**TERMINOLOGICAL NOTE.** We need to introduce a piece of technical jargon, as follows. There are different senses in which a speaker is doing something when making an utterance

> *Locutionary act* S utters U with a linguistic meaning (sense) determined by the conventions of a language.
> *Illocutionary act* S does an action A by means of U.
> *Perlocutionary act* S affects H (or the audience generally) in a certain way.

The theory of speech acts focusses on the analysis of illocutionary acts. Indeed, 'speech acts' are often synonymous with 'illocutionary acts'.

One might, however, protest that the contrast between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts is poorly drawn. Aren't both kinds of action? Indeed. However, the illocutionary act, as we are going to explain in a moment, is associated with an utterance through a convention. Perlocutionary acts (effects) are, on the other hand, heavily dependent on context.

**MAIN THESIS.** Utterances serve not only to express propositions, but also to perform actions. Which actions they expressed is, in many cases at least, mediated by convention. Hence, whatever the contingent effects of the utterance, one type of action may be read off the linguistic form of the utterance. The illocutionary force conveyed by the utterance may be identified by paraphrasing the given utterance into a verb construct such as:

(18-1) I $\Phi_p$ you that $\sigma$,

containing the performative verb and the complement sententce.

**SEARLE'S APPROACH.** From the beginning, Searle frames his question in terms of 'constitutive conditions'. He demands to know what are the conditions for a particular illocutionary act embodied in an utterance. Searle admits that this is an idealisation, but insists that this is part of the normal scientific progress. 55

It is not a reductionist project, on the other hand, if by that we understand an attempt to reduce linguistic facts to physical facts. Instead, illocutionary acts will be interpreted in terms of intentions, rules, and institutional facts. 56

**PROMISING.** Searle lists nine conditions for felicitious act of promising. Let us comment on some of them: 57ff

> *Condition 1* This innocent looking condition may be booby-trapped: if you did not understand what I was saying, my utterance might still count as a promise to you.
> *Condition 2* Demarcates locutionary and illocutionary acts.
> *Condition 3* Promises here can be contrasted with directives, such as commands and requests.
> *Condition 4* Preparatory: Seems rather controversial (as Searle recognises himself). Why cannot I say, 'I promise to you I will shoot you if...'? Because, Searle insists, this is an elliptic form of a *strong commitment*. But there are other clear counter-examples. I may promise you to go to the cinema, even though it turns out you didn't want to go. Or I may promise you to return you the money at $t$, even though I know you do not want the money to be returned at $t$. It is strange to argue that these are not cases of genuine, and rather ordinary, promising. 58
> *Condition 5* Preparatory: Has to be compared to Austin's examples of Generalissimo Stalin and horse-as-a-consul.

*Condition 6*  Sincerity: it is required to account for the fact that the speaker expresses something with his act. When he really wishes to make a promise, he intends to do *A*. But when he does not, what does he express? Searle modifies this condition to read that the speaker intends the utterance to make him responsible for intending to do *A*. Here we rule out an allegedly absurd case where I say, 'I promise to shoot, but I absolve myself of *any* responsibility entailed by my utterance.' Even insincere promises should carry responsibility. <span>62</span>

*Condition 7*  There may be other pressing obligations overriding the one of my promise. It is also unclear, in Searle's formulation, whether the utterance actually places the speaker under any obligation.

*Condition 8*  We have not covered Grice's approach, so let us skip this condition for now. We will return to the relationship between Searle's views and Grice's later on. <span>60</span>

*Condition 9*  Literality: we should exclude as promises statements like 'I will be damned if I don't do it!'

**GENERALISATION.**  Already in Austin we saw that even assertions can be incorporated into the category of performative utterances. So now the question whether there is a general theory that can account for every type of illocutionary act. Searle answers in the positive. The same conditions that we have now described for promises can be used to characterise every illocutionary act (though in some cases some conditions will be empty). <span>64</span>

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