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The concept of illocutionary acts was introduced into linguistics by the philosopher J. L. Austin in his investigation of the various aspects of speech acts. In Austin's picture, locution is what was said and meant, illocution is what was done, and perlocution is what happened as a result. When someone says "There's salt?" at the dinner table, the illocutionary act is a request: please give me some salt even if the locutionary act (the literal phrase) was to ask a question about the presence of salt. The perlocutionary act (the real effect), may be to cause someone to pass the salt.

Overview The notion of an illocutionary act is closely linked to Austin's doctrine of so-called performative expressions and constancy: an expression is performative if, and only if it is issued in the course of performing an action (1975, 5), by which, again, Austin means the performance of an illocutionary act (Austin 1975, 6 n2, 133). According to Austin's original exhibition in *How to Do Things With Words*, an illocutionary act is an act: (1) for the performance of which I must make it clear to someone else that the act is performed (Austin speaks of the guarantee of absorption), and (2) the performance of which involves the production of what Austin calls conventional consequences as, for example, rights, commitments or obligations (Austin 1975, 116f., 121, 139). So, for example, to make a promise I must make it clear to my audience that the act I am performing

is the realization of a promise, and in carrying out the act I will be undertaking a conventional obligation to do the promised thing: the promise will understand what it means to make a promise and keep it. Thus, promising is an illocutionary act in the present sense. Since Austin's death, the term has been defined differently by several authors. One way of thinking about the difference between an illocutionary act (e.g., a declaration, command, or a promise), and a perlocutionary act (for example, a listener's reaction) is to observe how, in the first case, uttering the object — for example, I promise you — (and assuming that all other necessary characteristics of the performative situation belong), then the act occurred : a promise has been made. The perlocutionary result (as the promise reacts) may be acceptance, or skepticism, or disbelief, but none of these reactions alter the illocutionary force of the statement: the promise was made. That is, in each case, a statement, command or promise has necessarily occurred by virtue of the pronouncement itself, whether the listener believes or acts on the statement, command or promise or not. On the other hand, with a perlocutionary act, the object of the expression did not occur unless the listener considers it so — for example, if someone pronounces, I insult you, or I persuade you — it is not assumed that an insult necessarily occurred, nor did persuasion necessarily occur, the listener were adequately offended or persuaded by the expression. Approaches to defining illocutionary act While Austin used performative to talk about certain types of expressions as having strength, his term illocution instead of naming a quality or aspect of all expressions. They will have a locutionary meaning or meaning, an illocutionary force, and a perlocutionary result. This approach has encouraged the view that even true/false police statements have illocutiva force (as in I through the state and we affirm) and even the performers can be accurate as true/false statements (as a guilty verdict can be right or wrong). It is also often emphasized that Austin introduced the illocutionary act through a contrast to other aspects of speaking. The illocutionary act, he says, is an act performed by saying something, as contrasted with a locutionary act, the act of saying something, and also contrasted with a perlocutionary act, an act performed by saying something. Austin, however, eventually abandoned the test in saying/saying (1975, 123). According to the conception adopted by Bach and Harnish in 'Acts of Linguistic Communication and Speech' (1979), an illocutionary act is an attempt at communication, which they analyze as an expression of an attitude. Another conception of the illocutionary act dates back to the book Meaning of Schiffer (1972, 103), in which the illocutionary act is represented only as the act of meaning something. According to a generalized opinion, an adequate and useful account of illocutivos acts was provided by John Searle (e.g., 1969, 1975, 1979). In recent years, however, it has been questioned whether Searle's account is well founded. A wide criticism is at FC Doerge 2006. Collections of articles examining Searle's account are: Burkhardt 1990 and Lepore /van Gulick 1991. Classes of illocutionary acts Searle (1975) established the following classification of illocutionary speech acts: assertive = speech acts that commit a speaker to the truth of express proposition guidelines = speech acts that should cause the listener to take a particular action, for example, requests, commands and commissive advice = speech acts that commit a speaker to some future action, for example, promises and expressive oaths = acts of speech that express about the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the proposition, for example, congratulations, apologies and statements of thanks = speech acts that change reality according to the proposition of the statement, for example, baptized, pronouncing someone guilty or declaring someone husband and wife The classification is intended to be exhaustive , but the classes are not mutually exclusive : The well-known example of John Austin I bet you will rain five pounds is both directive and comme. Illocutional force Several speech theorists, including Austin himself, make use of the notion of an illocutionary force. Austin's original account, the notion remains quite uncertain. [according to agreement who?] Some Austin followers, such as David Holdcroft, see the illocutionary force as the property of an expression to be made with the intention of performing a certain illocutionary act —rather than how the act's successful performance (which should require even more appropriateness of certain circumstances). According to this conception, the utterance of I bet that you will rain may well have an illocutionary force even if the recipient does not hear. However, Bach and Harnish assume illocutionary force if, and only if this or that illocutionary act is actually (successfully) accomplished. According to this conception, the recipient must have heard and understood that the speaker intends to make a bet with them so that the pronouncement has 'illocutionary force'. If we adopt the notion of illocutiva force as an aspect of meaning, then it seems that the (intended) 'force' of certain phrases, or expressions, is not very obvious. If someone says: It's definitely cold here, there are several different acts that can be directed by the utterance. The utterance may intend to describe the room, in which case the illocutionary force would be to describe. But she may also want to criticize someone who should have kept the room warm. Or it could be a request for someone to close the window. These forces may be interrelated: it may be by stating that the temperature is too cold that another person is criticized. Such performance of an illocutionary act through the performance of another is referred to as an indirect act of speech. The illocutionary force that indicates devices (IFIDs) Searle and Vanderveken (1985) often talk about what they call illocutionary force-indicating devices (IFIDs). These must be elements, or aspects of linguistic devices that indicate also (depending on which are adopted conceptions of illocutionary force and illocutionary act) that the expression is made with a certain illocutionary force, or else that constitutes the realization of a certain illocutionary act. In English, for example, the interrogator must indicate that the expression is (intended as) a question; the directive indicates that the expression is (intended as) an illocutionary act directive (an order, a request, etc.); the words I promise should indicate that the pronouncement is (intended as) a promise. Possible IFIDs in English include: word order, stress, intonation contour, punctuation, verb humor, and performative verbs. Illocutionary denials Another notion That Searle and Vanderveken use is that of an illocutionary denial. The difference from such illocutional denial to a propositional denial can be explained by reference to the difference between I do not promise to come and Promise not to come. The first is an illocutionary denial—the does not deny the promise. The second is a propositional denial. In the view of and Vanderveken, illocutionary denials change the type of illocutionary act. See also Adjustment direction J. L. Austin John Searle Linguistics Performative Expression Act Perlocutionary Act Pragmatic Semantic Speech References Alston, William P.. Illocutivos acts and meaning of sentence. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2000 Austin, L. John. How to do things with words. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1975[1962] ISBN 0-19-281205-X Burkhardt, Armin (ed.). Acts of Speech, Meaning and Intentions: Critical Approaches to Philosophy by John R. Searle. Berlin / New York 1990 ISBN 0-89925-357-1 Doerge, Christoph Friedrich. Illocutionary Acts - Austin's Account and What Searle Made Of Him. 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