



Discourse and Pragmatics

Speech Act Theory
and Pragmatics





WHAT IS PRAGMATICS?

- **Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics which studies those aspects of meaning which cannot be captured by semantic theory. It is a systematic way of explaining language use in context.**

Signification



**Grammatical
Competence**



**Communicative
Competence**

*EFMD
commercial
beauty is
nothing
without
brains. fr*

Value



To speak is to act.

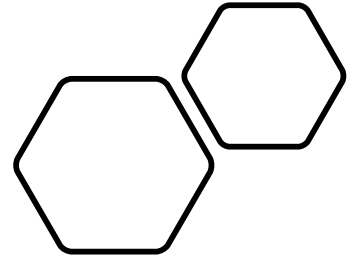


Every time a speaker utters a sentence, he is attempting to accomplish something with the words; specifically, he intends to have some effect on the listener and wants the listener to recognize this intention.



The Theory of Speech Acts

Locutionary, Illocutionary and Perlocutionary



The Theory of Speech Acts

THE MAIN AIM OF THIS THEORY IS:

We can do things with words



I sentence
you to
death



Describe



Apologize

The Theory of Speech Acts

**Knowing the words is
not enough.**



**Speech-act theory, most notably
attributed to John Searle, is designed to
help us understand how people
accomplish things with their words.**

The Theory of Speech Acts

A SPEECH ACT is a functional unit in communication. It is an act that the speaker performs when he makes an utterance



Austin (1962) and Searle (1981) established that whenever we say something, three simultaneous acts are performed:

Speech act

Definition: A **speech act** is a technical term in linguistics and the philosophy of language. It is an act that a speaker performs when making an utterance.

According to John L. Austin (1962) speech acts can be analysed on three levels:

- Locutionary act
- Illocutionary act
- Perlocutionary act

Locutionary Act



Is the act of saying or writing something in a language.



It is the actual words spoken.

Illocutionary Act



Is the "intention" we have when saying or writing something.



The FORCE of the word.

For Example:

I don't have any money

- **Son-Father**
- **Girlfriend-boyfriend**
- **Classmates**

Perlocutionary Act



Is the effect produced in the listener or reader when they listen or read a locutionary act.

For Example:

I don't have any money

• **Accepting the request**



• **Denying the request**



Classification of Illocutionary Acts

In colloquial language use we don't really mean what we say. In these cases the listener/reader must infer our illocutionary acts since the meaning is not directly expressed in our message.



The Philosopher Searle (1981) established a classification which is useful for inferring the illocutionary force or value of an utterance in a given

Classification:

1. Commissive
2. Directive
3. Expressive
4. Representative
5. Declarative

Classification of Illocutionary Acts



Commissive Illocutionary Acts

A promise, vow, pledge.

If you don't pay the bill we'll call the police



Directive Illocutionary Acts

Order, command, beg, plead, permit.

Please, come in!

Classification of Illocutionary Acts

Expressive Illocutionary Acts



An apology, a complain, thank or congratulate.

The letter was so beautiful; I'm sorry for being late.

Representative Illocutionary Acts

Assert, suggest, hypothesize, swear.

*I think he's saying the truth.
This is a German car.*



Classification of Illocutionary Acts

Declarations Illocutionary Acts

the speaker brings about a correspondence between the propositional content of his utterance and reality.

I now pronounce you Man and Wife

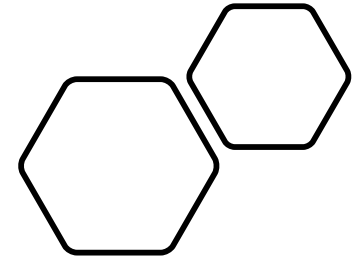
I name this Building Ruby

I order you to clean the house

Their use operates appropriately only in situations in which certain conditions are given and the one who speaks is socially or academically invested with the authority necessary for saying them.

Speech Acts

Direct and indirect speech acts



Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Any speech act can be *Direct* or *Indirect*.
It depends on the speaker.

Direct

The locutionary act and the illocutionary act coincide.

The intention is expressed in the message

Indirect

There is no coincidence between the type of illocutionary act and the syntactic structure of the message

The intention is not explicitly expressed in the message

FELICITY CONDITIONS

- ✖ *It means that participants in the speech act must have the power to carry out the force, and the place in which all takes place must be deemed appropriate.*
- ✖ *All procedures in the event must be carried out correctly. These are conditions necessary to the success of a speech act. They take their name from a Latin root - “felix” or “happy”.*

Thanks for your attention!

