Approaches for Normative Conflicts: Towards the Development of a Deontic Logic of Reasons

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Abstract

1 Introduction

This paper intends to describe the underlying meaning explanations that grounds different approaches to normative reasoning, described in the contemporary literature on metaethics. It will do this by identifying three different general approaches for assessing conflicts between normative reasons, silencing, ranking and compositional reconstruction. In addition, we will describe how it is possible to interpret the use of different and distinct kinds of normative reasons, essential in views about normative pluralism, but also highlighted as an important distinction in other views concerning the comparison of reasons.

To do this we will use a particular interpretation of intuitionistic logic, intuitionistic type theory. Since this diverges from the classical systems of deontic logic, the first part of the article will provide a justification for the utilisation of this particular framework. First, we will give a historico-philosophical background, explaining why this particular approach seems better suited for deontic notions and the developments of reasons than its classical counterpart. Then, we will continue by explaining the technical advantages of intuitionistic type theory, namely its ability to unite higher- and lower-order properties without the introduction of a distinct higher-order language.

The second part of the article will describe an implementation of multiple kinds of normative reasons in the BHK-interpretation of propositions as sets, by reducing each kind to distinct canonical elements of what we will call a 'deontic proposition'. It uses this definition to describe how normative conflicts can be reduced to the logical notion of inconsistency and in doing so it distinguishes two different ways this might happen, identified as *direct normative conflicts* and *indirect normative conflicts*, and connecting this to the epistemological notions of inconsistency and incompatibility.

The third part of the article identifies three ways of handling such normative conflicts, creating connections to the logical analyses of legal interpretation and argumentation. The first way to solve a normative conflict is identified as *silencing*, to reject one of the conflicting reasons. The second is *ranking*, to appeal to some standard for comparison. The third is *compositional reconstruction*, to revise the underlying reasons for some action. This last alternative does not by itself provide a way out of a normative conflict, but can provide new grounds for a treatment by the other approaches. We will also describe how this last approach seems essential for normative pluralism.

The goal of this project is therefore to describe how one might use an intuitionistic logic to describe relevant approaches in a practical deontic logic of reasons. This connection between intuitionism and deontic logic is not new, though the most effort have been placed at identifying and describing the legal aspects deontic notions and reasoning. We will in this paper draw lines between the metaethical literature and the newer developments in intuitionism and legal reasoning and explain how many results in the area of legal reasoning seem transferable to the ethical domain, though highlighting some important differences and sketching out some ways to adjust according to the different domains.

1.1 A logic of actions, not of Truth

Much of the current metaethical literature on actions have been focused on *reasons* and how to evaluate them as guiding for particular actions. So to speak, the goal has not been to only describe the development or acknowledgment of moral reasons, but to explain how these actually forms only one kind of the more general notion of *normative* reasons. In this sense, a logical analysis of actions should not only be concerned with deontic qualifications, but should describe the interactions between different normative reasons and how they can be transformed into doing what the reason tells you to do. Ever since Aristotle's development of practical syllogisms where the conclusion of the syllogism is the actual performance of some action,[1] there has been a discussion on how to understand the underlying logical meaning structure for the relation between normative claims and actual performances.

This project has been particularly challenging in the traditional classical frameworks, where the idea has been to simply extend a language originally intended to describe the objects of abstract mathematical truth, to also hold for other domains, such as normative claims and actions.[2] The area of contemporary deontic logic has shown to be full of potential paradoxes and much of the effort, at least in recent years, has been on finding ways around these paradoxes. (Navarro and Rodríguez 2014) The essence of these challenges seems to be the problem that was explicitly identified by Jørgensen (1937) in his "Imperatives and logic", though originating in Poincaré's (1917) book *Dernières pensées* (pp. 224-225), namely that normative claims cannot properly be attached a logical notion of truth or falsity and therefore cannot be concluded by any logical, mathematical or scientific inference. The object of study for the traditional conception of logic that founds many contemporary deontic frameworks is the ideal *Truth*, likely to be very unsuitable for normative (and possibly also mathematical) claims.

A solution to this is to bring back the ancient idea of Aristotle, to concentrate the analysis *actions* rather than Truth. This was in fact done even in mathematics, by Brouwer's introduction of *intuitionism*, where its first act consists of

> *[c]ompletely separating mathematics from mathematical language and hence from the phenomena of language described by theoretical logic, recognizing that intuitionistic mathematics is an essentially languageless activity of the mind having its origin in the perception of a move of time.[...]*
>
> Brouwer (2011 [1946-1951])

We will not enter the details in the intuitionistic approach, but simply highlight that logic's object of study is not any more mathematical Truth, but an *activity of the mind*. The intuitionistic type theory introduced by Martin-Löf (1984) is precisely a constructive combination of Brouwer's intuitionistic project and the Aristotelean subject-predicate form, describing how logic both analyses and itself is a mental activity. In a series of lectures, Martin-Löf (1996) further develops the philosophical implications of this logic of activity by describing how it can describe the active component present in judgements concerning other forms of knowledge and understanding. The current analysis of deontic logic and reasons thereby enters into a logical tradition that studies the activity involved comprehension, here both in the mental development of normative reasons and in the apprehension and transformation of these reasons into actions. This concludes the brief historico-philosophical justification for why we think intuitionism (and in particular intuitionistic type theory) is particularly well-suited for developing and analysing normative notions.

Technically, the main motivation for utilising dependent type theory to develop a deontic logic of reasons is related to the meaning explanations provided by CTT. By means of the hypothetical judgment, CTT enables us to capture not only corresponding truth conditions as for the classical material conditional, but also the precise *dependency* that the consequent has on its antecedent. This is what makes CTT so expressive regarding the formalisation of moral and normative claims. We can then show how a decision

[1] Ethica Nichomachea (VII.7)

[2] The origins of the contemporary classical deontic logic is SDL, introduced by Von Wright (1951).

is dependent on its reason and how the deontic qualification is dependent on the performance of the action in very precise ways. Its dialogical interpretation provides a natural and comprehensible framework for meaning explanations that is closely linked to actual practical reasoning and that unites logical inferences and argumentation theory in one single framework.

Based on a dialogical interpretation of intuitionistic type theory, called immanent reasoning by Rahman, McConaughey, et al. (2018), there have been several implementations of deontic notions in this dialogical framework, solving many of the apparent paradoxes and challenges, mostly by the use of a fully explicit and powerful dependency structure. (Rahman and Granström 2019; Rahman and Iqbal 2018) The goal of this paper is though to develop the ethical sides of deontic concepts, associating it with the contemporary legal literature on the topic and by highlighting the underlying meaning explanations of ethical concepts, show their strong relation to argumentative legal moves.

The deontic imperatives (as the modal notions of possibility and necessity) are defined by a type-theoretical formulation and are not introduced as distinct operators. This allows for a framework where are free of most common paradoxes of deontic logic.[3] The most important reason for this is that the framework interprets the performance of actions directly in the object language, rather than considering them in a model or higher-order predicate. What allows for this is the particular notion of dependent types, found only in CTT and closely related extensions.

With this analysis of analogical reasoning, we have also included deontic imperatives directly into our description of analogical reasoning. This is a rather unconventional strategy as many theories would consider these questions separately. However as mentioned, these questions become interconnected in CTT as we consider actions in the object language. For analogies, this first enables us to see the particular aspect of analogical reasoning. Second, it shows how analogies might be used for reasoning with actions, not only propositions. We can thereby explain how a conclusion of an analogical argument might be the performance of some action, not simply a proposition describing a rule. This apprehends the point of Jørgensen's dilemma, by showing how analogical reasoning can occur not only with truth and falsity, but also with actions, rules and principles.

In the literature of moral values and reasons we might identify three positions or approaches to solve conflicts that occur as results of different normative reasons, and the goal of this paper is to develop both how multiple normative reasons might co-exist and to provide a rational reconstruction of the meaning explanations that lie behind three alternative ways of solving normative conflicts. Particularly problematic in the literature are conflicts across moral and prudential (or other normative) reasons, and this will also be the main focus here. We will concentrate on the pair of moral and prudential reasons, though our point will likely hold for any other kinds of normative reasons.

1.2 Describing normative conflicts

To start we will provide some terminological distinctions regarding normative conflicts. We can distinguish what we will call a *direct normative conflict* from an *indirect normative conflict*. If we have some reason r and some other conflicting reason r', so that r indicates the performance of an action A and r' indicate the non-performance of the same action A, we have a direct normative conflict. If we have some reason r and some other reason r', so that r indicates the performance of an action A and r' indicate the performance of some action B, and A and B cannot both be performed, we have an indirect normative conflict.[4]

This point might be illustrated by the following examples. Say that I have some reason to go to the cinema (for the pleasure of seeing a film). Say that I also has some reason not to go to the cinema (because

[3] See Rahman and Granström (2019) for comments on how many paradoxes simply do not occur when depending on a type-theoretical definition of deontic imperatives.

[4] This distinction between direct and indirect conflicts seems closely related to what in the logical literature is called *inconsistency* and *incompatibility*.

the owner is racist). This then constitutes a direct normative conflict, as I have some reason to to an action, while in the same time some other reason not to do it. However, say that I actually did not have the reason for not going to the cinema (the owner was in fact not racist). On the other hand I had some reason to stay home (to finish writing a paper). Now, I do not anymore have a direct normative conflict, but rather an indirect one, as staying home is a separate action, that merely conflicts with the action of going to the cinema (I cannot do both). Conceptually, this distinction might also describe the difference between conflicting reasons for some action and conflicting actions.

The BHK-interpretation of propositions as sets, has shown itself as very powerful framework to analyse reasons for action. We will call this special kind of proposition for *deontic proposition*. In the contemporary literature, these analyses have only been concerned with a single category of values, reducing deontic propositions to a set with a single canonical element. However, by recognising the existence of not one, but two kinds of reasons, we might extend the analysis and consider deontic propositions not as sets with one canonical element, but rather with two canonical elements. If we are to admit of a larger multitude of values a comparable, but of course more complex analysis would seem to hold (identifying deontic propositions as $N_3, N_4, ...$).[5]

Focusing on the two kinds, moral and prudential reasons, we recognise that we might have two different kinds of 'proofs' or 'elements' in a deontic proposition. That a deontic proposition D has an element e should here be understood as there being a reason e for performing the action described by D. Let us identify deontic propositions with sets of two canonical elements,

$$dprop = N_2.$$

Any deontic proposition might thereby receive two distinct elements or reasons. We will identify these as r_m (moral reasons) and r_p (prudential reasons), so that the two canonical elements of $dprop$ are

$$r_m, r_p : dprop$$

Notice that since they are distinct canonical elements, one kind of reason cannot logically be reduced into the other. We let the subscripts ($_m$ and $_p$ indicate what canonical element the reason might be reduced to. The subscript will be omitted if it does not matter which canonical element it is reduced to. A particular deontic proposition might therefore be inhabited[6] by two kinds of reasons. Let C stand for the action proposition of 'Driving a car to work and O_C stand for the obligation (or more precisely the 'ought') to perform C. Assume furthermore that this in fact a deontic proposition, $O_C : dprop$.[7] To have a prudential reason to perform the action described by the deontic proposition is thereby described as

$$c_p : O_C,$$

and to have a moral reason to perform this action is described as

$$c_m : O_C.$$

From this we can thereby describe a direct normative conflict as a situation where you have a prudential reason to perform an action described by a deontic proposition and a moral reason to not perform this

[5] We will in this text focus on conflicting *reasons*, though acknowledging that one might reasonably rather speak about conflicting *oughts*. Here we attach the morality and prudence to the reason, not the ought, though we might consider a 'moral ought' simply as an ought that is inhabited by a moral reason, and correspondingly for prudential oughts. We do however not indicate this in the notation as this seems to simplify the notion of 'conflict'.

[6] To be *inhabited by* should be understood as there being a reason in favour of the performance (or non-performance) of some action.

[7] Notice that O_C in fact is syntactic sugar of $(x : C)O(x)$ where $C : prop$, so that the deontic proposition is actually a special extended version of a regular action proposition. This approach seems to have two clear advantages. First it enables us to perform an actual comparison between the reasons for the ought of performing an action. Second, it enables us to separate the duty to perform an action from the actual performance.

action (or opposite). In the introduced example, we might have a prudential reason to drive a car to work,

$$c_p : O_C$$

while a moral reason not to drive a car to work,

$$c'_m : O_{\neg C}.$$

This thereby constitutes the basis for a direct normative conflict. We can describe the general dialogical structure of this situation by a semi-formal dialogue, described in Play 1. This is a simplified and informal description of the underlying meaning explanations by means of the dialogical framework, where two players (here X and Y) discusses a thesis.[8] The numbers in the left column indicate the order that the moves in the play is carried out. The point is to illustrate the opening of a subplay, where the three different argumentative moves described in subsection 1.3 can be carried out.

		Direct normative conflict
1	**X**	Do you have a reason to C? O_C?
2	**Y**	Yes, I have a reason r to C. $r : O_C$
3	**X**	Do you have a reason to $\neg C$? O_C?
4	**Y**	Yes, I have a reason r' to $\neg C$. $r' : O_{\neg C}$
5	**X**	From your judgements in move 2 and 4 we can get an inconsistency. Do you concede that there is a normative conflict? $\bot$?
6	**Y**	Yes, I concede that I have a normative conflict. $\bot$!
		[Opening subplay]

Play 1: Direct normative conflict

An indirect normative conflict on the other hand can be described as a situation where you have some reason (prudential or moral) to perform some action and some other reason to perform another action and these actions conflict. Notice that for indirect normative conflicts that the precise nature of the reason (whether it is prudential or moral) does not matter. At least logically, we might have conflicting moral reasons, conflicting prudential reasons or conflict across the two kinds of reasons. Because of this, the subscript will be omitted. As previously, we might have a reason to drive a car to work,

$$c : O_C.$$

If we in the same time also have some reason to bike to work (here represented as B, where the obligation is O_B),

$$b : O_B,$$

[8] The dialogical framework was initially described by Lorenzen and Lorenz (1978) and this dialogical interpretation of intuitionistic type theory is based on upon immanent reasoning, described by Rahman, McConaughey, et al. (2018).

this can also constitute a normative conflict, though only under the assumption that one cannot both drive to work and bike to work. This indirect normative conflict therefore also assumes some third judgment regarding the impossibility of the two actions both to be performed,

$$a : \neg(O_C \wedge O_B).$$

Notice that the recognition of both of these actions described by deontic propositions being incompatible is not itself a deontic proposition, but rather a factual proposition. It is not so that we have any normative reason for this incompatibility. This reason is rather of epistemological character.[9] However, because of the BHK-interpretation of both regular propositions and deontic propositions as sets, we can define how this might happen, without relying an any transformation rules between the deontic and the factual. The dialogical process behind the indirect normative conflicts is described by Play 2.

		Indirect normative conflict
1	**X**	Do you have a reason to C? O_C?
2	**Y**	Yes, I have a reason r to C. $r : O_C$
3	**X**	Do you have a reason to B? O_B?
4	**Y**	Yes, I have a reason r' to B. $r' : O_B$
5	**X**	Is it so that you cannot perform C and B? $\neg(O_C \wedge O_B)$?
6	**Y**	No, I cannot perform both C and B. $d : \neg(O_C \wedge O_B)$
7	**X**	From your judgement in move 6, C and B are incompatible actions and you cannot perform the actions described in move 2 and 4 without ending up in an inconsistency. Do you concede that there is a normative conflict? $\bot$?
8	**Y**	Yes, I concede that I have a normative conflict. $\bot$!
		[Opening subplay]

Play 2: Indirect normative conflict

In the end, we see that both kinds of normative conflict reduces to an inconsistency ($\bot$), but since we are reasoning here with *content* and not with logical proof these normative conflicts are not the same as logical (formal) inconsistency. The inconsistency we speak about for both kinds of normative conflicts is related to the conflicting content of the normative claims. The difference is simply that the in the direct normative conflict the inconsistency can be immediately deduced, while in the indirect normative conflict, the inconsistency is dependent on some other judgment regarding the impossibility of the propositions. In other words, the direct normative conflict relies on at least two premises and the indirect conflict relies

[9] This does not mean that we reject the possibility for such incompatibility judgments to be of deontic character. In the example, we might imagine that the real conflict is not that it is factually impossible to both bike and drive a car to work (for example by driving halfway and biking the rest), but rather that the agent has some normative reason not to do so (for example the prudential reason of this combination to be unpractical). The point is that this approach allows for both options.

on at least three premises. Because of this, we will in the following treat the indirect normative conflict as a special case of the direct normative conflict. The difference is simply that for indirect normative conflicts an additional solution exists, namely to reject the incompatibility of the actions. If this is not an alternative, we might continue with the same argumentative moves as for the direct variant.

In the following, we will describe three ways of solving a normative conflict, highlighting their logical meaning explanations and how they might be implemented in the given logic of deontic reasons.

1.3 Approaches for resolving conflicts

All the approaches described in this section is essentially based upon the enriching the dependency relation that grounds the deontic proposition. This is a modal process of further specification and in particular it means that what actually goes on is to claim that our judgments holds, but only in some context. This is what corresponds to the notion of possible worlds in the classical framework.

The main idea is to claim that somethings holds relatively to a certain possible world and this works as a specification of the present context. This is the way to introduce new information. The implementation of these terms in CTT has been done by Ranta (1991).[10]

The relations between specifications in CTT end up being reflexive and transitive. It corresponds to an S4-system in classical modal logic. The reason for this is the further specification of a context. One may look at the specification of contexts as a never-ending project of adding more and more precise information. It is however important to remember that a world is nothing more than any other hypothetical judgment and should not be understood to have any inherent metaphysical aspect. That something is the case in a world should simply be understood as claiming that it depends on some further judgment.

1.3.1 Silencing

Silencing consists in removing or not take account of one of the values, so that there is no more conflict. This approach amounts recognising that one of the reasons actually depends on some other assumption (itself being either a normative reason or a propositional reason) that actually does not hold. In the sparse literature on this approach an important focus have been on describing the precise content of this assumption, for example the negation of a conflicting reason. [11] The approach described here does not go into the details regarding the content of this assumption. This approach seems to correspond to what in the legal literature on Civil Law might be considered as 'overturning'. Say that our prudential reason for driving a car to work was dependent on an assumption of driving cars being a healthy activity (H),

$$c_p(x) : O_C(x : H),$$

we can reject this prudential reason on the basis of the rejection of the assumption. More precisely, since driving a car to work was dependent on the assumption that driving cars is a healthy activity and this assumption shows to be false ($h : \neg H$) or simply unjustified, we can also reject the prudential reason we had for driving a car to work. In this situation we do not anymore have any conflict. How this approach solves the normative conflict can also be described by the dialogical interactions in Play 3. I and II stands for the initial concessions that the player **Y** admits, here as what founds the normative conflict in the first place (see Play 1 and Play 2).

[10] See Primiero (1994) for an extension of this framework to also include rejection, revision and a distinction between (certain) knowledge and (uncertain) information.

[11] Early accounts of this approach have been described by McDowell and McFetridge (1978), arguing for the silencing of prudential reasons when there is a conflicting moral reason, and Raz (1988), analysing a general preference for higher-order over lower-order normative reasons.

		Silencing
I	**Y**	I have a reason r to C. $r : O_C$
II	**Y**	I have a reason r' to $\neg C$. $r' : O_{\neg C}$
1	**X**	Is it not so that your reason r for C depends on some assumption H? $r(x) : O_C(x : H)$?
2	**Y**	Yes. $r(x) : O_C(x : H)$
3	**X**	Do you actually have a good reason for H? H?
4	**Y**	No, I cannot find a good reason for H.
5	**X**	Then your reason for C is not justified. You do not anymore have any conflict and can accept $\neg C$.
6	**Y**	I will therefore accept $\neg C$. $r' : O_{\neg C}$

Play 3: Silencing

1.3.2 Ranking or appealing to some other value

Another approach to conflicting reasons is appealing to some more important or overarching reason or value. In the legal literature, we might identify this approach with 'distinguishing'. This approach points out some particular value or reason and explains how this ranks, weighs or sorts the apparent conflict.[12] In the given example, such overarching ground for comparison might be comfort for pollution. We would here ask ourselves whether my comfort for driving a car to work (if that is our prudential reason) outweighs the moral reason not to pollute (assuming this is our moral reason). This would thereby introduce a certain comfort for pollution value (CP) that could be used to distinguish or rank the alternatives. As we have recognised this process with 'distinguishing', it would seem appropriate to acknowledge it as an analogy, imposing the requirement of proportionality. However, a simplified structure can be described as a dependency relation between the two. In fact this is interpreted as two dependencies, based on the result of the comparison. First, the prudential reason is dependent on the proposition that the comfort of driving a car is greater than the pollution,

$$c_p(x) : O_C(x : CP_C),$$

and the moral reason is dependent on this negation,

$$c'_m(y) : O_{\neg C}(y : \neg CP_C).$$

The combination of these two dependencies, shows that we actually can do a comparison based on some regular proposition and not necessarily a deontic proposition. Let $\dashv$ represent a dependency that the

[12] Details regarding the structure of such comparative value has been discussed in Chang (1997) and Chang (2012). The underlying meaning structure of such comparative values seems closely related to the challenges of analysing complex notions, described by Aristotle in De Interpretatione (I.11,20b31-21a6) where he discusses precisely the concept of 'being good'.

disjunction has relative to the comparative notion,[13]

$$b(x) : O_C \vee O_{\neg C} \dashv (x : CP_C).$$

This reads that the decision whether O_C or $O_{\neg C}$ depends on a ranking or evaluation relative to comparative notion CP_C.

The step for solving this problem thereby lies in answering whether the comparison actually holds. Is it the case that the comfort outweighs the pollution or not? Dependent on the answer on this question, we can give an answer to given conflict. Notice that this strategy is essentially a *reductionist* strategy in the sense that it reduces the conflict to either another deontic notion or to a regular propositional question. This however can only occur if we identify some $dprop$ to be dependent on some other $dprop$ or $prop$ and the conflicting $dprop$ to be dependent on this negation. Also keep in mind since we are in a logically constructivist framework, the 'new' reason that we have for our deontic proposition actually contains (depends on) the any reason or proof of the proposition it was dependent on. It is therefore explicit in the newly constructed reason that it is a result of weighing it against another reason. The dialogical meaning structure greatly resembles what we find in analogical arguments in legal reasoning, here described by Play 4.

		Ranking
I	**Y**	I have a reason r to C. $r : O_C$
II	**Y**	I have a reason r' to $\neg C$. $r' : O_{\neg C}$
1	**X**	Is it not so that there exists a comparative notion CP that will enable you to distinguish C from $\neg C$? $b(x) : O_C \vee O_{\neg C} \dashv (x : CP_C)$?
2	**Y**	Yes, CP will be such comparative notion. $b(x) : O_C \vee O_{\neg C} \dashv (x : CP_C)$
3	**X**	With respect to C, is it so that CP favours or disfavours it? $CP_C \vee \neg CP_C$?
4	**Y**	CP does favour not favour C. $d : \neg CP_C$
5	**X**	Then you should accept $\neg C$ as better justified than C. Do you concede? C?
6	**Y**	I will therefore accept $\neg C$. $r' : O_{\neg C}$

Play 4: Ranking

A common requirement for distinguishing and the use of analogies in legal reasoning often also implements a criteria of *proportionality* or *efficiency*. This is a restriction that might be imposed on the choice

[13]This is in fact a type theoretical reconstruction of the special kind of moral conditional that was analysed by Leibniz in his two academic dissertations, *Disputatio Juridica (prior) De Conditionibus* (A VI, I, 1665) and *Disputatio Juridica (posterior) De Conditionibus* (A VI, I, 1965). The given formalisation is therefore just syntactic sugar of

$$b(x) : [(\forall y : CP_C)\mathbf{left}^{\vee}(y) =_{\{P\}} x \supset O_C(y)] \wedge [(\forall z : \neg CP_C)\mathbf{right}^{\vee}(z) =_{\{P\}} x \supset O_{\neg C}(z)](x : CP_C \vee \neg CP_C).$$

For details regarding the analysis and formulation of moral conditionals, see Rahman and Granström (2019).

of the comparative value, proposition or reason to establish the appropriateness of such notion of comparison.[14] An appropriate comparative notion should in this sense have no *counterexamples*, meaning that in all other actions of the same type, one decides the course of action by means of the same comparative notion. In the context of ethics, this might be a too strong requirement as this kind of reasoning seems less tightly construed than its legal counterpart. In legal reasoning, any counterexample would seem to lead to a refutation of the proposed comparative notion, but in ethics this should only be taken as an indication. A potential way out of this could be to soften the requirement by reducing the strength of the universal quantifier to a generalised one. We might capture such limited restriction as not holding for *all* actions of the same type, but only for *many* or *most* actions.[15]

1.3.3 Compositional reconstruction

The third approach is to revise the underlying structure of our reasons. In the legal context, this approach bears a strong resemblance to a decomposition of the underlying meaning structure of a legal concept, as a kind of 'reinterpretation'. The challenge in the second approach is finding a way to rank or compare multiple competing reasons by means of some comparative notion. Important questions in the literature is therefore whether such a comparative notion can always be found, and whether it is possible at all to provide a comparison between different types of reasons. We might think that this actually is an unattainable goal if we expect to find such notion in all situations. So whether we think that this is a problem whenever we try to compare prudential and moral reasons (which is actually to treat them as independent domains of reasons, and thereby end up in what might be recognised as 'normative pluralism') or whether we think that the two types of reasons might be compared, but not in all situations, we in either case end up in a situation where we admit some variant of a plurality of reasons.[16]

An important approach in this position is the ability to describe and expand the dependency structure found within the particular notion. This has been proposed as a way of dealing with seemingly challenging counterexamples, where we seem to have a conflict between prudential and moral reasons, though where one reason is significantly weightier than the other. The point of this approach is then to describe why the weighing actually is not imbalanced, by claiming that the prudential and the moral reasons actually indicate the same action, and therefore reject the possibility of such counterexamples.

By going back to our example, this way to consider the situation would be to recognise that one of the reasons actually is also a reason for the other option. In the example, one way to do this would be to recognise that there actually are prudential reasons not to pollute and that the prudential reason we have to drive a car to work is not as strong as first seemed. The pluralist approach admits of considering the original example as previously introduced, namely that we have some prudential reason to drive a car to work,

$$c_p : O_C.$$

Though presented in this simplified form, there would seem to be a clear conflict with the moral reason to not drive a car to work. However, by acknowledging that we might also have a prudential reason for not driving a car to work, because of our own self-interest of not polluting or to be healthy, we can assess the conflict internal to that domain. We can thereby claim that we actually do have a prudential reason to not pollute (P), and thereby also a prudential reason not to drive a car to work (dependent on this prudential reason),

$$c'_p(x_p) : O_{\neg C}(x_p : O_{\neg P}).$$

[14] See Kvernenes (2022) for the implementation of this requirement in immanent reasoning and intuitionistic type theory.
[15] An analysis of the construction of generalised quantifiers can be found in Sundholm (1989).
[16] In Sagdahl (2022) we find a detailed discussion about the commensurability of normative reasons and oughts.

Now we have a similar conflict as described in the previous steps, though this conflict is internal to the prudential domain and do not anymore try to combine moral and prudential reasons. We can thereby try to evaluate or weigh the reasons against each other by means of either silencing or by appealing to another reason or value. A particularity for this approach, contrary to the other previously described approaches is that it does not really provide an answer to the normative conflict. Instead it highlights an ability to provide a new reason that itself might be a better candidate for a comparison, described by the previous approaches. The dialogical process related to this is therefore the development of new reasons, and this is described in Play 5. In this play we indicate the precise kind of reason (prudential or moral) in the play, as this seems to provide the most pressing situations that grounds this approach.

		Plurality
I	**Y**	I have a prudential reason r_p to C. $r_p : O_C$
II	**Y**	I have a moral reason r'_m to $\neg C$. $r'_m : O_{\neg C}$
1	**X**	Is it not so that you also have some prudential reason to $\neg P$? $\neg P$?
2	**Y**	Yes, I do have a reason p_p to $\neg P$. $p_p : \neg P$
3	**X**	Is it not also the case that this causes you to have also have a prudential reason to $\neg C$? $\neg C(x)(x : P)$?
4	**Y**	Indeed. $c'_p(x_p) : O_{\neg C}(x_p : O_{\neg P})$
5	**X**	This should then enable you to compare you prudential reason r_p for C with you dependent prudential reason $c'_p(x_p)$ for $\neg C$.
6	**Y**	I will therefore revise my reasons to also accommodate this new prudential reason.
		[Update conflict internal to one domain]

Play 5: Plurality

Notice that this increase in the dependency structure is not restricted to solving problems between moral and prudential reasons, but might also be used as a step to facilitate or enable a comparison if no such notion of comparison can be found directly. The point is to highlight the enriched structure of reasons and use that in a further investigation regarding their validity. Notice also that this strategy is neutral in respect to the nature of the reasons. Even if we have here used a logically intuitionistic and constructive framework, this does not mean that we are bound to also be constructive or intuitionist about reasons for action. We might very well understand this process of enriching structure either as a creation of the reasons in question, or as a discovery of the already existing reasons.

2 Conclusion

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