

MEANING AND
SPEECH ACTS

Volume I
**PRINCIPLES OF
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IV ON THE LOGICAL FORM OF ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS

The aim of this chapter is to formulate the logico-philosophical analysis of illocutionary forces and the definitions of the conditions of success and of satisfaction of utterances which underlie the illocutionary logic of general semantics. First, I will explain how each illocutionary force can be divided into six components, and how the set of all illocutionary forces is recursively defined on the basis of this componential analysis in speech act theory. Next, I will formulate the basic principles of the logic and semantics of elementary illocutionary acts. In particular, I will state the law of identity for speech acts and I will explicate the logical types of illocutionary forces and of elementary speech acts.

I ANALYSIS OF THE NOTION OF ILLOCUTIONARY FORCE

In illocutionary logic, the notion of illocutionary force is not taken as a primitive notion, but is derived from more primitive notions. Each illocutionary force is *divided* into six *components*, which serve to determine the conditions of success and of satisfaction of all speech acts with that force. The six components of an illocutionary force are: an illocutionary point, a mode of achievement of an illocutionary point, propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions, and a degree of strength. In this section, I will briefly explain the components of illocutionary forces. I will also explicate their logical type and study the ways in which they

are realized syntactically in natural language.¹

As we will see, there is a logical relation between the six types of component of an illocutionary force, the conditions of success and of satisfaction of elementary speech acts with that force, and the linguistic purposes served by that illocutionary force. Different components of illocutionary force determine different conditions of success or of satisfaction, and consequently serve different linguistic purposes. Thus, two illocutionary forces with the same components are identical because all elementary illocutionary acts with these two forces and the same propositional content have the same conditions of success and of satisfaction.

1 *Illocutionary point*

In the performance of an elementary speech act, the speaker always relates in a certain way the propositional content to the world of the utterance so as to determine a direction of fit between language and the world. If, on the one hand, the speaker makes an assertion or a report, the point of his utterance is to represent how things are, and the propositional content of the speech act is supposed to match a state of affairs existing in general independently in the world. Such utterances have the words-to-world direction of fit. If, on the other hand, a speaker makes a request or gives advice, the point of his utterance is not to say how things are, but to try to get the hearer to act in such a way that his behavior in the world matches the propositional content of the speech act. Such utterances have the world-to-words direction of fit. The illocutionary point is the principal component of illocutionary force because it determines the *direction of fit* of utterances with that force. A speaker who performs an illocutionary act may have all sorts of other intentions and perlocutionary purposes. For example, when he makes an assertion, he may want to amuse, convince, or embarrass the hearer. But he always has at least the intention to achieve the illocutionary point on the propositional content, because that point is the purpose which is essential to the type of speech act that he performs.

¹ See D. Vanderveken, "What is an illocutionary force?", in M. Dascal (ed.), *Dialogue and Interdisciplinary Study*, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1985, and J. R. Searle and D. Vanderveken, *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, for further explanations of these notions.

Analysts of the notion of illocutionary force

As Searle and I have argued at length elsewhere,² there are five and only five basic illocutionary points of utterances. These are:

- the *assertive point* which consists in representing as actual a state of affairs;
- the *commissive point* which consists in committing the speaker to a future course of action;
- the *directive point* which consists in making an attempt to get the hearer to do something;
- the ***declaratory point*** which consists in performing an action which brings into existence a state of affairs by representing oneself as performing that action;
- and the *expressive point* which consists of expressing propositional attitudes of the speaker about a state of affairs.

From a linguistic point of view, this classification of illocutionary points is empirically justified, because only these five illocutionary points are needed in order to analyze the illocutionary force markers and performative verbs in English and other actual natural languages.³ Moreover, one can also justify philosophically by a sort of "*transcendental deduction*" the completeness of this classification of illocutionary points of possible utterances. Indeed it can be argued that the five illocutionary points exhaust the different possible directions of fit between language and the world.

From a logical point of view, there are four and only four possible directions of fit of utterances, and to these four directions of fit⁴ correspond naturally the five illocutionary points, as I will now show. The four directions of fit are:

1 The words-to-world direction of fit

When the illocutionary act is satisfied, its propositional content fits a state of affairs existing in general independently in the world. *Speech acts with the assertive point* such as, for example, predictions, testimonies, conjectures, statements, and objections

² This classification of illocutionary points was first presented by J. R. Searle, "A taxonomy of illocutionary acts", in K. Gunderson (ed.), *Language, Mind, and Knowledge*, Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science, vol VII, University of Minnesota Press, 1975

³ See the last chapter of J. R. Searle and D Vanderveken, *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, for English performative verbs and the last chapter of my book, *Les Actes de discours*, Essai de Philosophie du Langage et de l'Espnt sur la Signification des Enonciations, Liège-Bruxelles: Pierre Mardaga Editeur, 1988, for French performative verbs.

⁴ The term is due to J. L Austin

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have the words-to-world direction of fit. Their point is to represent how things are in the world.

2 The world-to-words direction of fit

When the illocutionary act is satisfied, the world is transformed to fit the propositional content. *Speech acts with the commissive or directive point* such as, for example, promises, vows, recommendations, supplications, and demands *have the world-to-words direction of fit.* Their point is to get the world to be transformed by the future course of action of the speaker (commissives) or of the hearer (directives) in order to match the propositional content of the utterance. Speakers and hearers play such fundamental roles in the performance of speech acts that language distinguishes naturally two different illocutionary points with the world-to-words direction of fit: the commissive point, which has the speaker-based world-to-words direction of fit, and the directive point, which has the hearer-based world-to-words direction of fit. In the case of commissive utterances, the responsibility for achieving the success of fit is assigned to the speaker; in the case of directive utterances, it is assigned to the hearer.

3 The double direction of fit

When the illocutionary act is satisfied, the world is transformed by the present action of the speaker to fit the propositional content by the fact that the speaker represents it as being so transformed. *Speech acts with the declaratory illocutionary point* such as, for example, acts of appointing, nominating, endorsing, and naming *have the double direction of fit.* Their point is to get the world to match the propositional content by saying that the propositional content matches the world.

4 The null or empty direction of fit

Finally, for some illocutionary acts, there is no question of success or failure of fit, and their propositional content is in general presupposed to be true. *Speech acts with the expressive point* such as, for example, apologies, thanks, congratulations, and condolences *have the null or empty direction of fit.* Their point is only to express a propositional attitude of the speaker about the state of affairs represented by the propositional content.

Analysis of the notion of Illocutionary force

It is not to represent that state of affairs as actual or to try to get it to be actual in the world.

Because the illocutionary point determines from which direction success of fit must be achieved between language and the world in the case of satisfaction of an utterance, the achievement of the illocutionary point on the propositional content is internal to the performance of a speech act. Thus, in the performance of an illocutionary act of the form $F(P)$, the speaker always achieves the illocutionary point of F on the propositional content P in the context of his utterance. For example, in asserting that Paris is in France, a speaker represents as actual the particular state of affairs that Paris is in France. Similarly, in promising to go to Paris a speaker commits himself to carrying out the particular course of action of going to Paris.⁵

Now, each illocutionary point serves one and only one linguistic purpose in relating propositions to the world. Consequently, different illocutionary points have different conditions of achievement. Thus, each illocutionary point can be identified formally with the function which determines its conditions of achievement. That function associates with a possible context of utterance and a proposition, the value success S in a semantic interpretation if and only if the speaker in the context achieves that illocutionary point on that proposition according to that interpretation. On this account, an illocutionary point has the *logical type* of a function from the set $I \times U_p$ of all ordered pairs of possible contexts of utterance and of propositions into the set U_s of success values. As there are five distinct illocutionary points, there are five functions of this type, $\Pi_1, \Pi_2, \Pi_3, \Pi_4$ and Π_5 , in each semantic interpretation which determine respectively the conditions of achievement of the assertive, commissive, directive, declaratory, and expressive illocutionary points under that interpretation.

Most laws which govern illocutionary points in general semantics are direct consequences of their direction of fit. Thus, for example, the law of the assertive commitment in the achievement of the declaratory point follows directly from the fact that the declaratory point has the double direction of fit. By definition, a speaker who declares a proposition P carries out the present action represented by the propositional content of his utterance by

⁵ Illocutionary points determine what Searle calls the essential condition of success in *Speech Acts*, Cambridge University Press, 1969

representing himself as carrying out that action. This is why his utterance also has the words-to-world direction of fit.

From a linguistic point of view, illocutionary points are expressed in natural languages by *verb mood* or *sentence types*. Thus, the assertive, directive, and expressive illocutionary points are respectively expressed in the utterances of *declarative*, *imperative*, and *exclamatory* sentences in English and other natural languages. On the one hand, the indicative and the imperative moods express respectively the assertive and the directive illocutionary points in declarative and imperative sentences. On the other hand, the exclamatory intonation and the prefixed adverbial expression consisting of "how" followed by an adjective (e.g. "how nice", "how sad") express the expressive illocutionary point in exclamatory sentences. In general, the meaning of the adjective which occurs in the prefix of an exclamatory sentence serves to determine the particular type of mental states which are expressed in its utterances. For example, an exclamatory sentence such as "How glad I am you have come!" is used to express pleasure or joy (because of the meaning of the adjective "glad").⁶

Unlike the assertive, directive, and expressive illocutionary points, the declaratory and commissive points are not realized syntactically in a verb mood or sentence type in English and in most other languages.⁷ However, as I pointed out in chapter 1, speakers can make literal declarations in the utterances of *performative* sentences. Whenever an action can be performed by declaration, and that action serves important linguistic purposes in a human community, language creates in general a verb that names that action and that can be used performatively in the language of that community. As we have seen, any successful declaration contains an assertion of its propositional content. Consequently, there is no need for a specific mood or sentence type for the declaratory illocutionary point in natural languages. It is indeed sufficient to have expressions such as performative verbs and a logical constant like the adverb "hereby" which expresses the characteristic mode

⁶ Unlike the other illocutionary points, the expressive point has variable sincerity conditions. A speaker achieves the expressive point on a proposition P in a context if and only if he expresses a mental state of some psychological mode about the state of affairs that P. This variability of the sincerity conditions of the expressive point is shown in language by the fact that exclamatory sentences with different prefixes can be used to express mental states of different modes.

⁷ According to D. Zaefferer, "The semantics of sentence mood in typologically differing languages" in S. Hattori and K. Inoue (eds.), *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Linguists*; Tokyo, August 29-September 4, 1982, published under the auspices of the Committee, Tokyo, 1983, the commissive point is only realized in Korean, and the declaratory point is not realized at all in the large set of languages that he has studied.

of achievement of declarations. When the sentential type of a declarative sentence is modified by such expressions, it becomes a performative sentence whose illocutionary force marker expresses the force of declaration in addition to the force of assertion. Because of the existence of the indicative mood, another particular verb mood for the declaratory point would be superfluous.⁸

Now, the reason why the commissive point is not realized syntactically in English and in most other actual languages is different. That illocutionary point is less important than the other points for the purpose of linguistic communication. From a perlocutionary point of view, it is very important for a speaker in a speech situation, where there is human interaction, to have, for example, a syntactic means of getting other hearers to understand literally that they should adopt a certain behavior. On the other hand, it is much less important for a speaker in a speech situation to have a syntactic means of getting other hearers to understand literally that he is committing himself to a future course of action. Indeed, such an understanding creates a responsibility on the part of that speaker. Thus, speakers usually commit themselves indirectly by way of, for example, asserting literally that they will do something or that they intend to do something. In such cases, whenever they do not keep their commitment, they can always pretend they were only making a prediction. Moreover, when they want their commitment to be fully explicit, they have the resources to make a performative utterance with a commissive verb. They can say, for example, "I promise to do it" or "I agree to do it." Such indirect and performative ways of achieving the commissive illocutionary point are sufficient for the purposes of linguistic communication. This is why English and most other natural languages did not create a commissive mood.

Illocutionary point is unquestionably the *most important* component of illocutionary force. Indeed, it determines the principal or *essential condition of success* of each utterance. However, it is not the only component of illocutionary force, as is shown by the fact that there are many different forces with the

⁸ Moreover, it would not be very useful for a language to create a linguistic convention to the effect that sentences with designated features (such as, for example, a declarative mood of their main verb) serve to perform literal declarations. Indeed, there is a very restricted number of verbs which name states of affairs that speakers can bring into existence by declaration. Consequently, most utterances of sentences of such an hypothetical type would be void and unsuccessful.

same illocutionary point. For example, questions, commands, supplications, demands, requests, and orders are speech acts with the same directive illocutionary point but different illocutionary forces. The specific illocutionary forces of such directive illocutionary acts differ in other aspects which are instances of other components of illocutionary force.

2 Mode of achievement

Illocutionary points, like most purposes of our actions, can be achieved in various ways and by different means. The mode of achievement of the illocutionary point of an illocutionary force is the component of that force which determines how its point must be achieved on the propositional content in a successful performance of an act with that force. For example, in a request, the speaker must leave the option of refusal to the hearer in making his attempt to get him to do something. On the other hand, in a command he must be more peremptory and invoke a position of authority over the hearer. Such features, which distinguish requesting from commanding, are part of what I call *their mode of achievement* of illocutionary point.⁹ From a logical point of view, the mode of achievement of an illocutionary force restricts the conditions of achievement of its point by requiring certain specific means or ways of achievement of that point. Thus, a mode of achievement of an illocutionary point II is formally a function h of the same logical type as that illocutionary point, which divides into two the set of all contexts where that point is achieved. That function associates success with a context and a proposition when the speaker in that context achieves that illocutionary point on that proposition with that mode.

A mode of achievement is a *special mode* of achievement of an illocutionary point when it properly restricts the conditions of achievement of that point. For example, the mode of achievement of an act of begging, which is to make a humble or polite attempt to get the hearer to do something, is a special mode of achievement of the directive illocutionary point, since there are many ways to achieve that point which are neither humble nor polite.

In illocutionary logic, the set of all modes of achievement has the structure of a *Boolean algebra*.¹⁰ It contains a neutral and an

⁹ Often the relation in which the mode of achievement stands with respect to illocutionary point is the relation of a means towards an end, which has been studied in philosophy since Aristotle.

absorbent mode of achievement, and is closed under the classical Boolean operations. The *neutral mode of achievement* is the mode with which each illocutionary point is necessarily achieved when it is achieved in a context. It is the mode 1_μ such that $1_\mu(i, P) = S$ for every context i and proposition P . The *absorbent mode of achievement*, on the other hand, is the *impossible mode of achievement* 0_μ such that $0_\mu(i, P) \neq S$, for every context i and proposition P . All illocutionary forces have the neutral mode of achievement, but only the empty illocutionary force, which determines impossible conditions of success, has the absorbent mode of achievement. The Boolean operations on modes of achievement are (1) a unary operation which gives as value, for each mode h_μ , the complement \bar{h}_μ of that mode, and (2) a binary operation which gives as value, for two modes h_μ^1 and h_μ^2 , the conjunction $(h_\mu^1 \wedge h_\mu^2)$ of these modes. The *complement of a mode of achievement* is the mode with which an illocutionary point is achieved in a context if and only if it is not achieved with that mode in that context. Thus $\bar{h}_\mu(i, P) = S$ if and only if $h_\mu(i, P) \neq S$. The *conjunction of two modes*, on the other hand, is the mode with which an illocutionary point is achieved in a context if and only if it is achieved with these two modes in that context. Thus, $(h_\mu^1 \wedge h_\mu^2)(i, P) = S$ if $h_\mu^1(i, P) = h_\mu^2(i, P) = S$.

Special modes of achievement are expressed in English by adverbs such as "surely" and "whether you like it or not" which modify the mood of the verb in sentences such as (1) "Surely, he is here" and (2) "Whether you like it or not, come!" For example, the meaning of "surely" serves to determine that the speaker intends to convince the hearer by uttering (1), while the meaning of "whether you like it or not" serves to determine that the speaker does not give any option of refusal to the hearer in uttering (2). This is why a declarative sentence with the prefix "surely" serves to assure the hearer of the truth of a proposition, while an imperative sentence with the prefix "whether you like it or not" serves to tell the hearer to do something.

Special modes of achievement of illocutionary points are also named in English by adverbs such as "humbly" and "politely" which modify the performative verb in performative sentences like (3) "I humbly request you to come" and (4) "I politely advise you to leave this room." The complex performative expressions of such performative sentences name the illocutionary

¹⁰ The ideas underlying the structure of a Boolean algebra were first presented in G Boole, *The Mathematical Analysis of Logic*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1965 (original edition, 1847).

force obtained by adding to the force named by the performative verb the special mode of achievement expressed by these adverbs. Thus, for example, in a performative utterance of (3), the speaker declares that he begs the hearer to come, since an act of begging is a request made with the humble or polite mode of achievement.

Notice that in English one can compose, with the logical particles "and", "or", and "not", complex adverbial expressions such as "humbly and nicely" and "not as your commanding officer". Such complex expressions name conjunctions or complements of modes of achievement in performative sentences like "I recommend you politely and nicely to do it" and "I ask you as a friend and not as your commanding officer to do it."

3 propositional content conditions

Some illocutionary forces impose conditions on the set of propositions that can be taken as propositional contents of acts with that force in a context of utterance. For example, the propositional content of a promise must represent a speaker's future course of action. The propositional content of a report must represent a state of affairs which is either past or present with respect to the moment of the utterance. Such conditions are called *propositional content conditions*. They constitute the third component of each illocutionary force. Formally, a propositional content condition has the logical type of a function from the set I of all contexts of utterance into the set $P(U_p)$ of all sets of propositions. Thus, if h_θ is a propositional content condition in a semantic interpretation, $h_\theta(i)$ is the set of all propositions P which satisfy that propositional content condition h_θ at the context of utterance i .

Some propositional content conditions are *determined* by their illocutionary point. Thus, for example, all directive illocutionary forces have the condition that their propositional content represents a future course of action of the hearer at each context. Indeed a speaker cannot make a linguistic attempt to get a hearer to do something unless he expresses the proposition that the hearer will carry out a future action with the aim of achieving a world-to-worlds success of fit. However, other propositional content conditions of illocutionary forces are *special* conditions of these forces. For example, the propositional content condition of a

report is special, since one can represent as actual future as well as past or present states of affairs.

Like the set of all modes of achievement, the set of all propositional content conditions also has the structure of a *Boolean algebra*. The *neutral propositional content condition* is the condition 1_θ , common to all illocutionary forces, which is satisfied by all propositions in all contexts. Thus, $1_\theta(i) = U_p$. The *absorbent propositional content condition*, on the contrary, is the impossible condition 0_θ which is not satisfied by any proposition in any context. Thus $0_\theta(i)$ is the empty set \emptyset . Only the empty illocutionary force has that absorbent condition. The two Boolean operations on propositional content conditions are those of complementation and of intersection. The *complement* \bar{h}_θ of a condition h_θ is satisfied at each context by all and only the propositions which do not satisfy h_θ at that context. Thus $\bar{h}_\theta(i) = \{P/P \notin h_\theta(i)\}$. The *intersection* ($h_\theta \cap g_\theta$) of two *propositional content conditions* h_θ and g_θ is satisfied at a context by all and only the propositions which satisfy these two conditions at that context. Thus $(h_\theta \cap g_\theta)(i) = h_\theta(i) \cap g_\theta(i)$.

Propositional content conditions are expressed in English and other natural languages by *syntactic constraints* on the grammatical form of the clauses of elementary sentences. For example, the tense of the main verb of imperative sentences cannot represent a past moment with respect to the moment of the utterance. Thus an imperative sentence like "Have been brave yesterday!" is ill formed and linguistically odd, while another imperative sentence such as "Have eaten beans tomorrow when I come!" (whose tense is in the past but which names a future moment with the respect to the moment of the utterance), is well formed and illocutionarily consistent. Similarly, there are syntactic constraints on the clauses of performative sentences which reflect the propositional content conditions of the illocutionary forces named by their performative verbs. For example, sentences like "I promise that I have won the race" and "I request that you have been nice to Ursula" are linguistically odd. Any competent speaker understands that the propositional contents of their literal utterances cannot satisfy the propositional content conditions of their literal illocutionary forces.

4 Preparatory conditions

Whenever a speaker attempts to perform an illocutionary act, he *presupposes* (or takes for granted) the truth of certain propositions in the context of his utterance, and, although

he might succeed in certain cases in performing this speech act even if these presupposed propositions are false, his performance of that illocutionary act would still be defective in these contexts. For example, a speaker who testifies in court presupposes that he has witnessed the state of affairs represented by the propositional content, but he could lie and that presupposition might be false. Thus a speaker might have successfully testified to something in court, and have achieved his perlocutionary intention of convincing the jury, even though he has not witnessed what he says he has. However, in such a case his successful testimony would be defective, as is shown by the fact that he could later be accused of perjury. Similarly, a speaker who blames the hearer for having done something presupposes that it is bad or reprehensible to do such a thing, and his illocutionary act of blaming would be defective if this was not the case.

Such conditions which are necessary for the successful and non-defective performance of speech acts are called in illocutionary logic *preparatory conditions*. They are features determined by illocutionary forces. Thus, each illocutionary force F has a component, called the preparatory condition of F , which determines which propositions the speaker must presuppose when he performs an illocutionary act with that force in a possible context of utterance. From a logical point of view, a preparatory condition is a function from the set $I \times U_p$ of all pairs of contexts and of propositions into the set $P(U_p)$ of all sets of propositions. It associates with each context i and proposition P the set of all propositions that the speaker would presuppose (or take for granted) if he were performing in that context an illocutionary act of the form $F(P)$ with a force F having that preparatory condition. For example, a preparatory condition of the illocutionary force of threatening can be construed as the function h such that $h(i, P) = \{\text{the proposition that } P \text{ is bad for the hearer of } i\}$. Indeed any speaker who threatens a hearer with doing something presupposes that that action is bad for the hearer.

As in the case of propositional content conditions, some preparatory conditions are *determined* by illocutionary point, while others are not. Thus, for example, all commissive illocutionary forces have the preparatory condition that the speaker can carry out the future course of action represented by the propositional content. Indeed, a speaker cannot commit himself to doing something in an utterance without presupposing that he is capable of doing it. But other preparatory conditions of

commissive illocutionary forces are *special* conditions for these forces. For example, the illocutionary force of a promise has the special preparatory condition that the future course of action represented by the propositional content is good for the hearer.

The preparatory conditions determine a set of *presuppositions peculiar to illocutionary force*. Those presuppositions must be distinguished from the other presuppositions of utterances which derive from the propositional content. Thus, for example, successful utterances of sentences such as "Will you see the Queen of England?" and "You will see the Queen of England" presuppose the existence of a Queen of England because of the meaning of the definite descriptions. Such presuppositions, peculiar to propositional content, have been discussed in the contemporary philosophy of language by Frege and Strawson,¹¹ and they are independent of illocutionary force. A speaker who expresses a proposition with an illocutionary force is indeed bound to make these propositional presuppositions independently of the specific nature of that illocutionary force.¹²

On the other hand, the speaker's presuppositions associated with the preparatory conditions of an illocutionary act are dependent on the nature of its illocutionary force. They serve to determine a special type of condition of success of the illocutionary act with that force. As I said earlier, a speaker who performs an illocutionary act must indeed *presuppose* the satisfaction of the preparatory conditions in the context of his utterance. The fact that, in performing a speech act of the form F(P) in a context *i*, the speaker presupposes the truth of all propositions $h(i,P)$ determined by the preparatory conditions *h* of its illocutionary force, is shown in language by the following fact: it is *paradoxical* to try to perform an illocutionary act and to deny simultaneously one of its preparatory conditions. Thus, for example, utterances of sentences such as "You cannot do it but, please, do it!" and "I blame you for what you did and this was a very good thing to do" are void and bizarre. These linguistically odd sentences are indeed analytically unsuccessful.

Like the sets of modes of achievement and of propositional content conditions, the set of all preparatory conditions also has the structure of a *Boolean algebra*. The *neutral preparatory*

¹¹ See G. Frege, "On sense and reference", in P. Geach and M. Black (eds.), *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1970.

¹² See R. A. Van der Sandt, *Context and Presupposition*, London: Croom Helm, 1988, for more on propositional presupposition. And see P. F. Strawson, "On referring", in *Mind*, 59, 235 (1950).

condition is the condition \setminus_{Σ} which associates with each context and proposition the empty set of propositions. It is common to all illocutionary forces. Indeed any speaker can be said to presuppose in every context the truth of all propositions determined by this neutral preparatory condition, since there are no such propositions. The *absorbent preparatory condition*, on the other hand, is the impossible condition 0_{Σ} which gives as value, for each context and proposition, the whole set U_p of propositions. An illocutionary force with the absorbent preparatory condition is empty, because no rational speaker can presuppose both a proposition and its negation in a context of utterance. Indeed speakers and hearers mutually know *a priori* that these propositions have incompatible truth conditions. The two Boolean operations on preparatory conditions are the set-theoretical operations of complementation and of union. The *complement of a preparatory condition* h_{Σ} associates with each context i and proposition P the set of propositions Q such that $Q \notin h_{\Sigma}(i, P)$. On the other hand, the *union* ($h_{\Sigma} \cup g_{\Sigma}$) of two preparatory conditions h_{Σ} and g_{Σ} associates with a context i and a proposition P the set of propositions which is the union of the sets of propositions that are the values of these two preparatory conditions for that context and that proposition. Thus $(h_{\Sigma} \cup g_{\Sigma})(i, P) = h_{\Sigma}(i, P) \cup g_{\Sigma}(i, P)$. A speaker who performs a speech act with the union of two preparatory conditions must presuppose the satisfaction of both conditions in the context of his utterance.

Preparatory conditions are expressed in English and in other natural languages in various ways. For example, expressions such as "Your majesty", "Son", and "Judge", which are used *vocatively* in sentences such as "Your majesty, can I come?", "Son, be nice to your little sister!", and "Judge, you will regret your sentence", serve to determine the special preparatory condition that the hearer has a certain title or position. Thus, two possible utterances in the same context of the interrogative sentences "Your majesty, can I come?" and "Son, can I come?" would serve to ask the same question, but the illocutionary forces of such utterances would have different preparatory conditions. Indeed in the first case the speaker would presuppose that the hearer is a royal person, while in the second case he would presuppose that the hearer is his son. Similarly, adverbs like "good" and "unfortunately" in sentences like "Good, it is raining" and "Unfortunately, it is raining" serve to determine the special preparatory condition that the state of affairs represented by the propositional content is good or unfortunate. Gender is also used in English to express

preparatory conditions concerning the sex of the persons to whom the speaker refers in his utterance.¹³

5 Sincerity conditions

By performing an illocutionary act, the speaker also *expresses* (or *manifests*) mental states of certain psychological modes about the state of affairs represented by the propositional content. For example, a speaker who promises something expresses an intention to do what he promises, and a speaker who requests a hearer to do something expresses a desire that he do it.¹⁴ Such mental states are *propositional attitudes* of the form $m(P)$, where m is a *psychological mode* such as, for example, desire, regret, or hope, and P is a proposition. A speaker can of course express a mental state that he does not have, and this is why illocutionary acts have sincerity conditions. A performance of an illocutionary act is *sincere* when the speaker has the mental states that he expresses in the performance of that act, and it is *insincere* otherwise. Sincerity conditions are features intrinsic to illocutionary forces. Thus, each illocutionary force F has a component, called the *sincerity condition of F* , which determines the psychological modes of the mental states that the speaker must have if he is sincerely performing a speech act with that force in a possible context of utterance. Formally, a sincerity condition is then a subset of the set U_τ of all psychological modes of propositional attitudes. For example, a sincerity condition of the force of assertion is the set {belief} which contains the mode of belief. By definition, a speaker who sincerely performs a speech act of the form $F(P)$ with a sincerity condition h must then have all mental states of the form $m(P)$ where $m \in h$.

As in the case of propositional content and preparatory conditions, some sincerity conditions are *determined* by illocutionary point. Thus, for example, all assertive illocutionary forces have the sincerity condition that the speaker believes the propositional content. Indeed, it is not possible for a speaker to represent a state of affairs as actual without *eo ipso* expressing his belief in the existence of that state of affairs. However, the sincerity condition that the speaker is proud of the existence of

13 For example, a preparatory condition of a successful utterance of the sentence "Please, go and speak to the chairman of the committee and tell him I am here" is that the chairman is male.

14 The verb "express" in English is also ambiguous in that speakers are said both to express propositions (which are senses) and to express psychological states such as fear, regret, and intention. These two senses of "express" are also used in this book.

the state of affairs represented by the propositional content is a *special* sincerity condition of the illocutionary force of boasting that is independent of the assertive point.

The fact that in performing a speech act of the form $F(P)$ in a context i , the speaker expresses all mental states $m(P)$ of the mode m determined by the sincerity conditions h of F is shown in language by the existence of *Moore's paradox*.¹⁵ It is paradoxical to try to perform an illocutionary act and to deny simultaneously one of its sincerity conditions. Thus, for example, one cannot say "It is raining and I do not believe it" or "Please, be nice to Mary and I do not want you to be nice to Mary." Such sentences are linguistically odd, because their utterances are analytically unsuccessful.

The set of all sincerity conditions also has the structure of a *Boolean algebra*. The *neutral sincerity condition* 1_ψ is the empty set of psychological modes. It is common to all illocutionary forces. Indeed, every speaker can be said to express all mental states determined by the neutral sincerity condition in every context, since there are no such psychological states. The *absorbent sincerity condition*, on the contrary, is the condition 0_ψ which is identical with the whole set U_τ of modes of propositional attitudes. Only the empty illocutionary force has this absorbent sincerity condition, because no rational speaker can have all kinds of mental states about the same state of affairs in a context of utterance. For example, if a speaker regrets that he did not do something in a context, he cannot be glad that he did not do it in that same context. These mental states have indeed relatively inconsistent conditions of possession. The two Boolean operations on sincerity conditions are the set-theoretical operations of complementation and of union. The *complement* \bar{h}_ψ of a condition h_ψ is the set of all modes of psychological states that do not belong to h_ψ . Thus $\bar{h}_\psi = U_\tau - h_\psi$. Finally, the *union* of two sincerity conditions h_ψ and g_ψ is the sincerity condition $(h_\psi \cup g_\psi)$ containing all psychological modes of h_ψ and of g_ψ . Whenever a speaker performs an illocutionary act $F(P)$ with the union of two sincerity conditions in a context of utterance, he expresses all mental states of the form $m(P)$, where m belongs to at least one of these two sincerity conditions.

Sincerity conditions are expressed in English by expressions such as "alas", "hurrah", and "thank God", whose meanings contribute to determining that the speaker, if he is sincere, possesses certain psychological states in sentences such as "Alas, they are

15 See G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, Cambridge University Press, 1903.

coming", "Thank God, you are saved", and "Hurrah, you did it." For example, two successful utterances in the same context of the declarative sentences "Hurrah, you did it" and "You did it" would serve to assert the same propositional content. However, the illocutionary force of the first utterance would be different from the illocutionary force of the second. Indeed it has the additional sincerity condition that the speaker is happy with the state of affairs represented by the propositional content.

6 Degree of strength

The mental states which enter into the sincerity conditions of speech acts are expressed with different *degrees of strength* depending on the illocutionary force. For example, the degree of strength of the sincerity conditions of a supplication is greater than that of a request, because a speaker who supplicates expresses a stronger desire than a speaker who requests. Similarly, the degree of strength of a testimony is greater than that of a conjecture, because a speaker who testifies something expresses a stronger belief than a speaker who simply makes a conjecture. Degree of strength is in general orally expressed by the intonation contour in English and in other actual natural languages. Thus an increase in the degree of strength of the intonation contour serves in general to increase the degree of strength of the sincerity conditions. Adverbs like "sincerely" and "frankly" also serve to strengthen the degree of strength of the sincerity conditions in sentences such as "Frankly, he is dead", "I sincerely advise you to do it", and "Frankly, please, let's make peace!"

From a theoretical point of view, there is no upper limit on the greatest degree of strength with which the psychological states determined by a sincerity condition can be expressed in an utterance. Indeed the use of syntactic devices which express an increase of degree of strength can in principle be reiterated indefinitely. Thus, for example, there is an infinite sequence of sentences of the form "Frankly, he is dead", "Frankly, frankly, he is dead", "Frankly, frankly, frankly, he is dead", and so on, expressing stronger and stronger assertions. However, it is important to notice that the speaker always expresses with a maximal degree of strength the mental states that he expresses in the performance of an illocutionary act, because all utterances have a finite length.

Direct comparisons of greater and smaller degrees of strength only make sense in general between illocutionary forces with the same illocutionary point. Moreover, there is a certain degree of arbitrariness in the assignment of degrees of strength to illocutionary forces. What is important, from the logical point of view, is to get the relations of greater and smaller strength correctly ordered between illocutionary forces so as to generate adequately the instances of illocutionary entailment which are due to the degree of strength. For this purpose, I will use in illocutionary logic the *Abelian additive group of integers*.¹⁶ Thus, integers will serve to measure the degrees of strength of illocutionary forces. By convention, I will select zero to represent the *neutral degree of strength* that is characteristic of the primitive illocutionary forces of utterances (such as assertion); +1 will represent the next stronger degree of strength (e.g. of testimonies); +2 the next stronger degree of strength (e.g. of solemn acts of swearing that something is the case). Similarly, — 1 will represent the greatest degree of strength smaller than 0 (e.g. of conjectures), and so on for —2, —3.

As Searle and I pointed out,¹⁷ the degree of strength of the sincerity conditions of an illocutionary force F is in general, but not always, identical with the degree of strength with which its illocutionary point is achieved on the propositional content in the case of a successful performance of an illocutionary act of the form $F(P)$. Thus, for example, just as a supplication expresses a stronger desire of the speaker than a request, a supplication is a stronger attempt to get the hearer to do something than is a request. Most actual illocutionary forces like requesting and supplicating have identical degrees of strength of illocutionary point and of sincerity conditions. However, some, but not many, actual illocutionary forces like, for example, the force of commanding, have a greater degree of illocutionary point than of sincerity conditions, which derives from their mode of achievement. A speaker who commands must invoke a position of authority over the hearer. This special mode of achievement of the directive point increases the degree of strength of the illocutionary point, but it does not necessarily increase the degree of strength of the sincerity conditions. Indeed, a speaker can give a command because it is his duty to give that command, although he does not strongly desire to be obeyed. From a logical point of view,

¹⁶ The Abelian additive group of integers is the decidable fragment of the arithmetic of integers whose language contains only the arithmetical constants for the number zero, and the operations of addition and of subtraction. It is a commutative group in the algebraic sense.

¹⁷ See *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic*.

Analysis of the notion of illocutionary force

the *degree of strength of illocutionary point* of an illocutionary force is not an independent component of illocutionary force. It can be measured by the integer which is the maximum of the two numbers measuring the degree of strength of the sincerity conditions and the degree of strength determined by the mode of achievement of that illocutionary force. This is why I will only incidentally mention degrees of strength of illocutionary point in general semantics.

7 There are no other components of illocutionary force

The preceding analysis of illocutionary forces is *complete*, in the sense that there are no other independent components of illocutionary force than illocutionary point, mode of achievement, degree of strength and propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions. Thus two illocutionary forces are identical in illocutionary logic if and only if they are the same with respect to these features. I will explain in detail later the consequences of this *law of identity of illocutionary forces*. As I will show, it is equivalent to an *axiom of extensionality* according to which two illocutionary forces F_1 and F_2 are identical if and only if, for all propositions P, the speech acts $F_1(P)$ and $F_2(P)$ are performed in the same possible contexts of utterance.

Before terminating this section on the componential analysis of illocutionary forces, I will make two general remarks concerning the logical form and the actual realizations of illocutionary forces.

8 The components of illocutionary force are not independent

It is important to notice that, from a logical point of view, an illocutionary force is more than a simple juxtaposition or sequence of its six components. Indeed, components of one type can *determine* components of another type. For example, as I said earlier, some illocutionary points determine propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions. It is not possible for a speaker to achieve these points in a context of utterance without achieving them on a proposition that satisfies these propositional content conditions in that context, without presupposing the propositions which are determined by these preparatory conditions and without expressing the psychological states which are determined by these sincerity conditions. Thus, the declaratory point

authority or power to carry out by his utterance the course of action represented by the propositional content. This is why all illocutionary forces with the declaratory point have such a preparatory condition. Similarly, certain modes of achievement and sincerity conditions determine preparatory conditions, in the sense that it is not possible for a speaker to achieve an illocutionary point with these modes or to express these sincerity conditions without also presupposing these preparatory conditions. For example, the mode of achievement of a testimony (which is to represent a state of affairs in one's capacity as a witness) determines the preparatory condition that the speaker is a witness to the state of affairs represented by the propositional content. Similarly, the sincerity condition of an act of boasting (which is that the speaker is proud of the existence of the state of affairs represented by the propositional content) determines the preparatory condition that that state of affairs is good. Thus, whenever an illocutionary force has a component of one type, it also has all the components of the other types which are determined by that component. (More on this later.)

9 Only some possible components of illocutionary force are actual

Among all possible modes of achievement, and propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions which can be considered in illocutionary logic, only a few are linguistically significant and are needed in order to analyze the actual illocutionary forces expressed or named by the illocutionary force markers and the performative verbs of English and other actual natural languages. As I said earlier, actual illocutionary forces are like *natural kinds of use of human languages*. They serve linguistic purposes that are important to the human societies which speak these languages in their historic and natural environment. For this reason, one must expect all the special modes of achievement and propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions of the actual illocutionary forces of an actual human language to be *linguistically significant* for the community of the speakers of that language at the moment of time that one is considering. Now it is very difficult to define exactly what linguistic significance is. Of course, in our human linguistic games and other forms of life, there are certain features which are pervasive and essential for the use determines the preparatory condition that the speaker has the of language, such as the time,

the place, the speaker and the hearer of a context of utterance, as well as the abilities, the kinship relations, and the relative status of the protagonists of the utterance, what is against and in their interest, and what is good or bad in general. Some of these features are *transcendent* and are realized in all languages. Thus, for example, one can expect the special preparatory conditions that the propositional content represents a state of affairs which is good (or bad) to be actual in all natural languages, if one admits that human beings are *persons* who have ethical concerns.¹⁸ Similarly, one can expect the preparatory conditions determined by the five illocutionary points to be universally linguistically significant, since these illocutionary points are transcendent basic uses of language.

But many features of our uses of language are *immanent* and not transcendent. They are relative to a particular state of advancement or historical environment of a particular human society. In many declarations, for example, the speaker invokes a particular position in a social institution and presupposes that he or the hearer has a certain status in that institution. One can no more expect all natural languages to have the special modes of achievement and preparatory conditions corresponding to these particular uses than one can expect all human societies to have the corresponding historic institutions. As Wittgenstein pointed out,¹⁹ to speak a language is to engage in *conversations* and other *activities* interwoven with various *forms of life*. The speakers and hearers of a language would not understand each other in many cases if they were not sharing the same relevant forms of life and information about the *background* of their utterances. This is why many actual special modes of achievement and propositional content or preparatory conditions in English, French, and German, which serve important purposes in our modern societies, are not linguistically significant for closed linguistic societies living at an earlier historical state of advancement or under a totally different natural environment. Think, for example, of the difficulties that the Spanish priests had at the time of the conquest of Mexico and Peru in getting the Indians to understand declaratory uses of language such as christening and administering other sacraments based on religious institutions which were totally unknown to the Indians. Conversely, preparatory and propositional content conditions

¹⁸ For a philosophical discussion of persons, see P. F. Strawson, *Individuals*, London: Methuen, 1959

¹⁹ See L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1968

which were linguistically significant for other social communities in the past are no longer actually linguistically significant for us in English and other contemporary natural languages. For example, the preparatory condition that the object which is being referred to in the propositional content is above (or below) the height of the speaker's eyes is not linguistically significant in our modern societies, but did serve important purposes in primitive societies of hunters, and was for that reason sometimes linguistically realized in their languages.

Linguistic activities and other social forms of life evolve with time, and one can conceive *linguistic communities* of human beings for whom entirely different features of the world would be linguistically significant (after a nuclear holocaust, for example). By considering all possible modes of achievement, propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions, illocutionary logic leaves space for the analysis of illocutionary forces of utterance in possible natural languages of such human beings.²⁰ As I said earlier, illocutionary logic conceived as the logic of language use is not empirical but *transcendental*. It must consider all possible components of all possible illocutionary forces, and not only the actual components of actual illocutionary forces. Of course, in every particular actual human language, there are only finitely many special basic actual components needed for the analysis of the illocutionary forces expressed or named by the illocutionary force markers or performative verbs of that language. However, general semantics studies the logical structure of language and is only incidentally concerned with particular actual syntactic realizations of that structure.

20 Some linguists, like, for example, D. Zaefferer in the above-mentioned paper, have criticized *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic* by saying that the definitions of the components of illocutionary force are too liberal. Illocutionary logic admits, for example, as possible propositional content conditions functions whose values, for each context, would be a single proposition. My answer to this is that it is better to have too many than not enough possible propositional content conditions. Indeed, illocutionary logic cannot anticipate the history of language and specify in advance which possible conditions could become linguistically significant. Moreover, one must admit that some bizarre possible conditions have sometimes been actualized in actual natural languages. Thus, for example, the obsolete English performative verb "macarize" (to call the hearer happy) names an assertion that is performed in a context if and only if the speaker asserts in that context that the hearer is happy. Here is an example of a very peculiar possible propositional content condition that Zaefferer had not foreseen.

II RECURSIVE DEFINITION OF THE SET OF ALL ILLOCUTIONARY FORCES

On the basis of the preceding componential analysis of illocutionary force, I will adopt in general semantics the following *recursive definition* of the set of all illocutionary forces.²¹

There are five and only five *primitive* illocutionary forces of utterances. These are the *simplest* possible illocutionary forces: they have an illocutionary point, no special mode of achievement of that point, a neutral degree of strength and only the propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions which are determined by their point. All other illocutionary forces are derived from these five primitive illocutionary forces by a finite number of applications of operations, which consist in adding new special components or in increasing or decreasing the degree of strength. These are *complex* illocutionary forces.

The five *primitive illocutionary forces* of utterance are:

1 *The illocutionary force of assertion*

By definition, the force of assertion has the assertive point, the neutral mode of achievement, the neutral propositional content condition, the preparatory condition that the speaker has reasons or evidence for the truth of the propositional content, the sincerity condition that the speaker believes the propositional content, and the neutral degree of strength. This primitive illocutionary force is named in English by the performative verb "assert", and is realized syntactically in the *declarative sentential type*. Simple declarative sentences whose illocutionary force marker is identical with their sentential type serve to make assertions.

2 *The primitive commissive illocutionary force*

By definition, the primitive commissive illocutionary force has the commissive point, the neutral mode of achievement and degree of strength, the condition that the propositional content represents a future course of action of the speaker,²² the

²¹ See my paper "What is an illocutionary force?" in M. Dascal (ed.), *Dialogue and Interdisciplinary Study*, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1985 and my book with J. R. Searle, *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic*, for more explanation of this recursive definition.

preparatory condition that the speaker is capable of carrying out that action, and the sincerity condition that he intends to carry it out. This primitive commissive force is not realized syntactically in a sentential type in English, but is named by the performative verb "commit".

3 *The primitive directive illocutionary force*

By definition, the primitive directive illocutionary force has the directive point, the neutral mode of achievement and degree of strength, the condition that the propositional content represents a future course of action of the hearer, the preparatory condition that the hearer can carry out that action, and the sincerity condition that the speaker desires or wants the hearer to carry it out. This primitive directive force is realized syntactically in English in the *imperative sentential type*. All simple imperative sentences serve to make an attempt with a medium degree of strength to get the hearer to do something.

4 *The illocutionary force of declaration*

By definition, the illocutionary force of declaration has the declaratory illocutionary point, the neutral mode of achievement and degree of strength, the condition that the propositional content represents a present course of action of the speaker, the preparatory condition that the speaker is able to carry out this action in his utterance, and the sincerity condition that the speaker believes, intends and desires to carry out this action. This illocutionary force of declaration is named by the performative verb "declare" and is expressed in utterances of *performative sentences*?²³

22 The fact that speakers can sometimes use with success sentences like (1) "I promise that John will do it" is not incompatible with my analysis of the commissive illocutionary point according to which it determines the condition that the propositional content represents a future action of the speaker. Indeed, when the logical form of utterances of (1) is fully analyzed, one must admit that the speaker who uses (1) in order to make a promise means more than he says. A speaker who utters (1) means indeed to promise that *he will see to it* that John will do something, and this is also a future action of that speaker.

23 In *Foundations*, Searle and I failed to notice that the declaratory point determines the condition that the propositional content represents a present course of action of the speaker which brings into existence a state of affairs. The admission of that propositional content condition is needed both for philosophical and logical reasons. First, it permits me to derive the logical relations existing between the stronger declaratory illocutionary forces, which have the double direction of fit, and the weaker illocutionary forces, which have the simpler words-to-world or world-to-words directions of fit. Thus, for example, the preparatory conditions of declarations are the union of the preparatory conditions of the primitive assertive, commissive, and directive forces.

5 The primitive expressive illocutionary force

By definition, the primitive expressive illocutionary force has the expressive point and the neutral mode of achievement, degree of strength and propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions. It is realized syntactically in English in the type of *exclamatory sentences*. Because the expressive illocutionary point is the only point where variable sincerity conditions are part of the point, there are no exclamatory sentences which express only the primitive expressive illocutionary force, just as there are no performative verbs naming that force.²⁴ This primitive force is like a theoretical construct. In the utterance of exclamatory sentences, speakers always express special psychological states whose mode is determined by the meaning of the adjectives which follow the adverb "how" in their exclamative prefixes. Thus, for example, by saying "How sad he is dead!" a speaker expresses his sadness, while by saying "How glad I am about it", he expresses his gladness. All actual expressive illocutionary forces of utterances are necessarily *complex*, because one cannot express a mental state about the state of affairs represented by a proposition without relating that proposition to the world with a *particular* psychological mode. Thus, from a logical point of view, the primitive expressive illocutionary force is a *limit case*, as is shown by the fact that it is the weakest illocutionary force with the neutral degree of strength.

The five primitive assertive, commissive, directive, declaratory, and expressive illocutionary forces are the simplest illocutionary forces of utterances. All other illocutionary forces are *more complex*; they can be *derived* from these five primitive forces by a finite number of applications of operations which consist in enriching the components of these forces or in changing their degree of strength. Given the nature of illocutionary forces, there are six and only six types of operations on illocutionary forces in language. These six operations consist in *restricting the mode of achievement* of the illocutionary point by imposing a new special mode, *in increasing or decreasing the degree of strength* of the sincerity conditions and in *adding new*

Moreover, it permits me also to simplify the definition of the logical type of sincerity conditions and to keep the simple idea that the propositional contents of illocutionary acts and of the corresponding propositional attitudes are identical.

²⁴ However, one can form performative verbs that name particular expressive illocutionary forces in English by combining the verb "express" with names of psychological states. Thus, for example, successful utterances of sentences such as "I express to you my gratitude for what you have done", "I express my total approval of your conduct", are performative.

special propositional content, preparatory or sincerity conditions. For example, the illocutionary force of a *request* is obtained from the primitive directive force by imposing the special mode of achievement which consists in giving an option of refusal to the hearer. The illocutionary force of a *question* is obtained from that of a request by adding the propositional content condition that the propositional content represents a future speech act of the hearer to the original speaker. A question is a request for an answer. The directive illocutionary force of *suggestion* is obtained from the primitive directive force by decreasing by one the degree of strength. A suggestion to someone to do something is just a weak attempt to get him to do it. The illocutionary force of a *recommendation* is obtained from the directive force of suggestion by adding the preparatory condition that the future course of action represented by the propositional content is good. Finally, the illocutionary force of a *complaint* is obtained from that of assertion by adding the sincerity condition that the speaker is dissatisfied with the state of affairs represented by the propositional content.

As I said earlier, the components of illocutionary force are not independent. Thus, the addition of one component to an illocutionary force can result in the addition of a component of another type. For example, the illocutionary force of boasting, which is obtained from that of assertion by adding the sincerity condition that the speaker takes pride in the existence of the state of affairs which is represented, also has the preparatory condition that that state of affairs is good because the added sincerity condition determines that additional preparatory condition.

As I pointed out, the addition of a component to an illocutionary force can be expressed in English by combining an expression for that component with the marker for that force. Thus, for example, the adverbs "fortunately" and "alas" express respectively the preparatory condition that the state of affairs represented by the propositional content is good, and the sincerity condition that the speaker is unhappy with the existence of that state of affairs, in the sentences (1) "Fortunately, he is dead" and (2) "Alas, he is dead." In these sentences, these adverbs modify the indicative mood of the verb, and serve to compose a syntactically complex marker which expresses the illocutionary force obtained from assertion by adding the condition which they express. Thus, a declarative sentence whose verb is

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modified by "alas," serves to perform an assertive speech act stronger than an assertion. A speaker who uses such a sentence does not simply assert that someone is dead, but also complains or laments about it, since he expresses his unhappiness with the represented state of affairs by his use of "alas".

III THE SEMANTIC CONCEPTS OF SUCCESS AND SATISFACTION

One of the single most important questions which illocutionary logic must answer is: what are the *criteria of identity* of illocutionary acts? By definition, each elementary illocutionary act of the form $F(P)$ has an illocutionary force F and a propositional content P . These serve to determine its conditions of success and of satisfaction and its linguistic purposes. How can illocutionary acts be identified on the basis of these features? In this section, I will first define the conditions of success and of satisfaction of elementary speech acts as they are uniquely determined by the components of their illocutionary force and by their propositional content. On the basis of these definitions, I will next formulate the law of identity for elementary speech acts and explicate the logical types of illocutionary acts and of illocutionary forces.

1 Definition of the notion of success

As I have shown in section 1, every illocutionary force F can be divided into six types of component, each of which determines a special type of condition of success for the speech acts with that force. On the basis of this componential analysis of illocutionary forces, the conditions of success of utterances are naturally defined as follows in general semantics: an illocutionary act of the form $F(P)$ is *performed* in a context of utterance under a semantic interpretation if and only if, in that context, according to that interpretation:

- (1) the speaker *achieves the illocutionary point of F* on the proposition P with the *mode of achievement* of F , and P satisfies the *propositional content conditions* of F in that context;
- (2) the speaker moreover *presupposes* the propositions $h(i, P)$ determined by the *preparatory conditions h* of F ; and
- (3) the speaker also *expresses* with the *degree of strength* of F the mental states of the form $m(P)$ with the *psycho-logical modes m* determined by the *sincerity conditions* of F .

On the logical form of illocutionary acts

According to this view, a speaker, for example, urges the hearer to help him in a context of utterance if and only if:

(1) the point of his utterance is to attempt to get the hearer to help him (illocutionary point);

(2) in this attempt, the speaker leaves an option of refusal to the hearer (mode of achievement);

(3) the propositional content of the utterance is that the hearer will carry out a future action (propositional content conditions);

(4) the speaker presupposes that the hearer is capable of helping him and that he has reasons for helping him (preparatory conditions); and finally,

(5) he expresses with a positive degree of strength a desire that the hearer help him (sincerity conditions and degree of strength).

Now, a speaker can presuppose a proposition that turns out to be false, and express psychological states that he does not have. Thus, successful performances of illocutionary acts can be defective from a logical point of view. I will say, in general semantics, that an illocutionary act of the form $F(P)$ is *non-defectively performed* in a context of utterance if and only if it is successfully performed in that context, and, moreover, the preparatory and sincerity conditions are satisfied. Thus, all non-defective performances of illocutionary acts are successful. But the converse is not true, since the speaker can be insincere or presuppose false propositions in the context of his utterance.²⁵

It follows from the preceding definition of the conditions of success of elementary speech acts that in performing an illocutionary act in the context of an utterance, a speaker performs various *speech acts of other types*. Thus, for example, he must also perform an act of *pronouncing* the sounds or of *writing* the signs of the token of a sentence, an act of *expressing a proposition* with a certain illocutionary force, an act of *achieving* an illocutionary point with a certain mode, and acts of *presupposing* propositions and of *expressing psychological states*.²⁶ Of course, in the context of an utterance, these speech acts are not separate acts that the speaker performs simultaneously, as when, for example, he speaks while

25 J. L. Austin, with his notion of felicity conditions, failed to distinguish between the attempts at performance of illocutionary acts which are successful but defective, and those which are not even successful, and this is why his terminology is not used here.

26 I take it to be an obvious truth that a speaker achieves an illocutionary point on a proposition in the context of use of a natural language only if he performs an utterance act in that context.

playing with a ball and moving from one place to another. Neither do they stand to the performed illocutionary acts in the relation of means to ends as when, for example, the speaker shouts in order to get silence. On the contrary, such speech acts are acts that a speaker characteristically performs in the performance of an illocutionary act.

From the point of view of illocutionary logic, these speech acts are different; their *types* must be distinguished because they have different criteria of identity and are performed under different conditions. Thus, for example, a speaker can utter a sentence without expressing any illocutionary act, if he just wants to repeat that sentence for the pleasure of listening to its sounds. Moreover, a speaker who expresses a proposition P with an illocutionary force F in an utterance could have expressed his intention to perform the illocutionary act $F(P)$ by uttering another sentence. Finally, whenever a preparatory and a sincerity condition are independent of an illocutionary point, a speaker can achieve that illocutionary point on a propositional content without presupposing these preparatory conditions and expressing these sincerity conditions. Thus, the different types of speech acts corresponding to the different types of components of illocutionary force have in general independent conditions of success. This is why illocutionary logic, which studies the logical forms of types of elementary illocutionary act, distinguishes them in its analysis.

However, it is important to point out that, if one considers the tokens (and not the types) of the different speech acts which are characteristically performed in a successful utterance, these *tokens* need not be different in a philosophical theory of action. Indeed, instead of multiplying the tokens of speech acts in a successful utterance, it seems more natural to describe the literal performance of an elementary illocutionary act as follows. The speaker, in the context of an utterance, produces the token of an elementary sentence and thereby performs an *utterance act token* of a certain type. Because certain conditions are fulfilled in the context of that utterance (e.g. the speaker understands the meaning of the uttered sentence and his utterance is serious), that utterance act token constitutes the *token of an act of expressing a proposition P with a certain illocutionary force F* . Moreover, because further conditions obtain (the context is appropriate for the performance of illocutionary act $F(P)$), the token of that act of expressing the proposition P with the illocutionary force F is also identical in the context of that utterance with (1) the *token of an act of achieving*

the illocutionary point of F on P with the mode of achievement of F ; (2) the token of an act of presupposing the propositions determined by the preparatory conditions of F ; and (3) the token of an act of expressing the psychological states $m(P)$ determined by the sincerity conditions of F . According to this view, in the end all the tokens of the different types of speech acts that are performed in the performance of an illocutionary act in a context are identical with the token of the utterance act performed by the speaker in that context. That utterance act token, as it stands, is the illocutionary act token in that context.

There has been much controversy in contemporary philosophy of action on the criteria of identity of action tokens. Some philosophers, like Goldman, tend to multiply, and others like D. Davidson to diminish, the number of action tokens with their criteria of identity.²⁷ As regards the speech acts that are characteristically performed in the performance of illocutionary acts, I am more in agreement with the diminution rather than with the unnecessary multiplication of their tokens in contexts of utterance. In my view, there are many different types of speech act that are characteristically performed in the performance of an illocutionary act, but all the tokens of these acts are identical. There is then a single token of speech act in the context of a successful utterance.

2 Definition of the notion of satisfaction

The general notion of *satisfaction* is based on the notion of *correspondence*. Elementary illocutionary acts with a propositional content, like all intentional actions, are *directed* at objects and states of affairs in the world. They are satisfied *only if* their propositional content represents correctly how things are (at certain past, present, or future moments of time or intemporally) in the world. As I pointed out earlier, the existence of a correspondence between the propositional content of an utterance and the world is a necessary, but not always a sufficient, condition for the satisfaction of that utterance. Indeed, in order that a speech act be satisfied, the correspondence between its propositional content and the world must be established following the proper direction of fit of its illocutionary force. Thus, the *conditions of satisfaction* of an elementary illocutionary act of the form $F(P)$ are a *function* of both

²⁷ See D. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, Oxford University Press, 1984 and A. I. Goldman, *A Theory of Human Action*, Princeton University Press, 1970.

the *truth conditions* of its propositional content, and of the *direction of fit* of its illocutionary force.

First, when an illocutionary act has only the words-to-world direction of fit, it is *satisfied* in a context of utterance under an interpretation if and only if its propositional content is *true* in that context according to that interpretation. Indeed, in such a case, the success of fit between language and the world is achieved by the fact that the propositional content corresponds to a state of affairs existing (in general) independently in the world. Thus the conditions of satisfaction of assertive illocutionary acts are identical with the truth conditions of their propositional content. This is why the *truth predicates* are commonly used in ordinary language to assess success in achieving the words-to-world direction of fit. One can speak of true assertions, reports, and testimonies as well as of true propositions.

Second, when an illocutionary act has the world-to-words direction of fit, it is *satisfied* in a context of utterance under an interpretation if and only if the speaker or hearer *makes* its propositional content *true* in that context *in order* to satisfy that illocutionary act. Unlike assertive utterances, the commissive and directive utterances have *self-referential* conditions of satisfaction that are not independent of these utterances. An assertion is true if and only if its propositional content corresponds to a state of affairs that exists in the world, no matter how that state of affairs got into existence. But, strictly speaking, a promise is *kept* or a request is *granted* only if the speaker or hearer carries out in the world a future course of action because of the promise or the request. This is why one cannot use the truth predicates in order to assess success in achieving the world-to-words direction of fit. Thus, one speaks of requests which are granted or refused, and of promises which are kept or broken, and not of true or false requests or promises.

Illocutionary acts with the double direction of fit also have the two simpler directions of fit. Consequently, their conditions of satisfaction are also not independent of their performance. Thus, a declaration is *satisfied* in a context if and only if the speaker performs the action represented by its propositional content by way of representing himself as performing that action in his utterance. On this account, a declaration could not be satisfied if it was unsuccessful, just as, conversely, a declaration could not be successful if it was not satisfied.

In sum, in the case of satisfaction of an elementary illocutionary act with the double or the world-to-words direction

of fit, the success of fit is achieved by the fact that the speaker or hearer makes the propositional content true in the world in order to satisfy the performed illocutionary act. Thus it is a consequence of the direction of fit of commissive, directive, and declaratory utterances that their satisfaction implies both the truth of their propositional content and their success.²⁸ Illocutionary acts with the empty direction of fit do not, properly speaking, have conditions of satisfaction. Indeed, in the performance of such speech acts, the speaker does not express a proposition with the aim of achieving a success of fit between language and the world. He only means to express his propositional attitudes about the state of affairs represented by the propositional content, so that there is no question of success or failure of fit. For this reason, one cannot *stricto sensu* say that expressive illocutionary acts are or are not satisfied. One can only say that they have a true (or false) propositional content.²⁹ However, for the sake of verbal commodity, I will go on attributing conditions of satisfaction to all types of elementary illocutionary acts of the form $F(P)$. Where the force F is expressive, my saying that the illocutionary act $F(P)$ is satisfied in a context of utterance will just be an indirect convenient way of saying that its proposition P is true in that context.

3 *The law of identity for illocutionary acts*

In *Foundations*, Searle and I did not specify complete criteria of identity for elementary illocutionary acts. One of the reasons for this was that we developed a logic of the illocutionary forces of utterances without developing a logic of their propositional contents. In this book, on the contrary, I have presented a logical theory of propositions adequate for illocutionary acts, and this enables me now to specify complete criteria of identity for

²⁸ As Searle and I pointed out, one could adopt a simpler definition of the conditions of satisfaction of elementary illocutionary acts with the world-to-words direction of fit, according to which these conditions of satisfaction are identical with the truth conditions of their propositional contents. On such a view, these truth conditions conditions would be self-referential. Thus, one could say that the propositional content of an order is that the hearer performs a future action by way of obeying that order and similarly for the other illocutionary forces. Such a definition of the propositional content of illocutionary acts with the world-to-words direction of fit will *not* be advocated here for two reasons. First, from a linguistic point of view, it has the drawback of assuming a difference in the propositional content of utterances of sentences like "Paul will come tomorrow" and "Paul, please, come tomorrow!" Second, from a logical point of view, such a construction violates the natural constraints of the modal theory of types of intensional logic and is likely to lead to paradoxes and inconsistency.

²⁹ See J. R. Searle, *Intentionally*, Cambridge University Press, 1983.

elementary illocutionary acts. In general semantics, I will adopt *an axiom of extensionality for illocutionary acts*, according to which elementary illocutionary acts with the same propositional content and the same conditions of success are identical. According to this view, two elementary speech acts of the form $F(P)$ are identical if and only if their propositional contents are identical, and they are performed in the same possible contexts of utterance. This axiom of extensionality is supported by philosophical evidence having to do with the very notion of an illocutionary act. As I have explained earlier, illocutionary acts are natural kinds of use of language which serve linguistic purposes in relating propositions to the world. From a philosophical point of view, two different illocutionary acts must serve different linguistic purposes. Moreover, different linguistic purposes should be either achievable under different conditions, or directed at states of affairs representable or obtainable under different conditions. Hence the requirement of identical success conditions and propositional contents from identical speech acts.

From a logical point of view, the acceptance of the axiom of extensionality permits me to identify set-theoretically each *elementary illocutionary act* of the form $F(P)$ with the ordered pair consisting of its propositional content P and of its conditions of success. For the purposes of formalization, the *success conditions* of an illocutionary act are identical with the function which associates success with a context if and only if the speaker performs that act in that context. On this account, the set of all elementary illocutionary acts is included in the set $(U_p \times U_s^I)$ of all ordered pairs of propositions and of functions from contexts into success values.

Notice that this explication of the notion of an illocutionary act gives an account of certain cognitive aspects of sentence meaning. It explains why one can understand which illocutionary act is expressed by an utterance without knowing whether that utterance is successful or satisfied. When, for example, one does not know whether the speaker has the authority which is necessary to perform that act in his utterance, one does not know exactly in which context that utterance takes place. Consequently, one cannot apply the function representing its success conditions, since one does not know the actual context that it takes as argument. However, if one masters that function, it is clear that one cannot understand which illocutionary act is expressed by an utterance

without knowing *eo ipso* which conditions must obtain in a possible context if that act is successfully performed and satisfied in that context.

As each illocutionary force F associates with each proposition P an elementary speech act of the form $F(P)$, it is a consequence of my axiom of extensionality that *illocutionary forces* can be identified with functions from propositions into ordered pairs of propositions and of success conditions. Thus, I will construct each illocutionary force F in general semantics as the function which gives as value, for each proposition P , the ordered pair which consists of that proposition and of the function that associates with a context the success value of the illocutionary act $F(P)$ in that context. As will become clear later, the adoption of the axiom of extensionality allows for a major simplification of illocutionary logic. One can, for example, derive from that axiom the other laws of identity for illocutionary forces.

Because of the logical relations existing between illocutionary acts and mental states, and of the strong parallelisms existing between illocutionary and psychological commitments,³⁰ I will also adopt in general semantics a *law of extensionality for propositional attitudes* (such as beliefs, intentions, or desires). I will say that two propositional attitudes are identical if and only if they have the same conditions of possession and the same propositional content. Thus, I will identify a propositional attitude (such as a belief that P or a regret that P) with the ordered pair whose first term is the proposition P and whose second term is the function which represents its condition of possession. Such a function associates truth with a context if and only if the speaker possesses that propositional attitude in that context.

³⁰ See chapter 5 of *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic*.