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1) “Can you hand me that water bottle?”

2) “I promise to make you pancakes.”

It is possible for performatives to be indirect speech acts.

“...it is essential to show that the efficacy of the performative formula is not a consequence of the meaning of the performative verbs.”

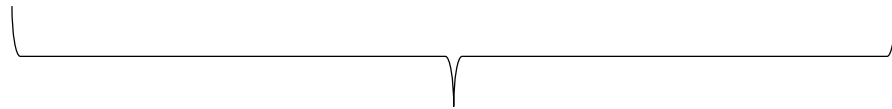
IF: performativity is contained in the meaning of the performative verbs

THEN: it can't be the case that the performativity is derived from the literal meaning

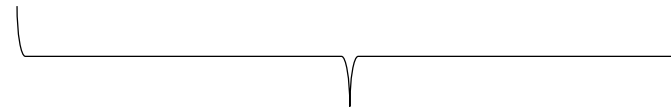
- 1) Imagine a world in which performative sentences are just statements
- 2) Assume these sentences can still be uttered truly and sincerely
- 3) Then something besides the utterance must constitute the performative action
- 4) Since in reality we can successfully utter performatives without any directly accompanying actions, it follows that the performative action can only be constituted by the utterance

We have a structure that makes the distinction between statement and performative explicit:

1) “Make me some pancakes, and that’s an order.”



Performative (order)



Statement

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## Bach: A Possible Derivation

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- 1) He is saying, “I order you to leave.”
- 2) He is stating that he is ordering me to leave.
- 3) If his statement is true, then he must be ordering me to leave.
- 4) If he is ordering me to leave, it must be his utterance that constitutes the order (what else could it be?).
- 5) Presumably, he is speaking the truth.
- 6) Therefore, in saying “I ordering you to leave,” he is order me to leave.

- 1) He is saying "I am the King of Spain."
- 2) He is stating that he is the King of Spain.
- 3) If his statement is true, then he must be the King of Spain.
- 4) If he is the King of Spain, it must be his utterance that constitutes his being the King of Spain(what else could it be?).
- 5) Presumably, he is speaking the truth.
- 6) Therefore, in stating that he is the King of Spain, he is being the King of Spain.



4) If he is the King of Spain, it must be his utterance that constitutes his being the King of Spain (what else could it be?).

- He inherited the title of King
- He is in control of the government of Spain
- The population of Spain acknowledges him as their King
- He has a crown
- He can sit on the throne without being arrested

- 1) “I promise to come and see you next week.”
  - a) The speaker is committed to the truth of the proposition
  - b) The truth of the statement is not guaranteed (the speaker could be lying, mistaken, etc.)

- 2) “This very utterance is the making of a promise to come and see you next week.”
  - a) The statement is self-referential
  - b) The truth of the statement is still not guaranteed, because self-referentiality does not entail truth; someone could say “This very utterance is being made in French.”

- 3) The speaker has made a self-referential truth claim that his utterance is a promise
  - a) The statement is true if it is a promise
  - b) Its being a promise consists in its being intended as a promise

- 4) Can other features guarantee the intention to make a promise?
  - a) If (i) the utterance is self-referential and (ii) the intended truth conditions are that it is a promise and (iii) to be a promise it must be intended as one
  - b) Then the intention to make that statement is sufficient to guarantee the presence of the intention for it to be a promise

- 5) Why is the intention to make the statement sufficient to guarantee the intention to make a promise?
  - a) The intention to make the statement carries a commitment to its truth
  - b) Its truth is predicated on its being a promise
  - c) Its being a promise is predicated on its being intended as a promise
  - d) Therefore, the intention to make the statement entails the intention to make a promise, which entails its being a promise

## The Problem:

The argument confuses being committed to having an intention with actually having the intention

“The intention to assert self-referentially of an utterance that it is an illocutionary act of a certain type, say a promise, is simply not sufficient to guarantee the existence of an intention in that utterance to make a promise.”



### Three Things We Must Accept:

- 1) A class of actions which can be performed merely by manifesting the intention to perform them
- 2) A class of verbs which contain intention in their meaning; which can only be performed intentionally
- 3) A class of utterances which are both *about* themselves and *operate on* themselves

- 1) S uttered the sentence “I hereby order you to leave” (or the equivalent)
- 2) The literal meaning of this utterance is such that by that very utterance the speaker intends to make it the case that he orders me to leave

- 3) Therefore, in making the utterance S manifested an intention to make it the case that he ordered me to leave
- 4) Therefore, in making the utterance S manifested an intention to order me to leave

- 5) Orders are a class of actions where the manifestation of the intention to perform the action is sufficient for its performance
- 6) S ordered me to leave, by that utterance
- 7) S both said that he ordered me to leave and made it the case that he ordered me to leave; therefore he made a true statement

- 1) What is the nature of the assertive “commitment”?
- 2) What is the nature of the “intention” to promise?

“It is just a fact about how the world works, and not part of the semantics of English verbs, that we humans are unable to perform these acts [e.g. frying an egg] by declaration.”

How can Searle simultaneously hold that there is something special in the semantics of performative verbs (intention) and yet also hold that there is *nothing* special?

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## Some Questions & Concerns

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Create *non-linguistic*  
entities?



Intentional Verbs

Performative Verbs

Create *linguistic* entities





- 1) What exactly counts as an intentional verb?
- 2) Again, what is the nature of this intention?

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## Some Concerns

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“...there is no reason (except on a hard ‘Meaning is use’ line) to hold that for these speakers words like ‘order’ and ‘warn’ would differ in meaning from what they mean for us. After all, they call ‘orders’ or ‘warnings’ the same things we do, except for the utterances of sentences that for us but not for them are performatives. Surely for us ‘order’ in ‘I order’ means the same as it does in other constructions. Moreover, since they use the same sentences we do but without performative effect, no special grammatical feature can account for that effect.”

- 1) What is the relationship between the performative and non-performative use of performative verbs?