Centrality, that is, against the idea that analytic philosophers rely on intuitions as evidential support for their theories. Cappelen challenges this notion by targeting the "Argument from 'Intuition'-Talk", i.e., the idea that intuitions must play a decisive role in the arguments of analytic philosophers because they use intuition talk profusely. This paper empirically examines this claim by assessing the prevalence of intuition talk in critical parts of the arguments. Specifically, it explores whether intuition talk coincides with reasoning markers signifying premises and conclusions. To accomplish this, I will first compile a corpus of articles on taste disagreements. Then, I will conduct two types of analysis: a frequency list analysis, and an analysis of the dispersion of both types of vocabulary along the corpus.

**Keywords:** experimental philosophy, corpus methods, intuition talk, reasoning markers.

### Resumen

Cappelen (2012) argumenta en contra de la Tesis de la Centralidad, es decir, en contra de la idea de que los filósofos analíticos usan las intuiciones como evidencia para defender sus teorías. Para ello, ataca el denominado "Argumento del vocabulario de intuiciones", es decir, la idea de que las intuiciones deben jugar un papel determinante en los argumentos de los filósofos analíticos porque estos usan vocabulario de intuiciones de manera profusa. Este



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artículo examina empíricamente esta afirmación, determinando en qué medida el vocabulario de intuiciones aparece en partes centrales de los argumentos; más concretamente, si el vocabulario de intuiciones suele coincidir con marcadores de razonamiento que indican la presencia de premisas y conclusiones. Para ello, primero compilaré un corpus de artículos sobre desacuerdos de gusto. Segundo, llevaré a cabo dos tipos de análisis: un análisis de listas de frecuencias, y un análisis de la dispersión de ambos tipos de vocabulario a lo largo del corpus.

Palabras clave: filosofía experimental, métodos de corpus, vocabulario de intuiciones, marcadores de razonamiento.

#### 1. Introduction

Intuitions are a source of evidence that many people use, to a greater or lesser extent, on a daily basis. We appeal to them to examine very different questions, for instance, moral, mathematical, or religious questions, or to survey other people's opinions on a plethora of different topics. While there exists considerable debate surrounding the criteria for identifying something as an intuition, a preliminary definition of the term could be that we intuit that p, as opposed to, for example, deducing that p, when we believe that p is true but without the mediation of any other belief that serves as a basis for believing that p. As Peirce notes, an intuition encompasses any belief that acts as evidence but lacks support from other evidence (see Peirce, 1868/1992). In a similar but more contemporary line, Cappelen defines "intuitiveness" as involving "some kind of ease, effortlessness, or spontaneity" (see Cappelen, 2012, p. 33). In summary, a belief or an affirmation is intuitive when it can serve as evidence to conclude other affirmations or beliefs without depending on previous affirmations or beliefs. To put it differently, when we do not infer it through theoretical reflection but rather in a spontaneous way.

Appealing to intuitions has gained widespread traction across many different areas within philosophy. Specifically, in analytic philosophy, the accepted view (see Goldman, 2007; Weinberg, 2007; Williamson, 2007, p. 2; Baz, 2012, p. 87; Koopman, 2012; Kornblith, 2014) is that intuitions play a fundamental role in the practice of analytic philosophy. This idea is summarized in the so-called "Thesis of Centrality": "contemporary analytic philosophers rely on intuitions as evidence (or as a source of evidence) for philosophical theories" (Cappelen, 2012, p. 3). Cappelen traces the origins of this influence back to well-known thought experiments to defend semantic externalism (see Putnam, 1975; Kripke, 1980) and other influential thought experiments such as Mary's room (see Jackson, 1982).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In this work, I follow philosophers who defend intuitions' doxastic and propositional nature (see, i.a., Peirce, 1868/1892; Sosa, 1996; Cappelen, 2012). Nevertheless, there are those who oppose this viewpoint and assert the non-propositional nature of intuitions, defining them instead as seemings (see Bealer, 1998; Chudnoff, 2013; Bengson, 2015; Koksvik, 2017).

However, for Hintikka (1999, p. 127), "[i]ntuitions came into fashion in philosophy as a consequence of the popularity of Noam Chomsky's linguistics and its methodology [after the mid-1960s]". Also, Cohen says that this tendency "began to prevail in the later 1940s. It then became fairly common, at least in North America, for intuitions to be explicitly invoked by philosophers" (Cohen, 1986, p. 77, quoted by Andow, 2015a, pp. 189-190). While the exact inception of this trend remains a topic of debate, the "use of the word 'intuition' has exploded in analytic philosophy." (Andow, 2015a, p. 190). Supporting evidence from Andow further substantiates this thesis: "the proportion of philosophy articles indexed in JSTOR indulging in intuition talk has grown from around 22 percent in the decade 1900-1909 top around 54 percent in the decade 2000-2009." (Andow, 2015a, p. 190).

Since the beginning of the 21st century, a controversy has arisen surrounding the suitability of intuitions as a methodology within the realm of analytic philosophy. In this debate, we find different positions. First, the "autonomists" (see, e.g., Bealer, 1998; Liao, 2008; Sosa, 2013; Chalmers, 2014; Devitt, 2015) defend the appeal to intuition as a proper methodology. Second, the "naturalists" (see, e.g., Machery et al., 2004; Knobe and Nichols, 2007; Mallon et al., 2009; Alexander, Mallon and Weinberg, 2010) believe that philosophy must be constrained by science since introspection and appealing to intuition are not reliable methods. Third, borrowing the term from Nado (2016, p. 782), the "intuition deniers" (see, e.g., Williamson, 2007; Deustch, 2009; Cappelen, 2012; Molyneux, 2014), defends that analytic philosophers do not employ intuitions as evidence.

Herman Cappelen, one of the most visible leaders of intuition deniers, argues that intuitions play no evidential role in analytic philosophy. Specifically, he contends that "it is not true that philosophers rely extensively (or even a little bit) on intuitions as evidence." (Cappelen, 2012, p. 1). He distinguishes two different arguments that have traditionally been used to defend the Thesis of Centrality:

- the "Argument from Philosophical Practice" (Cappelen, 2012, pp. 5-7), concerns the methods used in analytic philosophy and, more specifically, whether such methods use intuitions as evidence.
- the "Argument from 'Intuition'-Talk (AIT)" (Cappelen, 2012, pp. 4-5), relates to the vocabulary philosophers use when arguing in favor of their theories. If analytic philosophers use terms like "intuition" or "intuitive" in their argumentations to prove or disprove particular theories, then intuitions must serve as evidence.

Cappelen's stance on this matter is that the utilization of intuition talk among analytic philosophers does not imply that intuitions are used as evidence; indeed, he claims that it is no more than a verbal tick, a passing trend in writing. Cappelen identifies three questions crucial for appraising AIT. Firstly, a quantitative question delves into the extent of intuition talk employed by philosophers. Secondly, a centrality question assesses the prominence of intuition talk within arguments, for example, if it appears in essential parts of the argumentation. Thirdly, an interpretative question examines whether philosophers' applications of intuition

talk align with the Thesis of Centrality or permit alternative interpretations. Cappelen focuses on the third issue, the interpretative one. However, he recognizes the other two's importance when he highlights that proponents and opponents of AIT must engage with these issues. Consequently, he contends that a thorough exploration of AIT's support for the Thesis of Centrality would involve studying analytic philosophy texts from 1950.

This article examines the centrality and interpretation questions, primarily focusing on the former. On the one hand, I will assess to what extent intuition talk is central in the arguments of analytic philosophers, empirically investigating what specific positions intuition talk takes up in the arguments; in other words, if it usually coincides with reasoning markers (terms pointing to premises and conclusions), or if, on the contrary, it does not usually concur with such particles. On the other hand, the study aims to scrutinize whether the terms associated with intuition talk in the corpus point to uses supporting the Thesis of Centrality. To this end, an analysis is conducted on a corpus of papers on analytic philosophy. The scope of the analysis is intentionally narrowed to focus on taste disagreements, as comprehensively investigating this matter across the entire spectrum of analytic philosophy would be an excessively demanding undertaking. Bordonaba-Plou (2021) shows the existence of two basic intuitions in the debate on taste disagreements: disagreement and faultlessness intuitions. Moreover, it shows that intuition talk related to these two intuitions co-occur systematically with terms that could point to an evidential use of intuitions, specifically in a "intuition respecting" sense (see Andow, forthcoming, pp. 5-6). The present paper expands upon this inquiry in two distinct directions. Initially, an analysis is conducted to identify which intuition talk terms are most frequently used in the corpus. Subsequently, the investigation explores whether the ways in which philosophers employ these terms lend support to the Thesis of Centrality. Second, I will analyze the extent to which intuition talk appears in central parts of the arguments.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 characterizes AIT, paying particular attention to the centrality question and showing how Cappelen (2012) denies that intuition talk is central to the arguments of analytic philosophers. Section 3 presents the methodology used in this work: corpus methods. Section 4 details the results of the analyses. Section 5 evaluates the results, focusing on the interplay between intuition talk and reasoning markers. Section 6 discusses the consequences of the results and comments on some possible lines of criticism. Finally, in Section 7, I draw some conclusions.

### 2. The argument from intuition talk and the centrality question

As mentioned in the Introduction, the AIT states that analytic philosophers use intuitions as evidence, given their extensive reliance on intuition talk. However, Cappelen argues against this idea:

I am inclined to put weight on what I think of as a verbal tick (or virus): philosophers started to use expressions such as "Intuitively, BLAH" a lot. . . . [A]ccording to this diagnosis, the usage itself is not motivated by (or anchored in) any substantive philosophical commitments or views about intuitions or philosophical methodology—it's simply a verbal tick without any interesting philosophical foundation. (Cappelen, 2012, p. 22)

In brief, for Cappelen, the fact that intuition talk is widespread in analytic philosophy does not inherently demonstrate that intuitions are used as evidence. Instead, it signifies a prevailing convention or literary trend. To elucidate, certain analytic philosophers adopted phrases like "Intuitively, ..." or "It is intuitive that ..." in their discourse, which gained traction and followers over time, solidifying this particular writing style. Ultimately, the constant use of the same locutions made analytic philosophers use intuition talk automatically, practically without thinking.

This is the foundation of Cappelen's argument that intuition talk does not indicate evidential uses of intuitions. How analytic philosophers employ such phraseology indicates a verbal quirk, a stylistic trend that has gained popularity. As a result, it is likely that intuition talk will sometimes appear in central parts of the arguments, but at other times it will not. In other words, as the motivations for using this vocabulary primarily stem from stylistic inclinations, there is no reason to conclude that intuitions appear systematically in the argumentations of analytic philosophers. As Cappelen highlights:

Let Q be a central question in any philosophical subdiscipline. By doing a simple and quick scholarly search, you will both find philosophers who present key arguments in connection with Q in an entirely "intuition"-free way and philosophers who present those same key arguments by using "intuition"-talk. (Cappelen, 2012, p. 26).

The idea presented in this passage faces two main challenges. Firstly, a simple and quick search might not suffice to determine whether someone uses intuitions in connection with key arguments. It is true that, when reading a paper, we can see if that author has used intuition talk, and we can also, albeit with greater effort, determine in what parts of the argumentative structure has done it. However, a comprehensive evaluation of numerous authors is essential to evaluate whether intuitions are used as evidence within a specific subdiscipline of analytic philosophy. Besides, the set of terms that can indicate the presence of intuitions is immense. It would not only be necessary to consider terms referring directly to intuitions, what is known as "terminology of intuition" (Ashton and Mizhari 2018, p. 596), e.g., "intuition," "intuitive," or "intuit," but also "language indicating appeals to intuition" (Ashton and Mizhari, 2018, p. 596)." Verbs like "seem" or "appear," or nouns like "impression" or "appearance" may fall under this second category. Nevertheless, the assortment of expressions that might fit into this second category is immense. In short, without conducting a detailed analysis of how authors of a subdiscipline within analytic philosophy use terminology of intuition and

language indicating appeals to intuition, drawing definitive conclusions about how analytic philosophers use intuition talk is a complex task.

Secondly, Cappelen's discussion on the role of intuition talk in arguments lacks clarity. According to him, analytic philosophers present key arguments using intuition talk or in an entirely intuition-free way. Yet, he does not specify what this means, which does little to facilitate the comprehension of the already tricky question of how intuitions can be used in an argument.

One of the aims of this work is to investigate the extent to which analytic philosophers who write about a topic, taste disagreements, use intuition talk in essential parts of their argumentations. If, as Cappelen says, the use of intuition talk were nothing more than a verbal tick consisting of the automatic and almost unconscious preceding of a sentence with expressions such as "Intuitively" or "It is intuitive that", then, it would be reasonable to anticipate that such vocabulary would not consistently manifest in the central parts of the arguments. Sometimes it would, but many other times, it would not. Consequently, an investigation into the correlation between instances of intuition talk and reasoning markers becomes valuable. However, before proceeding with the analysis, I will present the methods and materials used in the work.

### 3. Methodology: corpus methods

In recent years, numerous scholars have defended the advantages of using linguistic corpora in experimental philosophy (Bluhm, 2013, 2016; Hansen and Chemla, 2015; Caton, 2020; Tallant and Andow, 2020; Bordonaba-Plou and Torices, 2021, Bordonaba-Plou, 2023). In this work, I will use corpus methods to inquire about the centrality of intuition talk in the literature on taste disagrements. There are compelling reasons for choosing the debate over taste disagreements. First, this topic has garnered substantial attention in the philosophy of language over the last two decades. Second, the debate hinges on two fundamental intuitions: disagreement and faultlessness intuitions. By opting for this decision, we guarantee our focus on a highly impactful and expansive subject within the field, where intuitions seem to hold a central position. This section focuses on three different methodological issues: the process of compiling and editing the corpus, the set of terms employed in the work, and the analyses performed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cappelen emphasizes that intuition talk often is used as a hedge. He argues that expressions like "intuitively" or "intuitive" are used very often to weaken the speaker's commitments. In this way, intuition talk would not be central in the argumentations of analytic philosophers since it would only be used to reduce the commitments the author is undertaking. He is right in stressing the existence of this use of intuition talk, which Andow (2015b, p. 524) confirms. However, it is important to note that while intuition talk is occasionally employed as a means of hedging, this does not imply that other times intuition talk points to cases where intuitions are used as evidence. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate later, hedging uses represent only a small portion of the overall instances of intuition talk.

To start, let us examine the various stages involved in the process of compiling and editing the corpus. I compiled a corpus by gathering papers on taste disagreements<sup>3</sup> using the beta version of Constellate.<sup>4</sup> The publication dates of the articles span from 2001 to 2020, reflecting the relatively recent emergence of literature on taste disagreements. Twenty papers from each decade were chosen, making a total of 40 papers.<sup>5</sup> The papers were identified through keyword searches for "personal taste" and "faultless disagreement". Subsequently, I organized the results based on their relevance, because "selecting the corpus in this way provides some assurances that the articles considered have gained attention in their field" (Andow, 2015b, p. 522). In the final step, I handpicked the top twenty papers from each decade, 2001-2010 and 2011-2020,<sup>6</sup> obtaining a total corpus size of 386,302 words.

Next, I performed a series of operations to preprocess and refine the corpus. Firstly, I convert the .pdf files to .txt format using the R package *pdftools*.<sup>7</sup> Secondly, I edit the corpora using regular expressions.<sup>8</sup> Regular expressions are a language used to specify searches for text strings. A text string is "any sequence of alphanumeric characters (letters, numbers, spaces, tabs, and punctuation)." (Jurafsky and Martin, 2008, p. 18). The primary objective during this phase was to eliminate extraneous content such as headers, which had the potential to influence the outcomes of subsequent analyses.

The subsequent stage involved selecting specific terms for the analysis. As discussed in the preceding section, two different sets of terms are referred to by "intuition talk", terminology of intuition and language indicating appeals to intuition. In this work, my emphasis has been on the former set of terms because I think it is better to choose a well-defined set of terms rather than a collection that lacks a straightforward criterion for inclusion or exclusion. Specifically, searched for those terms sharing the root "intuit", that is, "intuit", "intuits", "intuition", "intuitions", "intuitive", "intuitively", "counter-intuitive" and "counter-intuitively".

Reasoning markers are a subset of "discourse markers" (see Schiffrin, 1996; Fischer, 2006; Degand, Cornillie and Pietrandrea, 2013; Bayer and Struckmeier, 2016). Discourse markers,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Date of the search: March 23, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> https://constellate.org/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The twenty papers chosen from the 2001-2010 period are MacFarlane (2005), Glanzberg (2007; 2009), Haslanger (2007), Stojanovic (2007), Wright (2007), Binderup (2008), Brogaard (2008; 2009), Kölbel (2008; 2009), Rowley and Robinson (2008), Alwood and Schroeder (2009), Barker (2009), Lasersohn (2009), Montminy (2009), Weatherson (2009), Barker (2010), Francén (2010), and Moltmann (2010). The twenty papers from the 2011-2020 decade are Lasersohn (2011), Moltmann (2012), Stojanovic (2012), Odrowąż-Sypniewska (2013), Carter (2014), Cohnitz and Marques (2014), Egan (2014), Hales (2014), Huvenes (2014), Palmira (2014), Baker and Robson (2015), Clapp (2015), Colomina-Almiñana (2015), Hîncu (2015), Kompa (2015), López de Sa (2015), Capraru (2016), Díaz (2016), Eriksson and Tiozzo (2016), and Miščević (2018).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> To ensure a balanced corpus, I limited the selection to a maximum of two papers from the same author.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/pdftools/index.html

<sup>8</sup> https://regexr.com/

a multifunctional category, encompass a diverse array of terms primarily dedicated to structuring and streamlining communication. In this context, I focused on reasoning markers since I am interested in those terms indicating the presence of arguments. Reasoning markers are "words and phrases such as 'because', 'therefore' or 'in conclusion' which can be used to structure an argumentative piece of text, acting as the 'glue' to hold a text together and make it more intelligible." (Clayton and Gaizauskas, 2022, p. 137).

Williams (2018) provides a list of 86 different reasoning markers. Her primary objective, as articulated in her paper, is to "develop and validate an aggregated and evaluated list of reasoning markers that can be used by others for identifying reasoning in text" (Williams, 2018, p. 47). Of these 86 markers, I exclusively used 48, the one-word terms, because shortest reasoning markers are more common than longer ones (see Clayton and Gaizauskas, 2022, p. 139). The 48 terms are cited below in alphabetical order: "although", "assume", "assumed", "assuming", "assumption", "because", "but", "conclude", "conclusion", "consequently", "contrary", "deduce", "deduced", "deduces", "demonstrate", "demonstrates", "ergo", "firstly", "follow", "follows", "hence", "however", "imply", "implied", "implies", "indicate", "indicates", "infer", "inference", "inferences", "inferencing", "inferred", "infers", "prove", "proved", "proves", "reason", "reasons", "secondly", "since", "supposed", "supposedly", "supposition", "therefore", "though", "thus", and "yet".

Finally, I processed the corpus in R Studio. To start, I split the corpus into words by applying the *strsplit* function. This operation yielded a character vector containing the corpus' words, meticulously arranged so that the first word corresponded to position one in the vector, the second word to position two, and so forth. Then, I determined the specific positions of all the occurrences of intuition talk and reasoning markers in the corpus. This paved the way for two distinct avenues of analysis. Firstly, I constructed both absolute and relative frequency lists (see Hunston, 2002, pp. 67-68) for both intuition talk and the aforementioned reasoning markers. This will allow us to analyze which intuition talk terms and which reasoning markers are more common in the corpus. Secondly, I examined the dispersion along the corpus of the two vocabularies. To do this, I plotted a dispersion diagram to visually represent the occurrences of intuition talk and reasoning markers across the corpus, allowing us to check to what extent the two types of vocabulary match. This visualization was enriched using the *stripchart* function, <sup>12</sup> in conjunction with other functions to improve the visualization (*axis* and *mtext* functions).

<sup>9</sup> https://www.r-studio.com/es/

<sup>10</sup> https://www.rdocumentation.org/packages/base/versions/3.6.2/topics/strsplit

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The absolute frequency of a word or expression is equal to the number of total occurrences of that expression in the corpus. The relative frequency is the absolute frequency divided by the size of the corpus and the result multiplied by a normalizing base, in this case, 100.000.

<sup>12</sup> https://www.rdocumentation.org/packages/graphics/versions/3.6.2/topics/stripchart

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> https://www.rdocumentation.org/packages/graphics/versions/3.5.2/topics/axis

<sup>14</sup> https://www.rdocumentation.org/packages/graphics/versions/3.6.2/topics/mtext

After providing an overview of the materials and methods utilized in this study, the following section describes the results obtained.

#### 4. Results

As said in the Introduction, this paper examines whether analytic philosophers who discuss taste disagreements use intuition talk in central parts of their arguments or whether, on the contrary, it is nothing more than a mere verbal tick, as Cappelen (2012) suggests. To inquire into this matter, I conducted two types of analysis: frequency lists and dispersion diagrams. The first type of analysis will provide us with valuable insights into which terms are frequently employed and which are conspicuously absent. The second type of analysis will allow us to precisely map the distribution of the two sets of terms throughout the corpus.

Let us see the results of the first analysis. The search for the intuition talk produced a total of 552 occurrences, which are distributed among the different words as follows:

- "intuitions": absolute frequency = 258; relative frequency = 66.79.
- "intuition": absolute frequency = 140; relative frequency = 36.24.
- "intuitively": absolute frequency = 69; relative frequency = 17.86.
- "intuitive": absolute frequency = 59; relative frequency = 15.27.
- "intuit": absolute frequency = 12; relative frequency = 3.11.
- "counterintuitive": absolute frequency = 6; relative frequency = 1.55.
- "intuits": absolute frequency = 5; relative frequency = 1.29.
- "counterintuitively": absolute frequency = 3; relative frequency = 0.78.

The search for reasoning markers produced a total of 5,615 occurrences, which are distributed among the 48 different reasoning markers, as detailed in Table 1.

Term	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
but	1,791	463.63
thus	438	113.38
however	428	110.79
because	415	107.43
since	296	76.62
though	268	69.37
reason	181	46.85
suppose	152	39.35



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yet	144	32.28
therefore	137	35.46
reasons	134	34.69
conclusion	133	34.43
follows	129	33.39
hence	118	30.55
assume	101	26.14
although	86	22.26
assumption	78	20.19
inference	73	18.90
assuming	69	17.86
follow	69	17.86
conclude	53	13.72
supposed	45	11.65
contrary	38	9.84
consequently	32	8.28
assumed	31	8.02
imply	26	6.73
indicate	25	6.47
inferences	25	6.47
implies	21	5.44
secondly	14	3.62
prove	12	3.11
indicates	10	2.59
demonstrate	9	2.33
firstly	6	1.55
infer	6	1.55
supposition	6	1.55
demonstrates	4	1.03
implied	4	1.03
inferred	2	0.52
proved	2	0.52
proves	2	0.52
deduce	1	0.26



supposedly	1	0.26
deduced	0	0
deduces	0	0
ergo	0	0
inferencing	0	0
infers	0	0

**Table 1.** Absolute and relative frequencies of reasoning markers.

Let us see the results of the second analysis. The distribution of intuition talk exhibited significant discontinuity throughout the corpus. There was a high concentration of terms in some parts, while none existed in others. However, as the presence of reasoning markers in the corpus was massive, as the results of the first analysis show, they were distributed throughout the whole corpus without exception (see Figure 1).

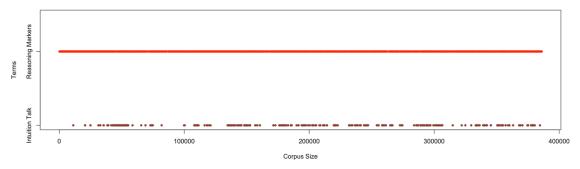


Figure 1. Distribution of the occurrences of intuition talk and reasoning markers.

At this juncture, limiting the number of reasoning markers considered in the analysis became imperative. Utilizing all available markers would have rendered the comparison between intuition talk and reasoning markers virtually meaningless because the latter were dispersed throughout the entire corpus, causing intuition talk to coincide with them consistently. In other words, intuition talk would always coincide with reasoning markers. This would show that analytic philosophers who discuss taste disagreements always use intuition talk in connection with their arguments, but such a course of action would lack scientific rigor. So, it was necessary to seek another way to compare the two vocabularies. Bearing that one of the goals of the work is to examine whether intuition talk occurs in central parts of the arguments, I decided to focus on reasoning markers indicating the presence of premises and conclusions.

Rainer (2017, p. 78) distinguishes "because", "for", and "since" as reasoning markers signaling premises, and "therefore", "so", "hence" and "consequently" as reasoning markers indicating conclusions. I excluded "for" from the analysis because it has either preposition

or conjunction uses, but only in the second case works as a reasoning marker. According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary, <sup>15</sup> when it functions as a preposition, it is "used to show who is intended to have or use something or where something is intended to be put". In contrast, when it functions as a conjunction, it is "used to introduce the reason for something mentioned in the previous statement". Both uses can be observed in the corpus. To illustrate, consider the following examples:

- 1) "Bucking conventions may be a partial solution that works for some individuals." (as preposition) (Haslanger, 2007, p. 72).
- 2) "Let me close this section with an example that Lasersohn believes to be particularly problematic for the contextualist." (as preposition) (Stojanovic, 2007, p. 695).
- 3) "This is for the simple reason that believing that p does not entail p." (as conjunction) (Barker, 2009, p. 225).
- 4) "For at least part of the disagreement manifested in exchange (A) concerns differing *evaluative attitudes* toward the taste of licorice; the exchange manifests that John *likes* of the taste of licorice and that Mary does *not like* it." (as conjunction) (Clapp, 2015, p. 526).

Considering the "for"-conjunction cases in the analysis would have involved individually scrutinizing over 3,600 cases and labeling them to distinguish them from their prepositional uses. Apart from the substantial workload this would entail, it was deemed inadvisable due to the risk of reintroducing the previous problem of excessive reasoning markers.

There were similar reasons for discarding "so". When it is a conjunction, it is used, i.a., "to show the reason for something", being, in this case, a reasoning marker. However, when it is an adverb, it means "to such a great degree", "very; extremely", or it refers "back to something that has already been mentioned", among others. As in the case of "for", both types of uses are common in the corpus. Consider the following examples:

- 5) "In Kaplan's actual semantics, circumstances of evaluation contain a world- and a time parameter, so a proposition can be world-sensitive (contingent) and time-sensitive (tensed)." (as conjunction) (Kölbel, 2009, p. 383).
- 6) "Thus, the structure of content-disagreement is mimicked at the presuppositional level: there is no contradiction in the truth-values ascribed to the utterances, so the contradiction is built into the presupposition." (as conjunction) (Díaz-Legaspe, 2016, p. 72).
- 7) "On the other hand, it might be that the range of potential context dependence is not so limited." (as adverb) (Glanzberg, 2007, p. 5).

<sup>15</sup> https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/

8) "While tastes good in the second premise may have the judge variable bound by the generic quantifier explicitly introduced by one, this is not so for the first premise." (as adverb) (Moltmann, 2010, p. 212).

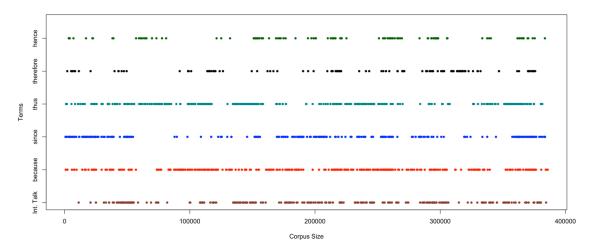
Someone might think that there could be comparable grounds to reject "since" because the term can be a preposition, in which case it means "from a time in the past until a later past time, or until now", an adverb, sharing a similar sense to its prepositional usage, or a conjunction, in which case it is a synonym of "because", being in this last case a reasoning marker. However, a search of the 296 cases shows that "since" is predominantly employed as a conjunction. <sup>16</sup> Consider some examples:

- 9) "But it is noteworthy that Richard denies the converse, since he thinks there are cases in which 'P' is appropriate but not 'It's true that P'." (Alwood and Schroeder, 2009, p. 806).
- 10) "Let us first look at moral proposition relativism and how it handles our intuitions about moral disagreements, since these are what I have called stable intuitions." (Francén, 2010, p. 24).
- 11) "To my mind, this neutrality is crucial since, in order for faultless disagreement to be of any significance for debates in semantics, the phenomenon must be conceived of as a neutral field of battle on which different semantic theories confront each other." (Palmira, 2014, p. 351).
- "Unfortunately, MacFarlane begs the question against the critics of contextualism, since their very objection is that ambiguity strategies, including contextualism, miss the point of disagreement." (Hales, 2014, p. 67).

As the number of reasoning markers indicating conclusions was notably lower than those distinguishing premises, it was necessary to supplement them with some of the 48 selected from Williams's (2018) list. Of these, I chose "thus" because it is a synonym of "hence" and "therefore", two terms already in the list. In summary, in the end, I considered two reasoning markers indicating premises, "because" and "since", with 415 and 296 occurrences, respectively, and three reasoning markers indicating conclusions, "thus", "therefore", and "hence", with 438, 137, and 118 occurrences, respectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> There are only four cases where "since" is not a conjunction: i) "But we both think it is important to distinguish these theories and their relative merits and to review why speech-act approaches have been neglected since the expressivist turn". (Alwood and Schroeder, 2009, p. 810); ii) "I've changed my mind since Weatherson (2001) largely because of developments since I wrote that paper." (Weatherson, 2009, p. 333); iii) "Since Gibbard (1981) there has been a lot of discussion over cases where A knows ~( p & ~q), and B knows ~ ( p & q)." (Weatherson, 2009, pp. 346-347); and iv) "The conventional meaning of an expression – called since Kaplan's paper *character* – is a function from contexts of utterance to semantic values (or contents)." (Palmira, 2014, p. 350).

Once the number of reasoning markers considered has been reduced, we get three sets of terms whose sizes are adequately balanced: 552 terms denoting intuition talk, 711 reasoning markers pointing to premises, and 693 reasoning markers indicating conclusions. In contrast to the previous situation, the distribution of reasoning markers is now discontinuous (see Figure 2), allowing us to check how they and intuition talk are distributed throughout the corpus and to what extent there are overlaps.



**Figure 2.** Distribution of the occurrences of intuition talk and reasoning markers indicating premises ("because" and "hence") and conclusions ("thus", "since", and "consequently").

After presenting the results of the two analyses, the following section evaluates the results obtained, showing to what extent these results support the idea that intuition talk occurs in central parts of the arguments.

### 5. Analysis

Starting with the results of the first analysis, the frequency lists, it is noteworthy to observe that philosophers' use of intuition talk in the literature on taste disagreements does not seem just a verbal tick whose primary function is to lower the speaker's commitments, as Cappelen suggests. There are indeed cases where analytic philosophers use intuition talk as hedges. Consider the following examples:

13) "This seems to be an intuitively plausible condition of when two assertions contradict each other given the Kaplanian semantic framework." (Francén, 2010, p. 29).

14) "Possible worlds thus offer a nice metatheory for intensional logic; nice both in leading to a wide range of metatheoretic results, and in offering an intuitive picture of the semantics of intensional logic." (Glanzberg, 2009, p. 286).

As can be seen, "intuitively" and "intuitive" are used as hedges in 13) and 14), respectively. In 13), Francén claims that, given Kaplanian semantics, the rationale he presents stands as a strong criterion for identifying when two statements contradict each other. However, he uses "intuitively" to weaken his commitments. Note the presence of other terms also used for this purpose, for example, "seems" and "plausible". In 14), Glanzberg discusses the complementarity between the semantics of possible worlds and intensional logic, illustrating how they collectively provide a good picture of the semantics of intensional logic. Although he uses the term "intuitive", it does not indicate the use of intuitions of any kind; instead, it merely functions as a synonym of "plausible".

However, the total number of occurrences of "intuitively" and "intuitive", the terms Cappelen employs in discussing hedge uses, is relatively modest, 69 and 59 instances, respectively, representing slightly more than 23% of the total. Moreover, there are examples where "intuitively" and "intuitive" are not used as hedges but to signify that intuition serves as the basis for justifying a statement. To illustrate this, consider the following examples:

- 15) "The theory implies that people do disagree in the way we intuitively think they do. If this is true, we can say that the theory in question *confirms* our intuitions about disagreement." (Francén, 2010, p. 21).
- "While Schafer and others have found these weaker faultlessness requirements appealing, Michele Palmira (2015, p. 360) has argued persuasively in our view that they do not fully capture the common intuition that disagreements like this can be faultless in every sense. And, further we worry [...] that such accounts do not respect the intuitive thought that there is a kind of faultless disagreement which is possible with respect to disputes in aesthetics, [...] but which never arises in disputes concerning, e.g., scientific theories, the shapes of medium sized objects in our immediate vicinity, or the events of the war of 1812." (Baker and Robson, 2017, p. 434).

In 15), Francén points out that people disagree in the same way we think they disagree when we use our intuitions. Here, "intuitively" is not used to weaken the philosopher's commitment but to signal that our belief that two given people disagree is an intuition. In 16), Baker and Robson argue that a good theory on faultless disagreement should account for weaker faultlessness intuitions and the intuitive thought that aesthetic disagreements can be faultless in every sense. In other words, in 16), "intuitive thought" means no more than "common intuition", that is, a thought coming from a widespread intuition. Note the constant references to specific intuitions that a theory should respect, for example, "found these weaker faultlessness requirements appealing", "fully capture the common intuition," or "do not respect the intuitive thought".

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In short, besides "intuitively" and "intuitive" having evidential uses, they are not the most common terms in the corpus. As shown, the most common terms in the corpus are "intuition" and "intuitions", indicating that philosophers speak of specific intuitions that clearly have evidential uses. <sup>17</sup> Consider the following examples:

- 17) "The problem of faultless disagreement is, as mentioned, that of explaining the intuition that disputants in a debate are blameless in spite of the fact that they assign different truth-values to one and the same proposition. Semantic relativists argue that truth relativism offers the best account of these intuitions." (Brogaard, 2009, pp. 225-226).
- 18) "On the face it, then, conventional semantic theories allow us to account either for the intuition of disagreement, or for the intuition of faultlessness, but not for both simultaneously." (Lasersohn, 2009, p. 360).
- 19) "But, by letting it by default take the value PRO<sub>J</sub>, Stephenson shows that we can accommodate most of the intuitions that motivate Lasersohn's relativism." (Weatherson, 2009, p. 342).
- 20) "Consequently, even if this account yields a sense in which the parties' judgments are faultless, it is far from obvious whether it accounts for our intuitions better than other accounts." (Eriksson and Tiozzo, 2016, p. 1529).

In 17), 18), 19), and 20), the authors talk about specific intuitions, disagreement, and faultlessness intuitions. More importantly, in these cases, the various authors use intuitions as evidence since they are something to be respected or accounted for, i.e., they indicate the intuition-respecting sense pointed out by Andow (forthcoming). Note again the expressions referring to this intuition-respecting sense, for example, "offers the best account of these intuitions", "allow us to account either for the intuition of disagreement, or for the intuition of faultlessness", "accommodate most of the intuitions", or "accounts for our intuitions better than other accounts".

Before commenting on the results of the second analysis, some clarifications are in order. First, the discussion will focus on the extent to which there is an overlap between the presence

 $<sup>^{17}</sup>$  I have not considered the difference between direct appeals to intuitions and propositions that refer to or mention intuitions. One might assume that only in the former scenario, where someone explicitly states, "I have the intuition that p" or "I intuit that p", are we in the presence of an evidential use of intuitions. However, I think this assumption is incorrect. Firstly, according to Andow (forthcoming), there exist six distinct I-Practices, or ways in which philosophers employ intuitions as evidence, most of them not involving an explicit appeal to intuitions. Secondly, there are situations where intuitions are indirectly referenced, such as when someone attributes or comments on other evidential uses. Even in these instances, intuitions are used as evidence. Consider, for instance, an argument where someone asserts that theory A is better than theory B because only A can accommodate intuitions p and q. In this case, the person is not appealing directly to intuitions, but is still making an evidential use. In short, the absence of a direct, first-person appeal to intuitions does not imply that there is no evidential use.

of intuition talk and reasoning markers, as well as between the absence of intuition talk and reasoning markers. Second, I have considered only those parts of the corpus where the presence and absence of intuition talk was sufficiently concentrated and sustained.

Let us start with the overlap between the presence of intuition talk and the presence of reasoning markers. I have distinguished six zones with a high and continuous presence of intuition talk, indicated in pink in Figure 3 as sections 1 to 6.

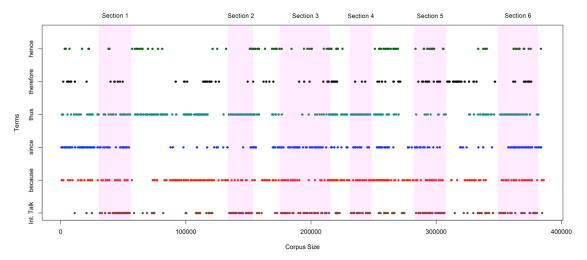


Figure 3. Distribution of intuition talk and reasoning markers presence.

In Section 1, there is an overlap between intuition talk and reasoning markers, indicating both premises and conclusions. In Section 2, there is an overlap between intuition talk and reasoning markers indicating conclusions, and very limited with reasoning markers indicating premises. In Section 3, intuition talk only coincides with reasoning markers indicating premises (the occurrences of "thus" are marginal). In Sections 4, 5, and 6, there is an overlap between intuition talk and reasoning markers indicating both premises and conclusions, although it is somewhat minor in Section 5.

In summary, intuition talk virtually always appears together with reasoning markers. In this sense, sections 1, 4, 5, and 6 are particularly relevant since the presence of both types of reasoning markers is massive. Whether intuition talk shows a preference for reasoning markers indicating premises or conclusions, data are not very significant. Section 2 hints at a slight inclination towards conclusions, while Section 3 leans somewhat towards premises.

Now, let us compare the absence of intuition talk and the absence of reasoning markers. I have marked the zones where intuition talk is absent in pink, distinguishing five sections (see Figure 4).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Although between Sections 4 and 5, there are areas where there is no intuition talk, I have not selected any section there because, throughout those areas, the concentration of occurrences is high, besides relatively con-

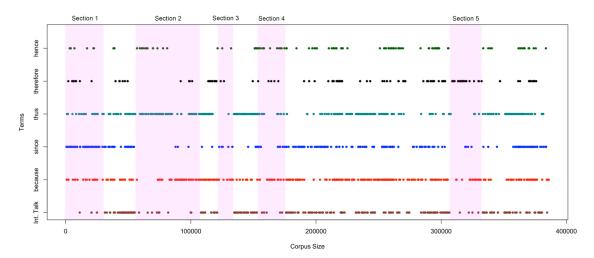


Figure 4. Distribution of intuition talk and reasoning markers absence.

Section 1 presents a substantial presence of reasoning markers pointing to premises and, to a lesser extent, of reasoning markers indicating conclusions (although "therefore" and "hence" practically are not present, "thus" has quite a few instances). Section 2 presents a very pronounced absence of premise markers ("since" is practically not present and "because" has apparent gaps) and a minor absence of conclusion markers ("therefore" and "hence" are almost non-existent, but the presence of "thus" is high). Section 3 shows a considerable absence of reasoning markers, but it is more prominent in those indicating conclusions. With Section 4, something similar happens, but, in this case, the presence of reasoning markers is generally higher. Finally, in Section 5, the lack of premise markers is pronounced, being somewhat less than that of conclusion markers (although "thus" and "hence" have almost no occurrences, those of "therefore" are considerable).

To recap, Section 1 is characterized by the absence of intuition talk and the presence of reasoning markers (Section 1). However, there are four sections, Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5, where the absence of intuition talk is accompanied by a lack of reasoning markers, being more pronounced the absence of premise markers in Sections 2 and 5, and of conclusion markers in Section 3.

### 6. Discussion

In this section, I will discuss some consequences that follow from the results of the analyses, as well as explore certain criticisms prevalent in the existing literature concerning the evidential role of intuitions that could be applied to the present study. First, what is the overall evaluation of the results regarding the centrality of intuition talk? Do the results allow us to

tinuous.

determine whether intuition talk appears systematically in central parts of the arguments? The data of the comparison between the presence of intuition talk and the presence of reasoning markers point to the idea that intuition talk occurs in central parts of the arguments. In all six sections examined, intuition talk is accompanied by reasoning markers. This alignment is particularly pronounced in Sections 1, 4, 5, and 6; in Sections 2 and 3, the data also supports AIT but to a lesser degree because premise and conclusion markers are lower in Sections 2 and 3, respectively. In short, according to these data, intuition talk plays a central role in the argumentative structures of the corpus.

Similarly, the comparison data between the absence of intuition talk and reasoning markers reinforces this conclusion. Among the five sections scrutinized, only in Section 1 does the presence of reasoning markers accompany the absence of intuition talk. In other words, there is only one section where philosophers argue without using intuition talk, but four sections where philosophers do not use intuition talk but neither do they use reasoning markers.

To sum up, the data of the two analyses show that philosophers discussing taste disagreements frequently employ intuition talk as a central component of their arguments. Notably, reasoning markers are frequently observed whenever intuition talk is present. Conversely, the absence of reasoning markers often corresponds to the absence of intuition talk. In brief, the joint data of the presence and absence of intuition talk and reasoning markers underscores a tendency among analytic philosophers to utilize intuition talk when engaging in argumentation and not to use it when they do not argue.

Second, one of the key insights gleaned from the analyses is that the terms "intuitive" and "intuitively", which were the focus of Cappelen (2012), are not among the most common terms. As noted above, when these terms appear, they often imply a non-evidential use of intuitions because they are often used as a hedge. This is not to say that such cases are entirely unimportant. On the contrary, as Andow (2017, p. 527) emphasizes, the hedge uses of intuition talk "serve an intellectually positive pragmatic function in academic debate". Some authors defend that academic writing relies on hedging language (see, for example, Hyland and Tse, 2004). The same Andow links the increased use of intuition talk in philosophy to this increase in hedging language. However, the examples he uses as illustrations are examples of "intuitive" and "intuitively", but, as the present study shows, these terms are not the most common in the debate that is the subject of this article. This could suggest that, although it is true that in other disciplines within the academy, the authors use terms such as "intuitive" or "intuitively" to a greater extent, this is not the case when it comes to taste disagreements. That is, there may be important differences in how scholars use intuition talk in each discipline or even in each sub-discipline within analytic philosophy. This is in line with the stance of some authors who identify variations in the use of hedges between disciplines (Hyland, 1998; Hyland and Salager-Meyer, 2008).

Third, it could be argued that the results of the present study are undermined by the mischaracterization objection (see Cappelen, 2012; Deutsch, 2015). According to this idea,

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"analytic philosophers of the last few decades came to believe that their judgments about hypothetical cases are primarily intuitive judgments" (Horvath, 2022, p. 2). However, according to this objection, analytic philosophers do not rely on intuitions to defend their theories, but they "argue and give reasons for their judgments about hypothetical cases" (Horvath, 2022, p. 4). Cappelen and Deutsch focus on "Gettier's cases (1963), Jackson's Mary (1982), or Thomson's violinist (1971)" (Horvath, 2022, p. 4). Note that all these examples are thought experiments mostly belonging to epistemology. Examples of other authors discussing the subject also belong to this discipline (see, for example, Sękowski, 2022; Landes, 2022). In other words, none of the examples used by the authors discussing the objection belong to the philosophy of language. I acknowledge that, in epistemology, analytic philosophers could put forward reasons and arguments instead of appealing to intuitive judgments. However, in the debate on taste disagreements, it is usual that the authors argue using two of the I-Practices distinguished in Andow (forthcoming), case wielding and intuition respecting. 19 According to the former, philosophers use intuitions as evidence when they use a case to generate certain intuitions in the audience. According to the second, philosophers use intuitions as evidence when they argue that a theory A is better than a theory B because only A accommodates certain intuitions. Consider the following quote:

Lasersohn's argument for a relativist account of taste predicates proceeds by elimination. He starts with cases that trigger the intuition of faultless disagreement, then argues that none of the available accounts can explain them. (Stojanovic, 2007, p. 696)

As can be seen, the way Stojanovic reconstructs Lasersohn's argumentation shows that his way of arguing relies solely on the two I-Practices previously mentioned, case wielding and intuition respecting.

In short, if the scope of the mischaracterization objection is narrow, in the sense of applying only to thought experiments in epistemology, it has no significant impact on the findings of our current study. However, if we broaden the scope of this objection to encompass not only its application to thought experiments but also to a wide array of scenarios, then the practice of analytic philosophers in arguing about taste disagreements is a counterexample because the arguments they employ depend directly on two evidential uses of intuitions: case wielding and intuition respecting.

### 7. Conclusions

In this paper, I have investigated whether analytic philosophers discussing taste disagreements use intuition talk in a way that supports the Thesis of Centrality, addressing one of the arguments that Cappelen (2012) points out as central to arguing for or against

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Within the corpus, there is compelling evidence that supports this conclusion. Some of the verbs that most frequently co-occur with intuition talk are: "explain", "account" and "trigger", in expressions such as "account for these intuitions", "explain our intuition", or "what triggers the intuition".

such a thesis, AIT. Cappelen's position on AIT is that the substantial use of intuition talk by analytical philosophers is nothing more than a verbal tick and in no sense indicates an evidential use of intuitions. In this line, he argues that terms such as "intuitively" and "intuitive" are very often used as hedges, that is, to weaken the commitments acquired by the speaker when making a statement.

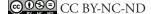
Of the three issues encompassed by the AIT, I have focused on the interpretative and centrality questions. I have used a corpus composed of articles on taste disagreements and conducted two types of analysis, frequency lists, and dispersion diagrams. Regarding the interpretative question, the analysis of frequency lists shows that the two terms on which Cappelen focuses his analysis, "intuitively" and "intuitive", are not the most used. Instead, the most used terms are "intuition" and "intuitions", which point to cases of specific intuitions, disagreement, and faultlessness intuitions; more importantly, in these cases, intuitions are used evidentially. In other words, intuition talk is not simply a verbal tick because, *pace* Cappelen, although intuition talk is sometimes used as a hedge, this is not its the most representative use.

Regarding the centrality question, the analysis of the dispersion diagrams shows a correlation between intuition talk and reasoning markers. The data on the presence and the absence of the two types of terms provide evidence in this regard. In short, intuition talk appears in central parts of the argumentative structures of the corpus. Some philosophers indeed present their arguments in an intuition-free way (see Section 1 of Figure 4). However, these types of cases are not typical at all (in fact, there is only one). Besides, I believe that the most relevant question to evaluate AIT is not whether we find any cases where philosophers present intuition-free arguments but whether the cases examined show regularities in the co-occurrence between intuition talk and reasoning markers. In this sense, both the presence and absence of intuition talk show recurring patterns of this type.

Finally, I want to comment on whether intuition talk exhibits a preference for reasoning markers indicating premises or conclusions. Considering the results, especially the data obtained from the comparison between the absence of intuition talk and reasoning markers, it can be said that intuition talk shows a slight preference for premise markers. In other words, intuitions would tend to appear more in the premises of arguments. The fact that intuition talk appears more related to the premises makes sense given the very nature of intuition, a belief that has no other belief as its source. This is in line with novel developments about the nature of intuitions. As Frápolli (forthcoming) says: "intuitions are provisionally held propositions, they typically play the role of premises, [...] although not the conclusions that are reached". However, since the data from the present study are preliminary in nature, more research on the relationship between intuition talk and reasoning markers is required.

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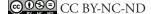
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