

April 10, 2008

1.

Decide if you could perform each of the following actions by either speaking or physical gesture:

- (a) Congratulate someone.
- (b) Call someone's attention to the television set.
- (c) Forbid someone to enter a room.

2.

One way of describing what the following utterances do is to say that they describe a state of affairs. But think of some contexts where each of these assertions does much more than simply describe a state of affairs:

- (a) There's a spider in your hair.
- (b) Someone's eaten all the ice-cream.
- (c) I've got a gun.
- (d) You're an idiot.
- (e) I need the salt.

3.

Classify each of the following utterances as interrogative, imperative or declarative. Then decide what the speaker is using the utterance to do.

- (a) You can pass the milk.
- (b) Why don't you pass the milk?
- (c) Have you got the milk?
- (d) I could use the milk.
- (e) Get me the milk.
- (f) Send the milk down here.

4.

Give me some cash.

LOCUTION: Mike uttered the words Give me some cash which can be semantically paraphrased as: 'Hand some money over to me', with me referring to Mike.

ILLOCUTION: Mike performed the act of requesting Annie to give him some cash.

PERLOCUTION(S) :

5.

It's cold in here

6.

Look at the following pairs of utterances. What difference do you notice between the utterances in each pair?

- 1(a) I promise to be there.
- 1(b) I'll be there.
- 2(a) I admit I was foolish.
- 2(b) I was foolish.
- 3(a) I warn you, this gun is loaded.
- 3(b) This gun is loaded.
- 4(a) I apologize.

4(b) I'm sorry.

7.

In each of the groups below only the (a) utterances would be performative in Austin's view. Think about why the (b) and (c) utterances would not be classed as performative.

- 1(a) I admit I was wrong.
- 1(b) I think I was wrong.
- 1(c) I know I was wrong.
- 2(a) I apologize to you.
- 2(b) I amuse you.
- 2(c) I flatter you.
- 3(a) We promise to leave.
- 3(b) He admits he was silly.
- 3(c) I warned you to stop.

8.

Insert the word *hereby* before the verb in all nine utterances in Exercise 7. For example: *I hereby I admit I was wrong; I hereby think I was wrong.* Does this produce odd results in some cases? Why?

9.

Using the locution, illocution, perlocution analysis analyse Steve's utterance.

Jane: You've interrupted me again!
Steve: I was rude.

10.

Give as many different illocutions as you can for the locutions: *I'm sorry* and *This gun is loaded*. Describe the context in which each of those illocutions would apply.

11.

Choose a particular illocutionary force (e.g. apology, threat, request) and give at least five different locutions which could express that force.

12.

Give three possible perlocutions for the locution: *I love coffee*.

13.

Miscommunication can result when the hearer has miscalculated the intended illocution. This often forms the basis of humour as in the following rather awful joke where a complaint is (deliberately?) misinterpreted as praise.

Customer: Waiter! There's a fly in my soup.
Waiter: Don't worry, there's no extra charge.