An example for sentence meaning

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Abstract

I offer a definitional schema in non-semantic terms for the semantic terms "expresses \( \phi \)"; as applicable to sentences and where "\( \phi \)" is to be replaced by any that-clause. I submit that these definitions are extensionally correct. They are definitions by example based on the idea that every token (utterance) of a sentence that expresses something calls for a certain rational response equal to the rational response that a token of the chosen exemplar would call for in equivalent circumstances. In the second part of the article I speculate that expressing is nothing more than satisfying such kind of definitions by example. On the whole, the paper presents a response-dependence theory that attends to responses under all possible circumstances, and not only to those in favourable conditions.