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PREFACE

Until recently, the work of linguists and of philosophers of language appeared to be incommensurable. Linguists were concerned with predicting the distribution of morphemes in strings, while philosophers were interested in the meaning and use of various linguistic forms. As generative grammarians gradually turned their attention to semantics in the early 1960s, this situation began to change. In the mid-1960s, it became apparent that abstract, underlying syntactic structures, motivated primarily by nonsemantic matters of distribution and well-formedness of strings, tend also to represent meaning better than do superficial syntactic structures.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, many syntacticians came to believe that the study of syntax is inseparable from the study of meaning. As a result, scholars trained in the methodology of abstract syntax have taken on many of the problems traditionally considered to be within the purview of philosophers of language. The approaches of philosophers and linguists have, however, remained reasonably distinct. This has led to a wide variety of analyses. Linguists and philosophers have attempted to take cognizance of each others' work, but it has not always been certain that the interpretation of linguistic research by philosophers, and of philosophic research by linguists, bears more than a superficial resemblance to the intent of the author of the research.

This volume is an attempt to explore an area of apparently shared concern: speech acts. The papers included center around two controversial aspects of the treatment of speech acts.

The first topic treated by a number of the authors is the performative hypothesis. The papers of A. Davison, J. R. Ross, and D. W. Stampe deal explicitly with the status of this hypothesis. In addition, P. Cole, B. Fraser, G. M. Green, and J. R. Searle touch on issues affecting the status of the hypothesis.

The second controversy addressed in many of the papers is the proper treatment of conversational implicature. H. P. Grice's "Logic and Conversation," the seminal work on this topic, appears in print for the first time here. R. A. Wright examines the relationship between Grice's theory of conversational implicature and Grice's earlier work on meaning. A wide range of related philosophical issues in the theory of meaning are treated by R. T. Garner. The problem of indirect speech acts per se is the subject of papers by P. Cole, B. Fraser, D. Gordon and G. Lakoff, G. M. Green, J. L. Morgan, J. M. Sadock, S. F. Schmerling, and J. R. Searle.

会话含义

The interaction of philosophical and linguistic approaches to language can be seen in articles by both philosophers and linguists. It is to be hoped that this interaction will help to develop both fields.

语言学家与
哲学家合作

The editors would like to thank Kathy Wise for her competent assistance in the preparation of the manuscript. We would also like to thank the staff of Academic Press for their patience and helpfulness.

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MEANING AND TRUTH IN THE THEORY OF SPEECH ACTS

DENNIS W. STAMPE

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1 What one says determines what one may hope to do in so saying, and what one hopes to do determines what one may say in the effort to do it. In this truism there lies a rich opportunity to penetrate the nature of the acts we perform in speech, and to understand why sentences should have certain of the features they do. That opportunity is lost if we misunderstand the relationships between what one says and what one does in saying it, and between what one means by what he says and what he means what he says AS, or intends it to BE.

THE CONVENTIONALIST OR PERFORMATIVIST VIEW

2 Of course, many sentences, and thus many of the things one says, are not such as to determine uniquely what 'illocutionary' act¹ one is performing: For instance, *There is a bull in the field* is not such as to determine whether one, in uttering it, is issuing a warning, making a promise, or merely making a casual remark. It may seem a reasonable strategy, then, in seeking to understand the relationships between sentences and the various illocutionary forces with which they may be uttered, to begin not with sentences that are more or

¹ The term is, of course, Austin's (see Austin, 1962).

less indeterminate with respect to force but, instead, with those sentences that are fully determinate in that respect. Such sentences include those that bear an 'explicit performative preface,' sentences like *I hereby warn you that there is a bull in the field*. It may well seem that here we have a model case, from which we can see clearly what it is that determines the illocutionary force with which a sentence is uttered.

3 But there is a danger here of mistaking the features of a sentence that render it unambiguous as to force for the factor that *determines* that its utterance has the force it has. It is obvious that it would be fallacious to infer from the fact that the performative prefix does the former that it is the performative prefix that does the latter. But I suspect that this mistake has in fact been made. For the proper explicit use of the performative preface has been taken not merely to indicate or to say what one is doing in saying what he says, but variously to 'constitute' his saying of it the making of a promise, a request, or whatever it may be—that is, to be what **MAKES IT THE CASE** that one has performed this or that speech act. Or, if this determination of force cannot be attributed to the actual utterance of the preface, it may be attributed to the conformity of the utterance with those considerations that **WOULD** render the use of the preface proper, were it to be employed.

4 The more natural view would be to suppose that the function of the performative preface is simply to **COMMUNICATE** something, about what one is saying—specifically, to **MAKE IT CLEAR** what one is doing in saying what he is saying, and in that way to remove any possible ambiguity as to force. (Of course, the utterance of an expression that functions to make it clear whether something is this or that kind of thing does not **MAKE** that thing the kind of thing it is.) On this more natural view, the function of the performative preface would not differ essentially from the cooking demonstrator's *Now I beat the olive oil into the egg yolks*. Of course, as one might have beaten the oil into the egg yolks without saying that that was what he was doing, so likewise may one perform a certain speech act without saying, or otherwise indicating, that that is what he is doing. And it would be extraordinary to suppose that one's performing either the culinary act, or the illocutionary act, **CONSISTS IN** one's making certain motions, or noises, in accordance with those considerations that would have made it proper for him so to have described what he was doing as he did it.

5 Plainly, the fact that one need not employ the performative preface to perform a speech act is something wholly predictable in

the natural view. It is NOT readily predictable but, rather, poses an apparent problem for any view on which the explicit performative preface plays a central role. Such views include Searle's, on which the performance of an illocutionary act of a given kind CONSISTS IN the conforming of one's utterance to the semantic rules governing the ILLOCUTIONARY-FORCE-INDICATING DEVICE (hereafter, acronymously, the IFID; see Searle, 1970: chapter 3). Such a view immediately must contend with the fact that the ifid is apparently quite INESSENTIAL: One may perfectly well have made a promise without having uttered the words *I hereby promise* or having employed any other illocutionary-force-indicating device whatever. This is a fact perfectly well known, of course; but in the face of it the view in question is not discarded. At best, it is merely reformulated, rarefied through a process that may be called the sublimation of the ifid.

The Sublimation of the Ifid

6 The ifid, being required by the theory to figure in every sentence, ascends to the status of a theoretical entity, so that those factors thought to determine illocutionary force where the performative prefix occurs may be held to operate to determine force even where no prefix or other ifid occurs—i.e., where the ifid is not 'overt.' (This will bring to some minds the syntactic analysis of Ross and others, called the performative analysis; some remarks about this proposal are interspersed throughout this study.)

7 There are considerations thought to justify this position. If we inquire what EXPLAINS the capacity of *I hereby promise that I'll come* to make it the case that, upon uttering it, the utterer has promised to come (and all that that entails), we tend to consult our general conviction that it is owing to its MEANING, fundamentally, that a sentence has such powers as it has. And no doubt it IS in some sense owing to the meaning of the sentence *I hereby promise that I'll come* that, upon uttering it seriously and literally, I can have performed no illocutionary act other than that of promising to come. From this it is inferred that it is the meaning of that sentence that MAKES IT THE CASE that the utterance of that sentence has the force of a promise and, indeed, may constitute the making of a promise. Now once this doubtful step is made (see §32), one reasons further: If it is the meaning of *I hereby promise* that determines the illocutionary force of that utterance, what can it be that determines the illocutionary force of an utterance of the ifidless sentence *I'll come* as being that of a promise, if that should happen to be its force? One

might hold that it was here some other factor altogether. But the course of theoretical simplicity would be to hold that it was the same thing in either case (ifid or no) that determines the force of the utterance.² And that is, by hypothesis, if not the admittedly unnecessary ifid, the MEANING of the ifid, of *I hereby promise*—and, thus, or alternatively, the semantic rules governing that phrase.

8 Now, what is it that determines that when I said to my son, *I'll go for a walk with you as soon as I finish this page*, I had made him a promise? IF it is determined by meaning, it must be not the meaning of the sentence I utter, which is indeterminate as to force, but rather what I mean BY what I say, my meaning, more fully expressed. What I mean, it will be held, is in fact the same as what is meant by the sentence *I hereby promise that I will go for a walk (etc.)*. If so, the operation of semantic rules governing the phrase *I hereby promise* (the rules determining the meaning of the ifid) may be invoked to ACCOUNT for this—the rules operating not on an overtly occurring ifid but, instead, on its postulated counterpart, perhaps 'subsequently' deleted from the uttered sentence.

9 By now, one may as well jettison the very distinction between meaning and illocutionary force, as does Searle (1968), who contends that the 'distinction between the literal meaning of a sentence and the intended force of its utterance . . . is only a special case of the distinction between literal meaning and intended meaning, between what the sentence means and what the speaker means in its utterance, and it has no special relevance to the general theory of illocutionary forces . . . [p. 413].'

10 I will want to assail this philosophical view both root and branch. I have merely pointed to what might be the root (§3), but having got into them, we may as well skirmish in the branches first.

The Distinction between Meaning and Illocutionary Force

11 There are two well-known attempts to impeach the distinction between illocutionary force and meaning, issuing one in the claim that such forces 'do not exist' and the other in the charge that the distinction has been 'exaggerated' (whatever either claim might mean). In both studies, the arguments given turn on perfectly transparent equivocations on the term *mean*, on resolutely confusing and conflating the matter of WHAT ONE MEANS TO DO (i.e., intends to do)

² I accept this point, but hold that force is not in the relevant sense determined by meaning; still, whether the ifid occurs or not, the force of the utterance is a function of the SAME factors. I recur to this §33.