9 The Structure of Illocutionary Acts

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The ground has now been prepared for a full dress analysis of the illocutionary act. I shall take promising as my initial quarry, because as illocutionary acts go, it is fairly formal and well articulated; like a mountainous terrain, it exhibits its geographical features starkly. But we shall see that it has more than local interest, and many of the lessons to be learned from it are of general application.

In order to give an analysis of the illocutionary act of promising I shall ask what conditions are necessary and sufficient for the act of promising to have been successfully and nondefectively performed in the utterance of a given sentence. I shall attempt to answer this question by stating these conditions as a set of propositions such that the conjunction of the members of the set entails the proposition that a speaker made a successful and non-defective promise, and the proposition that the speaker made such a promise entails this conjunction. Thus each condition will be a necessary condition for the successful and non-defective performance of the act of promising, and taken collectively the set of conditions will be a sufficient condition for such a performance. There are various kinds of possible defects of illocutionary acts but not all of these defects are sufficient to vitiate the act in its entirety. In some cases, a condition may indeed be intrinsic to the notion of the act in question and not satisfied in a given case, and yet the act will have been performed nonetheless. In such cases I say the act was "defective". My notion of a defect in an illocutionary act is closely related to Austin's notion of an "infelicity".[1] Not all of the conditions are logically independent of each other. Sometimes it is worthwhile to state a condition separately even though it is, strictly speaking, entailed by another.

If we get such a set of conditions we can extract from them a set of rules for the use of the illocutionary force indicating device. The method here is analogous to discovering the rules of chess by asking oneself what are the necessary and sufficient conditions under which one can be said to have correctly moved a knight or castled or checkmated a player, etc. We are in the position of someone who has learned to play chess without ever having the rules formulated and who wants such a formulation. We learned how to play the game of illocutionary acts, but in general it was done without an explicit formulation of the rules, and the first step in getting such a formulation is to set out the conditions for the performance of a particular illocutionary act. Our inquiry will therefore serve a double philosophical purpose. By stating a set of conditions for the performance of a particular illocutionary act we shall have offered an explication of that notion and shall also have paved the way for the second step, the formulation of the rules.

So described, my enterprise must seem to have a somewhat archaic and period flavor. One of the most important insights of recent work in the philosophy of language is that most non-technical concepts in ordinary language lack absolutely strict rules. The concepts of *game*, or *chair*, or *promise* do not have absolutely knock-down necessary and sufficient conditions, such that unless they are satisfied something cannot be a game or a chair or a promise, and given that they are satisfied in a given case that case must be, cannot but be, a game or a chair or a promise. But this insight into the looseness of our concepts, and its attendant jargon of "family resemblance"[2] should not lead us into a rejection of the very enterprise of philosophical analysis; rather the conclusion to be drawn is that certain forms of analysis, especially analysis into necessary and sufficient conditions, are likely to involve (in varying degrees) idealization of the concept analyzed. In the present case, our analysis will be directed at the center of the concept of promising. I am ignoring marginal, fringe, and partially defective promises. This approach has the consequence that counter-examples can be produced of ordinary uses of the word "promise" which do not fit the analysis. Some of these counter-examples I shall discuss. Their existence does not 'refute' the analysis, rather they require an explanation of why and how they depart from the paradigm cases of promise making.

Furthermore, in the analysis I confine my discussion to full blown explicit promises and ignore promises made by elliptical turns of phrase, hints, metaphors, etc. I also ignore promises made in the course of uttering sentences which contain elements irrelevant to the making of the promise. I am also dealing only with categorical promises and ignoring hypothetical promises, for if we get an account of categorical promises it can easily be extended to deal with hypothetical ones. In short, I am going to deal only with a simple and idealized case. This method, one of constructing idealized models, is analogous to the sort of theory construction that goes on in most sciences, e.g., the construction of economic models, or accounts of the solar system which treat planets as points. Without abstraction and idealization there is no systematization.

Another difficulty with the analysis arises from my desire to state the conditions without certain forms of circularity. I want to give a list of conditions for the performance of a certain illocutionary act, which do not themselves mention the performance of any illocutionary acts. I need to satisfy this condition in order to offer a model for explicating illocutionary acts in general; otherwise I should simply be showing the relation between different illocutionary acts. However, although there will be no reference to illocutionary acts, certain institutional concepts, such as e.g."obligation", will appear in the analysans as well as in the analysandum; I am not attempting to reduce institutional facts to brute facts; and thus there is no reductionist motivation in the analysis. Rather, I want to analyze certain statements of institutional facts, statements of the form "*X* made a promise", into statements containing such notions as intentions, rules, and states of affairs specified by the rules. Sometimes those states of affairs will themselves involve institutional facts.[3]

In the presentation of the conditions I shall first consider the case of a sincere promise and then show how to modify the conditions to allow for insincere promises. As our inquiry is semantical rather than syntactical, I shall simply assume the existence of grammatically well-formed sentences.

3.1. HOW TO PROMISE: A COMPLICATED WAY

Given that a speaker S utters a sentence T in the presence of a hearer H, then, in the literal utterance of T, S sincerely and nondefectively promises that p to H if and only if the following conditions 1–9 obtain:

(1) *Normal input and output conditions obtain.*

I use the terms "input" and "output" to cover the large and indefinite range of conditions under which any kind of serious and literal[4] linguistic communication is possible. "Output" covers the conditions for intelligible speaking and "input" covers the conditions of under-

standing. Together they include such things as that the speaker and hearer both know how to speak the language; both are conscious of what they are doing; they have no physical impediments to communication, such as deafness, aphasia, or laryngitis; and they are not acting in a play or telling jokes, etc. It should be noted that this condition excludes *both* impediments to communication such as deafness and also parasitic forms of communication such as telling jokes or acting in a play.

(2) *S expresses the proposition that p in the utterance of T.*

This condition isolates the proposition from the rest of the speech act and enables us to concentrate on the peculiarities of promising as a kind of illocutionary act in the rest of the analysis.

(3) *In expressing that p, S predicates a future act A of S.*

In the case of promising the scope of the illocutionary force indicating device includes certain features of the proposition. In a promise an act must be predicated of the speaker and it cannot be a past act. I cannot promise to have done something, and I cannot promise that someone else will do something (although I can promise to see that he will do it). The notion of an act, as I am construing it for the present purposes, includes refraining from acts, performing series of acts, and may also include states and conditions: I may promise not to do something, I may promise to do something repeatedly or sequentially, and I may promise to be or remain in a certain state or condition. I call conditions 2 and 3 the propositional content conditions. Strictly speaking, since expressions and not acts are predicated of objects, this condition should be formulated as follows: In expressing that *P*, *S* predicates an expression of *S*, the meaning of which expression is such that if the expression is true of the object it is true that the object will perform a future act *A*.[5] But that is rather long-winded, so I have resorted to the above metonymy.

(4) *H would prefer S's doing A to his not doing A, and S believes H would prefer his doing A to his not doing A.*

One crucial distinction between promises on the one hand and threats on the other is that a promise is a pledge to do something for you, not to you; but a threat is a pledge to do something to you, not for you. A promise is defective if the thing promised is something the promisee does not want done; and it is further defective if the promisor does not believe the promisee wants it done, since a non-defective promise must be intended as a promise and not as a threat or warning. Furthermore, a promise, unlike an invitation, normally requires some sort of occasion or situation that calls for the promise. A crucial feature of such occasions or situations seems to be that the promisee wishes (needs, desires, etc.) that something be done, and the promisor is aware of this wish (need, desire, etc.). I think both halves of this double condition are necessary in order to avoid fairly obvious counter-examples.[6]

One can, however, think of apparent counter-examples to this condition as stated. Suppose I say to a lazy student, "If you don't hand in your paper on time I promise you I will give you a failing grade in the course". Is this utterance a promise? I am inclined to think not; we would more naturally describe it as a warning or possibly even a threat. But why, then, is it possible to use the locution "I promise" in such a case? I think we use it here because "I promise" and "I hereby promise" are among the strongest illocutionary force indicating devices for *commitment* provided by the English language. For that reason we often use these expressions in the performance of speech acts which are not strictly speaking promises, but in which we wish to emphasize the degree of our commitment. To illustrate this, consider another apparent counter-example to the analysis along different lines. Sometimes one hears people say "I promise" when making an emphatic assertion. Suppose, for example, I accuse you of having stolen the money. I say, "You stole that money, didn't you?". You reply, "No, I didn't, I promise you I didn't". Did you make a promise in this case? I find it very unnatural to describe your utterance as a promise. This utterance would be more aptly described as an emphatic denial, and we can explain the occurrence of the illocutionary force indicating device "I promise" as derivative

from genuine promises and serving here as an expression adding emphasis to your denial.

In general, the point stated in condition 4 is that if a purported promise is to be non-defective, the thing promised must be something the hearer wants done, or considers to be in his interest, or would prefer being done to not being done, etc.; and the speaker must be aware of or believe or know, etc., that this is the case. I think a more elegant and exact formulation of this condition would probably require the introduction of technical terminology of the welfare economics sort.

(5) *It is not obvious to both S and H that S will do A in the normal course of events.*

This condition is an instance of a general condition on many different kinds of illocutionary acts to the effect that the act must have a point. For example, if I make a request to someone to do something which it is obvious that he is already doing or is about to do quite independently of the request, then my request is pointless and to that extent defective. In an actual speech situation, listeners, knowing the rules for performing illocutionary acts, will assume that this condition is satisfied. Suppose, for example, that in the course of a public speech I say to a member of my audience, "Look here, Smith, pay attention to what I am saying". In interpreting this utterance, the audience will have to assume that Smith has not been paying attention, or at any rate that it is not obvious that he has been paying attention, that the question of his not paying attention has arisen in some way, because a condition for making non-defective request is that it is not obvious that the hearer is doing or about to do the thing requested. Similarly with promises. It is out of order for me to promise to do something that it is obvious to all concerned that I am going to do anyhow. If I do make such a promise, the only way my audience can interpret my utterance is to assume that I believe that it is not obvious that I am going to do the thing promised. A happily married man who promises his wife he will not desert her in the next week is likely to provide more anxiety than comfort.

Parenthetically, I think this condition is an instance of the sort of phenomenon stated in

Zipf's law. I think there is operating in our language, as in most forms of human behavior, a principle of least effort, in this case, a principle of maximum illocutionary ends with minimum phonetic effort; and I think condition 5 is an instance of it.

I call conditions such as 4 and 5 *preparatory conditions*. Though they do not state the essential feature, they are *sine quibus non* of happy promising.

(6) *S intends to do A.*

The distinction between sincere and insincere promises is that, in the case of sincere promises, the speaker intends to do the act promised; in the case of insincere promises, he does not intend to do the act. Also, in sincere promises, the speaker believes it is possible for him to do the act (or to refrain from doing it), but I think the proposition that he intends to do it entails that he thinks it is possible to do (or refrain from doing) it, so I am not stating that as an extra condition. I call this condition the *sincerity condition*.

(7) *S intends that the utterance of T will place him under an obligation to do A.*

The essential feature of a promise is that it is the undertaking of an obligation to perform a certain act. I think that this condition distinguishes promises (and other members of the same family such as vows) from other kinds of illocutionary acts. Notice that in the statement of the condition, we only specify the speaker's intention; further conditions will make clear how that intention is realized. It is clear, however, that having this intention is a necessary condition of making a promise, for if a speaker can demonstrate that he did not have this intention in a given utterance he can prove that the utterance was not a promise. We know, for example, that Mr Pickwick did not really promise to marry the woman because we know he did not have the appropriate intention. I call this the *essential condition*.

(8) *S intends (i-1) to produce in H the knowledge (K) that the utterance of T is to count as placing S under an obligation to do A. S intends to produce K by means of the recognition of i-1, and he intends i-1 to be recog-*

nized in virtue of (by means of) H's knowl-
edge of the meaning of T.

This captures our amended Gricean analysis of what it is for the speaker to mean the utterance as a promise. The speaker intends to produce a certain illocutionary effect by means of getting the hearer to recognize his intention to produce that effect, and he also intends this recognition to be achieved in virtue of the fact that the meaning of the item he utters conventionally associates it with producing that effect. In this case the speaker assumes that the semantic rules (which determine the meaning) of the expressions uttered are such that the utterance counts as the undertaking of an obligation. The rules, in short, as we shall see in the next condition, enable the intention in the essential condition 7 to be achieved by making the utterance. And the articulation of that achievement, the way the speaker gets the job done, is described in condition 8.

(9) *The semantical rules of the dialect spoken by S and H are such that T is correctly and sincerely uttered if and only if conditions 1–8 obtain.*[7]

This condition is intended to make clear that the sentence uttered is one which, by the semantical rules of the language, is used to make a promise. Taken together with condition 8, it eliminates counter-examples like the captured soldier example considered earlier. The meaning of a sentence is entirely determined by the meaning of its elements, both lexical and syntactical. And that is just another way of saying that the rules governing its utterance are determined by the rules governing its elements. We shall soon attempt to formulate the rules which govern the element or elements which serve to indicate that the illocutionary force is that of a promise.

I am construing condition 1 broadly enough so that together with the other conditions it guarantees that H understands the utterance, that is, together with 2–9 it entails that the illocutionary effect K is produced in H by means of H's recognition of S's intention to produce it, which recognition is achieved in virtue of H's knowledge of the meaning of T. This condition could always be stated as a separate condition, and if the reader thinks that I am asking too

much of my input and output conditions that they should guarantee that the hearer understands the utterance, then he should treat this as a separate condition.

3.2. INSINCERE PROMISES

So far we have considered only the case of a sincere promise. But insincere promises are promises nonetheless, and we now need to show how to modify the conditions to allow for them. In making an insincere promise the speaker does not have all the intentions he has when making a sincere promise; in particular he lacks the intention to perform the act promised. However, he purports to have that intention. Indeed, it is because he purports to have intentions which he does not have that we describe his act as insincere.

A promise involves an expression of intention, whether sincere or insincere. So to allow for insincere promises, we need only to revise our conditions to state that the speaker takes responsibility for having the intention rather than stating that he actually has it. A clue that the speaker does take such responsibility is the fact that he could not say without absurdity, e.g., "I promise to do A but I do not intend to do A". To say, "I promise to do A" is to take responsibility for intending to do A, and this condition holds whether the utterance was sincere or insincere. To allow for the possibility of an insincere promise, then we have only to revise condition 6 so that it states not that the speaker intends to do A, but that he takes responsibility for intending to do A, and to avoid the charge of circularity, I shall phrase this as follows:

(6a) *S intends that the utterance of T will make him responsible for intending to do A.*

Thus amended (and with "sincerely" dropped from our analysandum and from condition 9), our analysis is neutral on the question whether the promise was sincere or insincere.

3.3. RULES FOR THE USE OF THE ILLOCUTIONARY FORCE INDICATING DEVICE

Our next task is to extract from our set of conditions a set of rules for the use of the indicator

of illocutionary force. Obviously, not all of our conditions are equally relevant to this task. Condition 1 and conditions of the forms 8 and 9 apply generally to all kinds of normal illocutionary acts and are not peculiar to promising. Rules for the illocutionary force indicator for promising are to be found corresponding to conditions 2–7.

The semantical rules for the use of any illocutionary force indicating device *Pr* for promising are:

Rule 1. Pr is to be uttered only in the context of a sentence (or larger stretch of discourse) *T,* the utterance of which predicates some future act *A* of the speaker *S*. I call this the *propositional content rule.* It is derived from the propositional content conditions 2 and 3.

Rule 2. Pr is to be uttered only if the hearer *H* would prefer *S*'s doing *A* to his not doing *A*, and *S* believes *H* would prefer *S*'s doing *A* to his not doing *A*.

Rule 3. Pr is to be uttered only if it is not obvious to both *S* and *H* that *S* will do *A* in the normal course of events. I call rules 2 and 3 *preparatory rules,* and they are derived from the preparatory conditions 4 and 5.

Rule 4. Pr is to be uttered only if *S* intends to do *A*. I call this the *sincerity rule,* and it is derived from the sincerity condition 6.

Rule 5. The utterance of *Pr* counts as the undertaking of an obligation to do *A*. I call this the *essential rule.*

These rules are ordered: rules 2–5 apply only if rule 1 is satisfied, and rule 5 applies only if rules 2 and 3 are satisfied as well. We shall see later on that some of these rules seem to be just particular manifestations as regards promising of very general underlying rules for illocutionary acts; and ultimately we should be able, as it were, to factor them out, so that they are not finally to be constructed as rules exclusively for the illocutionary force indicating device for promising as opposed to other types of illocutionary force indicating devices.

Notice that whereas rules 1–4 take the form of quasi-imperatives, i.e., they are of the form: utter *Pr* only if *x;* rule 5 is of the form: the utterance of *Pr* counts as *Y.* Thus, rule 5 is of the kind peculiar to systems of constitutive rules which I discussed in chapter 2.

Notice also that the rather tiresome analogy with games is holding up remarkably well. If we ask ourselves under what conditions a player could be said to move a knight correctly, we would find preparatory conditions such as that it must be his turn to move, as well as the essential condition stating the actual positions the knight can move to. There are even sincerity conditions for competitive games, such as that one does not cheat or attempt to 'throw' the game. Of course, the corresponding sincerity 'rules' are not rules peculiar to this or that game but apply to competitive games generally. There usually are no propositional content rules for games, because games do not in general represent states of affairs.

To which elements, in an actual linguistic description of a natural language would rules such as 1–5 attach? Let us assume for the sake of argument that the general outlines of the Chomsky-Fodor-Katz-Postal[8] account of syntax and semantics are correct. Then it seems to me extremely unlikely that illocutionary act rules would attach directly to elements (formatives, morphemes) generated by the syntactic component, except in a few cases such as the imperative. In the case of promising, the rules would more likely attach to some output of the combinatorial operations of the semantic component. Part of the answer to this question would depend on whether we can reduce all illocutionary acts to some very small number of basic illocutionary types. If so, it would then seem somewhat more likely that the deep structure of a sentence would have a simple representation of its illocutionary type.

3.4. EXTENDING THE ANALYSIS

If this analysis is of any general interest beyond the case of promising, then it would seem that these distinctions should carry over into other types of illocutionary act, and I think a little reflection will show that they do. Consider, e.g., giving an order. The preparatory conditions include that the speaker should be in a position of authority over the hearer, the sincerity condition is that the speaker wants the ordered act done, and the essential condition has to do with the fact that the speaker intends the utterance as an attempt to get the hearer to do the act. For

assertions, the preparatory conditions include the fact that the hearer must have some basis for supposing the asserted proposition is true, the sincerity condition is that he must believe it to be true, and the essential condition has to do with the fact that the proposition is presented as representing an actual state of affairs. Greetings are a much simpler kind of speech act, but even here some of the distinctions apply. In the utterance of "Hello" there is no propositional content and no sincerity condition. The preparatory condition is that the speaker must have just encountered the hearer, and the essential rule is that the utterance counts as a courteous indication of recognition of the hearer. We can represent such information about a wide range of illocutionary acts in the table shown on pp. 148–149.

On the basis of this table, it is possible to formulate and test certain general hypotheses concerning illocutionary acts:

1. Wherever there is a psychological state specified in the sincerity condition, the performance of the act counts as an *expression* of that psychological state. This law holds whether the act is sincere or insincere, that is whether the speaker actually has the specified psychological state or not. Thus to assert, affirm, state (that p) counts as an *expression of belief* (that p). To request, ask, order, entreat, enjoin, pray, or command (that A be done) counts as *an expression of a wish or desire* (that A be done). To promise, vow, threaten or pledge (that A) counts as *an expression of intention* (to do A). To thank, welcome or congratulate counts as *an expression of gratitude, pleasure* (at H's good fortune).[9]

2. The converse of the first law is that only where the act counts as the expression of a psychological state is insincerity possible. One cannot, for example, greet or christen insincerely, but one can state or promise insincerely.

3. Where the sincerity condition tells us what the speaker *expresses* in the performance of the act, the preparatory condition tells us (at least part of) what he *implies* in the performance of the act. To put it generally, in the performance of any illocutionary act, the speaker implies that the preparatory conditions of the act are satisfied. Thus, for example, when I make a statement I imply that I can back it up, when I make

a promise, I imply that the thing promised is in the hearer's interest. When I thank someone, I imply that the thing I am thanking him for has benefited me (or was at least intended to benefit me), etc.

It would be nicely symmetrical if we could give an account of *saying* in terms of the essential rules, parallel to our accounts of *implying* and *expressing*. The temptation is to say: the speaker *implies* the (satisfaction of the) preparatory conditions, *expresses* the (state specified in the) sincerity conditions, and *says* (whatever is specified by) the essential condition. The reason this breaks down is that there is a close connection between saying and the constative class of illocutionary acts. Saying fits statements but not greetings. Indeed, Austin's original insight into performatives was that some utterances were not sayings, but doings of some other kind. But this point can be exaggerated. A man who says "I (hereby) promise" not only promises, but *says* he does.[11] That is, there is indeed a connection between saying and constatives, but it is not as close as one might be inclined to think.

4. It is possible to perform the act without invoking an explicit illocutionary force-indicating device where the context and the utterance make it clear that the essential condition is satisfied. I may say only "I'll do it for you", but that utterance will count as and will be taken as a promise in any context where it is obvious that in saying it I am accepting (or undertaking, etc.) an obligation. Seldom, in fact, does one actually need to say the explicit "I promise". Similarly, I may say only "I wish you wouldn't do that", but this utterance in certain contexts will be more than merely an expression of a wish, for, say, autobiographical purposes. It will be a request. And it will be a request in those contexts where the point of saying it is to get you to stop doing something, i.e., where the essential condition for a request is satisfied.

This feature of speech—that an utterance in a context can indicate the satisfaction of an essential condition without the use of the explicit illocutionary force-indicating device for that essential condition—is the origin of many polite turns of phrase. Thus, for example, the sentence "Could you do this for me?" in spite of the meaning of the lexical items and the interroga-

tive illocutionary force-indicating devices is not characteristically uttered as a subjunctive question concerning your abilities; it is characteristically uttered as a request.

5. Wherever the illocutionary force of an utterance is not explicit it can always be made explicit. This is an instance of the principle of expressibility, stating that whatever can be meant can be said. Of course, a given language may not be rich enough to enable speakers to say everything they mean, but there are no barriers in principle to enriching it. Another application of this law is that whatever can be implied can be said, though if my account of preparatory conditions is correct, it cannot be said without implying other things.

6. The overlap of conditions on the table shows us that certain kinds of illocutionary acts are really special cases of other kinds; thus asking questions is really a special case of requesting, viz., requesting information (real question) or requesting that the hearer display knowledge (exam question). This explains our intuition that an utterance of the request form, "Tell me the name of the first President of the United States", is equivalent in force to an utterance of the question form, "What's the name of the first President of the United States?" It also partly explains why the verb "ask" covers both requests and questions, e.g., "He asked me to do it" (request), and "He asked me why" (question).

A crucially important but difficult question is this: Are there some basic illocutionary acts to which all or most of the others are reducible? Or alternatively: What are the basic species of illocutionary acts, and within each species what is the principle of unity of the species? Part of the difficulty in answering such questions is that the principles of distinction which lead us to say in the first place that such and such is a different kind of illocutionary act from such and such other act are quite various (see 8 below).[12]

7. In general the essential condition determines the others. For example, since the essential rule for requesting is that the utterance counts as an attempt to get H to do something, then the propositional content rule has to involve future behavior of H.

If it really is the case that the other rules are functions of the essential rule, and if some of the

others tend to recur in consistent patterns, then these recurring ones ought to be eliminable. In particular the non-obviousness preparatory condition runs through so many kinds of illocutionary acts that I think that it is not a matter of separate rules for the utterance of particular illocutionary force-indicating devices at all, but rather is a general condition on illocutionary acts (and analogously for other kinds of behavior) to the effect that the act is defective if the point to be achieved by the satisfaction of the essential rule is already achieved. There is, e.g., no point in telling somebody to do something if it is completely obvious that he is going to do it anyhow. But that is no more a *special* rule for requests than it is a matter of a special rule for moving the knight that the player can only move the knight when it is his turn to move.

8. The notions of illocutionary force and different illocutionary acts involve really several quite different principles of distinction. First and most important, there is the point or purpose of the act (the difference, for example, between a statement and a question); second, the relative positions of S and H (the difference between a request and an order); third, the degree of commitment undertaken (the difference between a mere expression of intention and a promise); fourth, the difference in propositional content (the difference between predictions and reports); fifth, the difference in the way the proposition relates to the interest of S and H (the difference between boasts and laments, between warnings and predictions); sixth, the different possible expressed psychological states (the difference between a promise, which is an expression of intention, and a statement, which is an expression of belief); seventh, the different ways in which an utterance relates to the rest of the conversation (the difference between simply replying to what someone has said and objecting to what he has said). So we must not suppose, what the metaphor of "force" suggests, that the different illocutionary verbs mark off points on a single continuum. Rather, there are several different continua of 'illocutionary force', and the fact that the illocutionary verbs of English stop at certain points on these various continua and not at others is, in a sense, accidental. For example, we might have had an

Types of Illocutionary Act

Types of rule	Request	Assert, state (that), affirm	Question[10]
Propositional content	Future act A of H.	Any proposition p.	Any proposition or propositional function.
Preparatory	1. H is able to do A. S believes H is able to do A. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H will do A in the normal course of events of his own accord.	1. S has evidence (reasons, etc.) for the truth of p. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H knows (does not need to be reminded of, etc.) p.	1. S does not know 'the answer', i.e., does not know if the proposition is true, or, in the case of the propositional function, does not know the information needed to complete the proposition truly (but see comment below). 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H will provide the information at that time without being asked.
Sincerity	S wants H to do A.	S believes p.	S wants this information.
Essential	Counts as an attempt to get H to do A.	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that p represents an actual state of affairs.	Counts as an attempt to elicit this information from H.
Comment:	*Order* and *command* have the additional preparatory rule that S must be in a position of authority over H. *Command* probably does not have the 'pragmatic' condition requiring non-obviousness. Furthermore in both, the authority relationship infects the essential condition because the utterance counts as an attempt to get H to do A *in virtue of the authority of S over H.*	Unlike *argue* these do not seem to be essentially tied to attempting to convince. Thus "I am simply stating that p and not attempting to convince you" is acceptable, but "I am arguing that p and not attempting to convince you" sounds inconsistent.	There are two kinds of questions, (a) real questions, (b) exam questions. In real questions S wants to know (find out) the answer; in exam questions, S wants to know if H knows.

illocutionary verb "rubrify", meaning to call something "red". Thus, "I hereby rubrify it" would just mean "It's red". Analogously, we happen to have an obsolete verb "macarize", meaning to call someone happy.[13]

Both because there are several different dimensions of illocutionary force, and because the same utterance act may be performed with a variety of different intentions, it is important to realize that one and the same utterance may constitute the performance of several different illocutionary acts. There may be several different non-synonymous illocutionary verbs that correctly characterize the utterance. For example suppose at a party a wife says "It's really quite late". That utterance may be at one level a

Types of rule	Thank (for)	Advise	Warn
Propositional content	Past act A done by H.	Future act A of H.	Future event or state, etc., E.
Preparatory	A benefits S and S believes A benefits S.	1. S has some reason to believe A will benefit H. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that H will do A in the normal course of events.	1. H has reason to believe E will occur and is not in H's interest. 2. It is not obvious to both S and H that E will occur.
Sincerity	S feels grateful or appreciative for A.	S believes A will benefit H.	S believes E is not in H's best interest.
Essential	Counts as an expression of gratitude of appreciation.	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that A is in H's best interest.	Counts as an undertaking to the effect that E is not in H's best interest.
Comment:	Sincerity and essential rules overlap. Thanking is just expressing gratitude in a way that, e.g., promising is not just expressing an intention.	Contrary to what one might suppose advice is not a species of requesting. It is interesting to compare "advise" with "urge", "advocate" and "recommend". Advising you is not trying to get you to do something in the sense that requesting is. Advising is more like telling you what is best for you.	Warning is like advising, rather than requesting. It is not, I think, necessarily an attempt to get you to take evasive action. Notice that the above account is of categorical not hypothetical warnings. Most warnings are probably hypothetical: "If you do not do X then Y will occur."

Types of rule	Greet	Congratulate
Propositional content	None.	Some event, act, etc., E related to H.
Preparatory	S has just encountered (or been introduced to, etc.) H.	E is in H's interest and S believes E is in H's interest.
Sincerity	None.	S is pleased at E.
Essential	Counts as courteous recognition of H by S.	Counts as an expression of pleasure at E.
Comment:		"Congratulate" is similar to "thank" in that it is an expression of its sincerity condition.

statement of fact; to her interlocutor, who has just remarked on how early it was, it may be (and be intended as) an objection; to her husband it may be (and be intended as) a suggestion or even a request ("Let's go home") as well as a warning ("You'll feel rotten in the morning· if we don't").

9. Some illocutionary verbs are definable in terms of the intended perlocutionary effect, some not. Thus requesting is, as a matter of its essential condition, an attempt to get a hearer to do something, but promising is not essentially tied to such effects on or responses from the hearer. If we could get an analysis of all (or even most) illocutionary acts in terms of perlocutionary effects, the prospects of analyzing illocutionary acts without reference to rules would be greatly increased. The reason for this is that language could then be regarded as just a conventional means for securing or attempting to secure natural responses or effects. The illocutionary act would then not essentially involve any rules at all. One could in theory perform the act in or out of a language, and to do it in a language would be to do with a conventional device what could be done without any conventional devices. Illocutionary acts would then be (optionally) conventional but not rule governed at all.

As is obvious from everything I have said, I think this reduction of the illocutionary to the perlocutionary and the consequent elimination of rules probably cannot be carried out. It is at this point that what might be called institutional theories of communication, like Austin's, mine, and I think Wittgenstein's, part company with what might be called naturalistic theories of meaning, such as, e.g., those which rely on a stimulus-response account of meaning.

NOTES

1. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, 1962), especially lectures II, III, IV.
2. Cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (New York, 1953), paras. 66, 67.
3. Alston in effect tries to analyze illocutionary acts using only brute notions (except the notion of a rule). As he points out, his analysis is unsuccessful. I suggest that it could not be successful without involving institutional notions. Cf. W. P. Alston, "Linguistic Acts," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1964).
4. I contrast "serious" utterances with play acting, teaching a language, reciting poems, practicing pronunciation, etc., and I contrast "literal" with metaphorical, sarcastic, etc.
5. Cf. the discussion of predication in chapter 2.
6. For an interesting discussion of this condition, see Jerome Schneewind, "A Note on Promising," *Philosophical Studies*, vol. 17. no. 3 (April 1966), pp. 33–5.
7. As far as condition 1 is concerned, this is a bit misleading. Condition 1 is a general condition on any serious linguistic communication and is not peculiar to this or that dialect. Furthermore the use of the biconditional in this condition excludes ambiguous sentences. We have to assume that T is unambiguous.
8. Cf., e.g., J. Katz and P. Postal, *An Integrated Theory of Linguistic Descriptions* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964).
9. This law, incidentally, provides the solution to Moore's paradox: the paradox that I cannot assert both that p and that I do not believe p, even though the proposition that p is not inconsistent with the proposition that I do not believe p.
10. In the sense of "ask a question" not in the sense of "doubt".
11. As J. L. Austin himself points out, "Other Minds," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, supplementary vol. (1964); reprinted in J. L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers* (Oxford, 1961).
12. In this respect, Austin's classification of illocutionary acts into five categories seems somewhat ad hoc. *How to Do Things with Words*, pp. 150 ff.
13. I owe the former of these examples to Paul Grice, the latter to Peter Geach, "Ascriptivism," *Philosophical Review*, vol. 69 (1960), pp. 221–6.