Title: Mechanisms of Illocutionary Games

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Abstract: The paper develops a score-keeping model of *illocutionary games* and uses it to account for mechanisms responsible for creating institutional facts construed as rights and commitments of participants in a dialogue. After introducing the idea of Austinian games — understood as abstract entities representing different levels of the functioning of discourse — the paper defines the main categories of the proposed model: *interactional negotiation*, *illocutionary score*, *appropriateness rules* and *kinematics rules*. Finally, it discusses the phenomenon of accommodation as it occurs in illocutionary games and argues that the proposed model presupposes an externalist account of illocutionary practice.

Keywords: illocutionary acts, institutional facts, score-keeping, accommodation, Austin, Lewis

1 Introduction

My aim in this paper is to motivate the category of Austinian games and use it to develop a score-keeping model of illocutionary interaction. I define Austinian games as abstract objects representing different levels of the functioning of discourse. Drawing on

Austin's theory of speech acts (Austin 1975), I distinguish between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary games. The function or purpose of any move made in a locutionary game ("functions" in the teleological sense) is to produce a *locution* construed as a linguistic representation of an actual or possible state of the world, whereas the job of any move made in a perlocutionary game is to affect mental states, attitudes, and behaviour of interacting agents. The function of any contribution to an illocutionary game, in turn, is to modify the domain of deontic facts or 'institutional states of affairs such as attributions of rights, obligations, entitlements, commitments' (Sbisà, 2002, p. 434) and so on. In other words, what motivates the introduction of the illocutionary level of analysis — *i.e.*, what justifies representing a certain dialogue as an illocutionary game — is the need to account for the institution-creating function of language and speech (Searle 2010). It should be stressed from the outset, however, that Austinian games are mere abstractions and neither of them, taken alone, provides a complete picture of the dynamics of discourse. To arrive at such a picture, it seems, one might have to integrate the three perspectives into a holistic framework and examine how locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary factors interact in determining the dynamics of discourse.

Following Gerald Gazdar (1981, p. 68), I assume that speech act types can be represented as functions from contexts to contexts or, as David Lewis (1979) would put it, as functions from conversational scores to conversational scores (this time, the term "function" is used in the mathematical sense). The conversational score at a given stage of an Austinian game is a sequence of abstract entities standing for contextual factors relative to which any move made at this stage is to be interpreted and evaluated. For example, at any stage in a locutionary game the score can involve representations of presupposed propositions, standards of precision, rankings of comparative salience, reference points for interpreting anaphoric expressions, as well as other factors relative to which new locutions should be interpreted and evaluated; the score at a certain stage in

an illocutionary game, in turn, contains representations of contextual factors conditioning the felicity of any illocutionary act that can be made at this stage. In general, any move m made in an Austinian game can be represented as an ordered pair $\langle s_1, s_2 \rangle$, where s_1 is the score representing the context relative to which the move is to be interpreted and evaluated (let us call it the *source score* of move m) and s_2 is a score representing the context that results from making the move (let us call it the *target score* of move m).

Following Lewis (1979), I assume that any language game is governed by two types of rules: the rules of appropriateness and the rules of kinematics. The rules of the former kind determine, for any stage of the game, what would count as a correct move at this stage; in other words, they define the appropriateness of the moves made in the game in terms of their source scores. The kinematics rules, in turn, govern the dynamics of conversational score; roughly speaking, they determine how the performance of a given speech act affects the context of its production. It should be stressed, however, that there are two types of kinematics rules: the *rules of direct kinematics* and the *rules of accommodation*. The rules of direct kinematics — or, for short, the *direct rules* — determine, for any move that can be appropriately made in the game, what would count as its *target score*; the rules of accommodation, in turn, govern a process whereby the context of a move is adjusted to make the move appropriate. In short, any direct rule can be seen as defining a function from source scores to target scores; accommodation rules, by contrast, define functions from source scores to source scores or, more specifically, from *non-accommodated* to *accommodated* source scores. At first sight, the differentiation between direct rules and accommodation rules might seem to be artificial and unmotivated. It is worth drawing, however, because it allows us formulate the main hypothesis of this paper, according to which there are two types of mechanisms — direct and indirect — that are responsible for bringing about institutional facts construed as commitments and rights of the participants in social life.

The main focus of this paper, then, is on the mechanisms of illocutionary games. Section 2 introduces the idea of Austinian games: it presents elements of Austin's theory of speech acts (subsection 2.1), introduces the notion of Austinian games (subsection 2.2), and motivates the category of illocutionary games by discussing the process of interactional negotiation (subsection 2.3). Section 3 develops a score-keeping model of illocutionary interaction: it defines the category of illocutionary score (subsection 3.1), draws a distinction between appropriateness rules and kinematics rules (subsection 3.2), and discusses the phenomenon of accommodation as it occurs in illocutionary games (subsection 3.3). Section 4 considers the role that the proposed model can play in our theorising about linguistic practice (subsection 4.1), and argues that it presupposes externalism about illocutionary agency and externalism about uptake (subsection 4.2).

2 Austinian games

2.1 Austin on speech acts

The main idea behind Austin's theorising about linguistic practice is that speech acts are 'context-changing social actions' (Sbisà, 2002, p. 421); in other words, to make a speech act is to bring about a series of changes in the context of its production. Austin (1975) distinguished between three types of speech acts: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. To make a locutionary act is to produce a locution construed of as a linguistic representation of an actual or possible state of the world; normally, it is also to perform an illocutionary act that amounts to taking a normative attitude towards the representation thereby produced, *e.g.*, the speaker's attitude of responsibility for its truth (then the locution under consideration constitutes a statement), the speaker's undertaking the commitment to see to it that it will be true (then the locution is a promise), or the

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speaker's being entitled to expect the addressee to see to it that it will be true (then the locution constitutes a command); usually, it is also to perform a perlocutionary act which amounts to bringing about — intentionally or not — certain changes in the sphere of the thoughts, actions or feelings of the participants in a dialogue. In short, the function ("function" in the teleological sense) of a locutionary act is to produce linguistic representations of actual or possible states of affairs, the proper purpose of illocutionary acts is to create or modify institutional or deontic facts — such as commitments, obligations, rights and entitlements — and the job of perlocutionary acts is to affect behaviour, attitudes and thoughts of the interacting agents. It should be stressed, however, that locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts are not real entities, but abstract aspects of the 'total speech-act in the total speech-situation' (Austin, 1975, p. 148). In other words, they are abstract objects that are posited by the comparative analysis of individual speech acts.

Let us focus on the locutionary and illocutionary aspects of verbal activity and consider John who, while talking to Tom, utters the following sentence:

(1) I will come to your seminar.

Uttering (1), John says that he will come to Tom's seminar, or, in other words, he represents John's coming to Tom's seminar as a future event. Let us assume that in saying this John makes a binding promise, i.e., he commits himself to come to Tom's seminar (to assume this is to take it for granted that the context of the utterance in question satisfies certain conditions of felicity; see Austin, 1975, p. 21-23). In other words, it is the speaker of (1), not the hearer, who is responsible for seeing to it that the locution under discussion will be true. Consider, by analogy, Tom who is talking to John and utters sentence (2) in a commanding tone:

(2) You will come to my seminar.

Uttering (2), Tom represents John's coming to Tom's seminar as a future event, Therefore, the two utterances under discussion — i.e., John's utterance of (1) and Tom's utterance of (2) — are locutionarily equivalent[1]. Nevertheless, they are not illocutionarily equivalent. Let as assume that John is Tom's student writing a PhD dissertation under his supervision. Therefore, Tom's utterance of sentence (2) can be naturally interpreted as a command that commits John to come to Tom's seminar. It is instructive to note that this time it is the hearer, not the speaker, who is under the obligation to see to it that the locution under consideration will be true.

2.2 From speech acts to Austinian games

In my view, the Austinian distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary aspects of verbal activity applies not only to individual speech acts, but also to complex episodes of linguistic interaction — conversations, talk exchanges, dialogues, and so on — that involve the participation of at least two speakers and, as the corollary of this, have a turn-taking structure. Paraphrasing Austin's words, we can say that the total talk-exchange in the total conversational-situation is 'the *only actual* phenomenon which, in the last resort, we are engaged in elucidating.' (Austin, 1975, p. 148) In research practice, however, our focus is usually on a particular function or purpose of language and speech; that is to say, we concentrate either on (*i*) the formation of linguistic representations of states of the world, or (*ii*) the creation of deontic facts construed of as commitments, obligations, rights and entitlements, or (*iii*) the influence that speech acts have on the

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1 More specifically, they are rhetically equivalent, i.e., equivalent with respect to their sense and reference. Rhetic equivalence is necessary, though not sufficient for locutionary equivalence.

mental states and behaviour of the interacting agents. Consistently, we represent examined dialogues either as (*i*) locutionary, (*ii*) illocutionary, or (*iii*) perlocutionary games.

The criterion I use to distinguish between the above-mentioned three types of Austinian games is functional. It is worth noting, however, that the resulting distinction also corresponds to three different levels of the dynamics of discourse. Roughly speaking, by a *level of discourse dynamics* I mean a system of mechanisms that govern the kinematics of a given game and determine, for every act made in the game, how it affects the context of its production. In short, locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary games are complex entities representing different levels of discourse functioning and dynamics.

Any Austinian game, then, is an abstract object that can be represented by a triple $\langle F, T, R \rangle$, where F specifies the functions or proper purposes of its constituent moves ("functions" in the teleological sense), T is the set of descriptive terms we use to explain how individual speech acts perform functions F, and R is the system of rules that govern the use of the descriptive terms and correspond to the mechanisms underlying the performance of function F. For example, function F_L of moves made in locutionary game $\langle F_L, T_L, R_L \rangle$ is to produce linguistic representations of actual or possible states of affairs; component T_L includes such terms as "reference", "sense", "presupposed propositions", "standards of precision", "rankings of comparative salience", "reference points for interpreting anaphoric expressions", and so on; component R_L is a system of rules that determine the locutionary content of any individual move made in the game. By analogy, function F_P of any move made in perlocutionary game $\langle F_P, T_P, R_P \rangle$ is to bring about certain changes in the sphere of the mental states and behaviours of interacting agents, whereas components T_P and R_P are systems containing, respectively, descriptive terms and explanatory principles of a psychological theory of motivation and persuasion. Finally, any illocutionary game type can be represented as a triple $\langle F_I, T_I, R_I \rangle$, where F_I specifies the functions of its constituent moves, whereas T_I contains descriptive terms used in the

formulation of rules specified by component R_I.

One can object that the term "Austinian game" is a new label for an old idea that has been inherent in the theory of speech acts since its beginning. Admittedly, the differentiation between the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary games corresponds to a distinction that has been traditionally adopted in the study of speech acts, *i.e.*, to the one between the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary *levels of speech act analysis*. This observation is true as far as it goes. In my view, however, it does not support the opinion that the term "Austinian game" is unmotivated and that it can at most be regarded as a new label for an old methodological idea. I would say, rather, that even though the distinction between the three types of Austinian games *corresponds* to the one between the three levels of speech act analysis, the former does not *come down* to the latter.

Most of the traditional theories of speech acts (Searle, 1969, 1979; Strawson, 1964; Bach and Harnish, 1979) focus on unilateral speech acts, i.e., on acts 'performed in their entirety in contiguous speech by a single speaker' (Mann, 1988, p. 521). For example, according to Searle:

> The speech act scenario is enacted by its two great heroes, "S" and "H"; and it works as follows: S goes up to H and cuts loose with an acoustic blast; if all goes well, if all the appropriate conditions are satisfied, if S's noise is infused with intentionality, and if all kinds of rules come into play, then the speech act is successful and nondefective. After that, there is silence; nothing else happens. The speech act is concluded and S and H go their separate ways. Traditional speech act theory is thus largely confined to single speech acts. (Searle, 1992, p. 7)

Other scholars working within the field of speech act theory, however, adopt what can be called an *Austinian* or *conversational perspective*. For example, Marina Sbisà claims that 'the investigation of conversational sequences (…) could throw some light on the investigation of individual speech acts, and in particular of the various kinds of effects they

bring about' (Sbisà, 1992, p. 110); in a similar vein, Herbert H. Clark argues that speech acts necessarily form parts of joint activities and 'have their origins in social practices' (Clark, 1996, p. 139). In short, Sbisà and Clark seem to accept the following idea underlying the conception of Austinian games: normally, to perform a speech act is to make a move in a certain game, and the actual effect of the move — i.e. the change it brings about in the context of its making — depends on other contributions to the game; in particular, the actual force of the move is subject to a discursive process of *interactional* negotiation (see Sbisà 2013).

Viewed from the perspective of Searle's theory, any individual speech act is unilateral in that it is entirely performed by a single speaker; in other words, even though the hearer is expected to meet certain requirements specified by the felicity conditions of the speaker's act, he or she is nobody but a passive receiver. According to the conversational perspective, by contrast, most speech acts are bilateral units in that their actual effects and properties are *agreed upon* (see Sbisà, 2002, 2007, 2009) and *negotiated* (Sbisà, 2013) by at least two agents: the speaker and the hearer. In particular, the way the hearer takes up the speaker's utterance — that in most cases is manifested by his response — can co-determine its actual illocutionary force. In short, to perform an illocutionary act is normally to make a move in an Austinian game; what is more, the actual force of the move is subject to a discursive process of interactional negotiation between two active players: the speaker and the hearer.

2.3 Interactional negotiation in illocutionary games

In my view, the idea of interactionally negotiated illocutionary forces is inherent in Austin's theory of speech acts. He assumed, namely, that a successful illocutionary act changes its context by producing the following three effects: firstly, it *secures uptake* on the

part of the audience, which normally 'amounts to bringing about the understanding of the meaning and force of the locution', secondly, it *takes effect* in that it creates certain deontic or institutional facts construed as rights and commitments of the participant in a speech event, and, thirdly, it *invites* 'by convention a response or sequel' (Austin, 1975, p. 117). The crucial points here are, first, that these three types of effects — i.e., the securing of uptake, the taking of effect, and the inviting of a response — are closely interdependent on each other and, second, that normally they are produced within the context of complex interactional events.

Undoubtedly, the central function of illocutionary acts is to bring about their normative effects. The force of an act, then, can be defined by reference to what counts as the deontic or institutional fact that it creates. It is worth stressing, however, that deontic facts have a special mode of existence: they are *conventional* in that they exist in virtue of being collectively accepted or agreed upon by the participants in a language game (see Sbisà, 2002, p. 434). That is why making a binding illocutionary act — i.e., an act that takes effect — necessarily involves the securing of uptake on the part of the audience: the act's deontic effect exists in virtue of an agreement negotiated by the interacting agents, and this 'agreement is made possible by the securing of uptake' (Sbisà, 2009, p. 49). What is more, 'in many cases uptake (…) is made manifest in the audience's response' (*ibid*., p. 50). Quite often the making of a binding act of a certain type is a negotiable event and, as such, involves contributions made by at least two players. In other words, the actual force of at least some moves made in illocutionary games is subject to *interactional negotiation* (see Sbisà, 2013) that involves the hearer's uptake manifested in his or her response to the speaker's move, where the speaker's act and the hearer's invited response to it are two complementary parts of a certain pattern of verbal interaction (see Millikan, 2005; cf. Witek 2013b).

It is also instructive to note that the content of the deontic effect of an act can be

spelled out in terms of the responses it conventionally invites or attempts to elicit. In other words, to say that a certain act takes effect is to assume that it commits 'us to certain future conduct' (Austin 1975, p. 154). For example, the binding commands made in uttering sentences (2) and (3):

(2) You will come to my seminar.
(3) Go and pick up wood!

take effect by bringing about the hearers' commitment to perform certain actions as well as by creating the speakers' right to expect the hearers to perform these actions or, in other words, by making them entitled to bring the hearers to justice if they failed to comply with what they were told.

With these ideas in mind, let us have a closer look at the mechanisms underlying interactional negotiation. Consider once again the situation in which Tom is talking to John and utters sentence (2) in a commanding tone. This time let us assume that the conversation of which this utterance forms a part is informal, *i.e.*, Tom and John are colleagues and neither of them stands in an authority relation to the other. Let us assume, however, that Tom utters sentence (2) with an intention to make a binding command and thereby to establish his authority over John. Consider two alternative versions of what happens next.

Let us assume, first, that John takes Tom's utterance to be a binding command and, as the corollary of this, the next day comes to Tom's seminar. In other words, Tom's utterance of (2) can be counted as a felicitous directive act: it secures uptake on the part of John and, in agreement with a certain pattern of interaction, evokes the response of obedience. Being a felicitous command, it has two deontic effects: it takes effect by *directly* bringing about John's obligation to come to John's seminar, and *indirectly — i.e.*, through

the mechanism of accommodation whose nature is discussed in subsection 3.3 below —

establishes Tom's authority over John (or at least contributes to a gradual process of

establishing Tom's status as an informal leader). The crucial point here is that these two

deontic effects are in a sense negotiatied: John accepts Tom's *conversational offer* to take

his utterance to be a binding command, and thereby takes for granted Tom's status as an

informal leader. What is direclty negotiated, then, is the actual force of Tom's utterance.

The force, in turn, can be analysed in terms of the utterance bringing about certain

institutional facts.

Assume, alternatively, that John replies to Tom's act by uttering sentence (4):

(4) No, I won't.

One may say that in uttering (4), John performs two acts: first, he makes it manifest that he

takes Tom's utterance to be a command and, second, refuses to comply with what he is

told. It is also possible to argue, however, that in uttering (4) John rejects Tom's

conversational offer to take his utterance of (2) to be a binding command. More

specifically, it can be argued that in uttering (4) John makes it manifest that he takes Tom's

preceding utterance to be a mere prediction, *i.e.*, an act that invites (in Austin's sense) the

response of confirming or denying its locutionary content rather than the response of

obedience or disobedience. Again, the actual force of the utterance of (2) results from

interactional negotiation. By uttering (2), Tom invokes a pattern of interaction that involves

the speaker's command and the hearer's complying with what he or she is told; in short,

he makes a conversational offer to take his utterance as an act of command. The offer,

however, is rejected by John: by uttering (4), he invokes an alternative pattern that

involves the speaker's prediction and the hearer's denial; in other words, he takes Tom's

utterance to be the act whose locutionary content can be denied or confirmed and, at the

same time, refuses to take it as the act that can be obeyed or disobeyed.

In summary, the actual force of many speech acts — especially those that form parts of informal interactions, small talks, casual conversations, and so on — is subject to a discursive process of interactional negotiation. The process under discussion involves, first, the speaker's conversational offer to take his or her act to be a binding illocution of a certain type and, second, the hearer's uptake manifested in his or her response. There might even be no particular illocutionary intention associated with the speaker's utterance and, as the corollary of this, the initiative to determine its force might be entirely on the hearer's part. The crucial point here is that to account for these and related phenomena one has to reject the Serlean idea of unilateral illocutionary acts in favour of the alternative idea of illocutionary acts construed as moves made in Austinian games. The making of a speech act involves the speaker's utterance of a certain sentence in a certain circumstances. But it is not the case that after that 'there is salience' and 'nothing else happens' (Searle, 1992, p. 7). Normally, what happens next is the hearer's response that functions as his or her contribution to the discursive process of interactional negotiation and, as the corollary of this, co-determines the actual force of the speaker's utterance.

3 Scorekeeping in an illocutionary game

Any illocutionary game type can be represented as a triple $\langle F_I, T_I, R_I \rangle$, where F_I specifies the functions of its constituent moves ("functions" in the teleological sense), T_I is the set of terms used to explain how individual illocutionary acts perform function F_I, and R_I is the system of rules that govern the performance of function F_I. In general, functions F_I of moves made in an illocutionary game are to be defined in terms of the commitments and rights of the players. If the game is an argumentative dialogue, then function F_I of its constituent moves is to contribute to making a case for or against a certain opinion by

supporting, attacking, challenging, correcting or falsifying previous moves (for a discussion of these topics, see Budzynska and Witek 2014). If, by contrast, the game is a law-making discourse, then function F_l of its constituent moves is to enact new rules or permissibility facts (see McGowan, 2004).

It is not my aim in this section to distinguish between different types of illocutionary games. Rather, I want to contribute to the development of a score-keeping model of illocutionary interaction by providing a preliminary account of rules R_l. In subsection 3.1, I define the concept of illocutionary score. Next, in subsection 3.2, I distinguish between two types of rules that govern illocutionary interaction: appropriateness rules and kinematics rules. Finally, in subsection 3.3, I focus on rules of accommodation construed as a type of kinematics rules.

3.1 Illocutionary score

According to Lewis (1979), the conversational *score* at a given stage of a language game is a sequence of abstract elements representing contextual factors relative to which any move made at this stage is to be interpreted and evaluated. By analogy, the *illocutionary score* at a given stage of an illocutionary game can be defined as a sequence of elements — that, for reasons discussed below, I call *Austinian presuppositions* (see Witek 2013) — standing for factors against which the felicity of any act made at this stage is to be evaluated.

Austinian presuppositions of an act can be defined in terms of its felicity conditions. In other words, any Austinian presupposition of an act is a contextual state of affairs that must exist if the act is to regardes as felicitous and binding. According to Austin, an utterance can be regarded as a binding illocution of a certain type only if there exists an accepted 'conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect', and if that

procedure includes 'the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances' (Austin, 1975, p. 14). Let us assume that the "conventional effect" in question is an institutional fact that can be defined by reference to the changes that the act brings about in the normative domain of commitments, obligations, entitlements and rights. By saying that it is conventional, in turn, I mean that it exists in virtue of being negotiated or agreed upon by the participants in the procedure (see Sbisà, 2002, 2009, and subsection 2.3 above). The crucial point here is that the invoked procedure puts certain constraints on its participants as well as the circumstances in which it is executed. If the constraints are not satisfied, the act does not take effect — that is to say, it fails to bring about certain institutional facts — and as such is 'purported but void' (Austin, 1975, p. 18). The felicity of an act, then, *presupposes* that the constraints in question are satisfied.

In my view, there are two types of Austinian presuppositions: *personal* and *circumstantial*. Any personal presupposition of an act can be characterised in terms of the speaker's having certain deontic powers (Searle, 2010) and, as such, can be called the act's *deontic presupposition*. For example, the felicity of an order presupposes that the speaker stands in an appropriate authority relation to his or her audience and, as the corollary of this, he or she is endowed with the power to make binding orders on certain issues. For example, to issue a binding command in uttering sentence (2), one has to have authority over one's audience. In general, to say that a speaker has a certain deontic or *illocutionary power* is to assume that he or she stands in a certain normative relation to either the audience or some elements of the context of his or her act. Circumstantial presuppositions of an act, by contrast, are states of affairs to be found either in the environmental or the discursive context of the act; we can speak, then, of two types of circumstantial presuppositions: *environmental* and *discursive*. For example, the felicity of an order made in uttering sentence (5):

(5) Close the window!

presupposes that the window that the speaker refers to is open; in other words, the fact

that it is open constitutes one of the environmental presuppositions of the order made in

uttering (5). A discursive presupposition of a promise made in uttering formula (6):

(6) I do.

is that the utterance of (6) was preceded by a mutually salient question of the form:

(7) Do you promise that *p*?

To illustrate the above points, let us consider the following passage from *How To Do
Things With Words*:

> (…) we might say that the formula "I do" presupposes lots of things: if these are not satisfied,
> the formula is unhappy, void: it does not succeed in being a contract when the reference fails (or
> even when it is ambiguous) any more than the other succeeds in being a statement. Similarly
> the question of goodness or badness of advice does not arise if you are not in a position to
> advise me about that matter. (Austin, 1975, p. 51)

The felicity of a promise made in uttering formula (6), then, presupposes that the

anaphoric reference to a question of the form (7) has been secured, i.e., that the speaker

and the audience mutually recognize a certain element of their discursive context as

standing in an appropriate rhetorical relation to the utterance of (6) (for an elaboration of

the idea of rhetorical relations, see Asher and Lascarides 2003). In short, the fact that the

discursive context of an utterance of formula (6) contains a mutually salient question of

form (7) is a circumstantial presupposition or, more accurately, a *discursive presupposition* of the promise made in uttering this formula. The felicity of an act of advising, in turn, presupposes that the speaker is an expert on the matters being discussed and, as a result, is *entitled* to advise on them. In other words, the speaker's power to make a binding act of advising is a *personal* or *deontic presupposition* of the act.

By analogy, let us consider Austinian presuppositions of directive acts. Let us assume, first, that Paul is talking to Peter and utters sentence (5). If the window has already been closed, then Paul's utterance of (5) cannot be regarded as a binding command: one of the circumstantial or, more accurately, *environmental presuppositions* of any command made in uttering (5) is that the window that the speaker refers to is open. Next, consider Tom uttering sentence (2) in a commanding tone. This utterance is a binding command only if Tom stands in an appropriate authority relation to his audience; if this *personal presupposition* is not satisfied by the source score of this utterance, then Tom's act is not binding but void: it fails to bring about its characteristic normative effects.

In summary, at any stage in an Austinian game the illocutionary score can be represented as a sequence of abstract entities $\langle p, e, d \rangle$ representing, respectively, personal, environmental, and discursive presuppositions of any potential move that may be felicitously made at this stage. The move can be represented as an ordered pair $\langle s_1, s_2 \rangle$, where s_1 is the *source score* representing the context relative to which the move is to be evaluated, and s_2 is the *target score* representing the context that results from making the move. That is to say, any felicitous move made in an illocutionary game changes the score that it presupposes. What the act presupposes — or, more accurately, what is presupposed by its felicity — is determined by certain *appropriateness rules*, whereas the change it brings about is determined by certain *kinematics rules*.

3.2 Appropriateness rules and kinematics rules

The rules of appropriateness define the appropriateness of moves made in an illocutionary game in terms of their source scores. In other words, for any stage in this game represented by score $\langle p_1, e_1, d_1 \rangle$, the rules determine what would count as a correct or admissible move at this stage. In short, the appropriateness rules of a given illocutionary game type correlate types of its constituent moves with scores representing stages at which the moves may be correctly made. As Lewis put is, 'they tell us that correct play occurs at a game stage if and only if the players' behaviour at that stage bears such-and-such relation to score at that stage' (Lewis, 1979, p. 343) In this respect, the appropriateness rules can be likened to preparatory conditions posited by Searle (1969) in his analysis of non-defective illocutionary acts, as well as to *standards* of 'conventional linguistic practice' that correlate any utterance type with what Robert Stalnaker calls its 'conventionalised common ground' (Stalnaker, 2002: 705).

The rules of kinematics, by contrast, are like Searle's essential rules in that they specify, for any illocutionary act type, what counts as its conventional or normative effect. More specifically, for any act type that can be felicitously made in a given illocutionary game, there is a corresponding kinematics rule that tells how the performance of this act affects conversational score. That is to say, the rule defines a certain function from scores into scores or, as Gazdar would put it, "from contexts into contexts":

> Thus and assertion that Φ is a function that changes a [score] in which the speaker is not committed to justify true belief in Φ into a [score] in which he is so committed. A promise that Φ is a function that changes a [score] in which the speaker is not committed to bring Φ about into one in which he is so committed. A permission to Φ is a function that changes a [score] in which Φ is prohibited into one in which Φ is permissible. (Gazdar, 1981, p. 68-69)

In short, the making of an illocutionary act at score $\langle p, e, d \rangle$ takes effect by changing the

personal or deontic component p of this score. It should be noted, however, that it also changes its discursive component d. The making of an illocutionary act is a *manifest event*: 'when it occurs, [it] is mutually recognized to have occurred' (Stalnaker, 2002, p. 708). Moves made in illocutionary games, then, are 'unavoidable context changers' (Jary, 2007, p. 212) in that they automatically modify components p and d of illocutionary score, where "automatically" means "in agreement with an appropriate kinematics rule". Let us recall, however, that the occurrence of an act of a certain illocutionary type is a negotiated conversational event: it exists in virtue of being agreed upon by the interacting agents. In other words, by saying that moves made in illocutionary games are unavoidable context changers I do not want to suggest their context-changing function cannot be negotiated. Quite the contrary: as Sbisà notes, a characteristic feature of illocutionary acts is their *defeasibility*: they can be made *undone* by discovering their infelicity (see Sbisà, 2007, p. 465-466). Let us add that at least in some cases such a discovery involves re-negotiating the score relative to which the act under consideration is to be evaluated.

In summary, the rules of kinematics specify how the performance of a given speech act affects the context of its production. To make a felicitous move in an illocutionary game, therefore, is to change the score relative to which it is evaluated by modifying its personal and discursive components. (Needless to say that illocutionary acts *qua* illocutionary acts cannot change the environmental component of their source scores; they can do this only *qua* perlocutionary acts.) In other words, any illocutionary act type can be defined as a function from source scores to target scores. Let us recall that the *source score* of an act represents the context relative to which the act is to be evaluated, and the *target score* of the act represents the context that directly results from making the act. Therefore, any illocutionary act can be defined as a complex object of the form "$\langle \langle p_1, e_1, d_1 \rangle, \langle p_2, e_2, d_2 \rangle \rangle$", where the transition from p_1 to p_2 is determined by the relevant kinematics rule.

3.3 Accommodation in illocutionary games

As Lewis noted, some kinematics rules are rules of accommodation. Roughly speaking, accommodation is a context-changing process whose function is to adjust the source score of an act in order to make the act a binding and felicitous illocution of a certain type: a statements, a promise, a command, and so on. Let us assume, for example, that Tom's utterance of sentence (2) takes effect as a binding command, i.e., it commits John to come to Tom's seminar. Assume also that at the stage directly preceding Tom's utterance the score of this conversation did not include the condition that Tom stands in an authority relation to John. Nevertheless, if this utterance is taken to be a binding command, then the score relative to which it is so evaluated is automatically adjusted and the condition in question becomes its component.

My aim in the next subsection is to discuss the phenomenon of accommodation as it occurs in illocutionary games. Before we get to the details, however, let me draw a distinction between two types of kinematics rules: *direct kinematics rules* and *accommodation rules*. The former define illocutionary act types by reference to their direct normative effects. That is to say, for every illocutionary act type there is a corresponding direct rule that defines a function from source scores to target scores. Accommodation rules, by contrast, define functions from source scores to source scores or, more precisely, from *non-accommodated* to *accommodated* source scores. Rules of accommodation, then, are like direct kinematics rules in that they define functions from scores to scores. Unlike direct kinematics rules, however, they operate indirectly: accommodation construed as a context-changing mechanism makes an essential use of appropriateness rules. What is more, it is triggered by interactionally negotiated uptake.

To illustrate the above points, let us consider again Tom's command made in uttering sentence (2). Let us assume that the act in question changes the personal

component of the score of this interaction by creating two deontic facts: (*a*) John's being committed to come to Tom's seminar, and (*b*) Tom's standing in an authority relation to John. The content of fact (*a*) is determined by an appropriate direct rule that defines the illocutionary act type of making a command; the content of fact (*b*), in turn, is determined by one of the rules of appropriateness whose function is to specify the conditions under which one can issue a binding command. The crucial point here is that the mechanism responsible for bringing about these two facts are triggered by uptake negotiated by two interacting agents: John and Tom.

In general, accommodation is a ubiquitous phenomenon that occurs in language games: it is a rule-governed process whereby the score at a given game stage is adjusted to make the move that is currently being made acceptable. According to Lewis, the general pattern for rules governing accommodation looks as follows:

> If at time *t* something is said that requires component s_n of conversational score to have a value in the range *r* if what is said to be true, or otherwise acceptable; and if s_n does not have a value in the range *r* before *t*; and if such-and-such further conditions hold; then at *t* the score component s_n takes some value in the range *r*. (Lewis, 1979, p. 347)

Let us recall that the accommodation of Austinian presupposition is a context-changing process whereby the personal component of the source score of an act is adjusted to make the act a binding illocution of a certain type. Therefore, the process under consideration can be regarded as being governed by the following rule (see Witek, 2013a):

> If at time *t* speaker *S* makes a binding illocution *I*, and if the felicity of *I* requires Austinian personal presupposition *p* to be part of the illocutionary score relative to which *I* is evaluated, and if *p* is not part of the score just before time *t* at which *I* is made, then — *ceteris paribus* and within certain limits — *p* becomes part of the score at *t*.

3.3.1 What accommodation is. A few examples.

Let us consider three of the eight examples with the help of which Lewis illustrated the phenomenon of accommodation: accommodation of pragmatic presuppositions, accommodation of permissibility, and the functioning of explicit performatives.

Let us begin with the observation that Lewis adopts Stalnaker's (1973, 2002) common-ground account of pragmatic presuppositions. According to Stalnaker, a pragmatic presupposition of an act is a propositional attitude of the speaker; in other words, to presuppose a certain proposition in this sense is to take it for granted, or at least to accept it for the sake of conversation, 'as background information — as *common ground* among the participants in conversation' (Stalnaker, 2002, p. 701). Some of our presuppositions, however, are informative. Let us assume, for example, that Linda, despite her being aware of the fact that John does not know that she has a sister, utters sentence (8) and thereby makes an assertion to the effect that she has to pick up her sister at the airport.

(8) I have to pick up my sister at the airport.

The crucial point here is that by uttering (8), Linda informs John not only that she has to pick up her sister at the airport, but also that she has a sister. The former proposition is communicated at the level of what is asserted, whereas the latter is transmitted at the level of what is presupposed. Despite this difference, however, these two propositions become parts of the common ground among Linda and John, or, in other words, contribute to the conversational score affected by her utterance of (8).

The phenomenon of informative presuppositions poses a serious challenge to the common-ground account of pragmatic presupposition (Gauker, 1998, p. 160-162; von

Fintel, 2008; Abbott, 2008). One can ask, namely, how it is possible for Linda to make an appropriate assertion in uttering (8) if it is clear for her at the moment of the utterance that the presupposition of her act is not satisfied by the common ground. Lewis (1979) and Stalnaker (2002) attempt to account for the phenomenon of informative presuppositions in terms of their common-ground model enriched with the conception of accommodation. As Barbara Abbott (2008, p. 526, f. 4) notes, however, the common-ground model of presupposition and the conception of presupposition accommodation are two independent theoretical proposals: one can reject the former and accept the latter. In what follows, then, I take presupposition accommodation to be a real phenomenon and remain neutral about the nature of pragmatic presupposition. What is more, I am interested in the phenomenon of accommodation occurring in illocutionary games. More specifically, I focus on accommodation of Austinian presuppositions and claim that they can be informative to both the speaker and the hearer. Before I elaborate on this idea in section 4, however, let me considered the next two examples discussed by Lewis.

Let us consider, first, a game between two players who 'are both willing that one of them should be under the control of the other' (Lewis, 1979, p. 340). Lewis calls the first player the *slave*, and the other the *master*. (One can alsp call the first player the *law-maker*, and the other the *law-consumer.*) The master controls the slave by changing the boundary between permissible and impermissible courses of action. He does this job by uttering sentences of the following forms:

(9) It is permissible to do *A*.
(10) It is impermissible to do *B*.

According to Lewis, the mechanism whereby the master's utterances affect the domain of permissibility facts involves accommodation. More specifically, the fact that it is permissible

to do *A* becomes part of the score relative to which the master's utterance of (9) is evaluated; analogously, the fact that it is impermissible to do *B* becomes part of the score relative to which the master's utterance of (10) is evaluated. What motivates this form of accommodation is the need to maintain the default supposition that whatever the master says is true.

In a similar vein, Lewis accounts for illocutionary acts made with the help of explicit performative formulae, e.g.:

(11) I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*.

Contrary to Austin, Lewis (1979, p. 355-356) claims that any utterance of (11) — like any other *explicitly performative utterance* (see Lewis, 1972, pp. 210-211) — is an assertion that is either true or false. He acknowledges that it takes effect as an act of naming, too. He argues, however, that this additional illocutionary act contributes to conversational score *via* the mechanism of accommodation. Let us add that this mechanism is guided by the need to maintain the default presumption that the utterance of (11) under discussion is a true assertion.

It is possible, however, to develop non-Lewisian accounts of the master-slave game and the explicit perfpmative talk. One can argue, namely, that sentences formed as (9) and (10) can be used to make direct exercitive acts, and utterances of (11) normally constitute direct acts of naming a ship. According to Austin, an 'exercitive is the giving of a decision in favour of or against a certain course of action (…). It is a decision that something is to be so' (Austin, 1975, p. 155). What is more, 'exercitives are the exercising of powers, rights, or influences' (*ibid*, p. 151). Therefore, to make a binding exercitive act in uttering (9) is to bring about a new permissibility fact or, in other words, to enact a new rule (see McGowan, 2004, 2009) that becomes part of conversational score. It is also instructive to note that the

felicity of this act presupposes that the speaker of (9) is a master and, as the corollary of this, is endowed with certain deontic powers. In short, the master-slave game is an illocutionary game that is governed by certain direct and appropriateness rules, respectively. The game has its own accommodation rule, too. The rule allows one to become a master if one's utterances of (9) and (10) are taken to be binding exercitive acts. (Let us note that this form of accommodation is not allowed for in Lewis' original model of the master-slave game.) It should be stressed, however, that this rule can function only against the background of certain appropriateness rules.

3.3.3 What accommodation is not. On the so-called conversational exercitives

Let me end this subsection with a comment on Mary K. McGowan account of conversational exercitives. In *Conversational Exercitives: Something Else We Do with Our Words* she claims that 'any conversational contribution that invokes a rule of accommodation changes the bounds of conversational permissibility and is therefore an (indirect) exercitive speech act' (McGowan, 2004, p. 93). She argues that conversational exercitives, unlike *direct* or *Austinian* exercitives, do not depend on either the speaker's having certain intentions or the hearer's uptake. In short, they can exist and take effect without being agreed upon. What is more, by contrast to the Austinian exercitives made in uttering sentences (9) and (10), conversational exercitives do not represent the permissibility facts that they enact. Her argument can be summarized as follows:

> Since rules of accommodation adjust the score so that what actually happens counts as fair play, any conversational contribution that invokes a rule of accommodation thereby changes the score. Since what counts as fair play depends on the score (and the rules), changing the score changes the bounds of conversational permissibility. Thus, any conversational contribution that invokes a rule of accommodation is an exercitive speech act in virtue of changing what is

permissible in that conversation. (McGowan, 2004, p. 99)

In my view, however, it is better to say that accommodating mechanisms in some respects *resemble* exercitive acts. To say this, however, is not to assume that they *are* exercitive acts. Let us focus on the following example of accommodating a personal Austinian presupposition: Alice, Tom and a few other people survive a plane crash and find themselves on a desert island. While talking to her colleagues, Alice utters the following sentence:

(3)   Go and pick up wood.

Let us assume that according to one of the appropriateness rules of a master-slave game one can perform a binding order in uttering an imperative sentence only if one stands in an appropriate authority relation to one's audience. In other words, the felicity of Alice's command made in uttering (3) presupposes that it is part of the score relative to which this utterance is evaluated that she is endowed with the power to issue her colleagues binding directives. Assume, however, that this requirement is not satisfied prior to time *t* at which the utterance under discussion is produced: before the fatal flight Alice and her colleagues did not know each other. Does it entail that in uttering (3) Alice fails to perform a binding directive act? Not necessarily. What is presupposed by the felicity of her command is that her power to issue binding commands is part of the personal component of the illocutionary score relative to which her act is to be evaluated, but not part of the score prior to the time of her utterance. What is more, the former can result from adjusting the latter to make Alice's utterance a binding command. Note, however, that the accommodation of her power to issue binding commands can involve nothing more than the re-occurrence of an appropriate pattern of interaction, *i.e.*, the pattern that involves Alice's uttering an imperative sentence and her colleagues' complying with what they are

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told. In short, the actual force of Alice's utterance is subject to interactional negotiation.

Viewed from the perspective of McGowan's model, Alice's utterance of (3) is to be viewed as a conversational exercitive. Let us recall, however, that 'exercitives are the exercising of powers, rights, or influences' (Austin, 1975, p. 151). One can ask, therefore, whether the act whereby Alice establishes her authority over her colleagues can be regarded as the exercising of her power? I am inclined to say that it is not, since what establishes Alice's power and authority on the desert island is the act itself. One way out would be to claim that the act involves the exercising of powers on the part of Alice's colleagues, who take her utterance to be a biding command and thereby contribute to the constitution of her status as a master. If this was so, however, one should say that the power-establishing act in question was performed not by Alice, but by her colleagues.

In summary, it is true that any move made in an illocutionary game that invokes a rule of accommodation changes the personal component of the illocutionary score relative to which it is evaluated and thereby brings about a change in the domain of permissibility facts. The crucial point here is that to change one's deontic status is to redefine the boundary between what one is and what one is not permitted to do. To acknowledge this, however, is not to justify the opinion that any conversational contribution that invokes a rule of accommodation is an exercitive act. In my view, to call such a contribution an *exercitive* is at least misleading. It is better to call it an act that triggers the process of score accommodation.

4 Concluding comments

4.1 Two methodological remarks

It is worth stressing that what motivates describing this or that individual

conversation as an illocutionary game is not the project of accounting for the dynamics and structure of discourse in terms of force-sensitive rules, i.e., rules stated over illocutionary act types. In my view, the project has been seriously undermined by Levinson (1981), who in his paper "The essential inadequacies of speech act models of dialogue" argues that there is no systematic and independently describable procedure that could implement what Gazdar (1981) calls *speech act assignment*: the function *from* utterances construed as basic units of conversation *to* illocutionary acts made in them. The failure of this project, however, has no bearing on the reliability of the conception of illocutionary games. It is worth stressing that we describe a given conversation as an illocutionary game to allow and account for the norm-producing function of its constituent utterances. More generally, the actual motive behind introducing the concept of illocutionary games is not the need to construct a comprehensive account of discourse dynamics, but to explain how the human social world — construed as a dynamic system of institutional and deontic facts — is created and modified in the course of linguistic interaction. In particular, it is the need to account for certain norm-producing forms of discourse: negotiations, legal talk, cross-examinations, argumentative dialogues, and so on. In short, I do not expect an adequate description of illocutionary games to lay the foundations for a theory of conversational structure formulated in terms of sequencing rules stated over illocutionary act types. In my view, the actual aim of an adequate account of illocutionary games is much more modest: it is to account for the institution-creating function of language and speech.

It is also instructive to note that there are two alternative approaches to modelling illocutionary games: reductionist and pluralist. To adopt the former is to attempt to reduce all the moves made in a given game to acts of a certain type — say, assertions — and, next, to account for their apparent non-assertoric forces in terms of accommodation. Undoubtedly, this is the strategy implemented by Lewis in his account of the master-slave game as well as in his model of explicit performative talks. The pluralist approach to the

study of illocutionary games, by contrast, consists in positing a certain number of illocutionary act types and a corresponding system of direct kinematics rules; this is what takes place in the case of the non-Lewisian account of the master-slave-game discussed in subsection 3.3.1. In short, any reductionist account minimizes the number of direct rules and posits a considerable number of accommodation rules; any pluralist account, by contrast, minimizes the number of accommodation rules and posits a considerable number of kinematics rules. I am sympathetic to the pluralist approach: I assume, namely, that there are many different illocutionary game types construed as 'goal-defined, socially constituted, bounded events with constraints on participants, setting, and so on, but above all on the kinds of allowable contributions' (Levinson, 1979, p. 368) or, more specifically, on the types of allowable illocutionary act types. It should be stressed, however, that the score keeping model proposed in this paper favours neither the pluralist nor the reductionist approach. It is a research tool that can be used to formulate certain kinds of questions: questions probing mechanisms responisble for generating certain institutional or deontic facts.

4.2 Externalism about illocutionary practice

The phrase „presupposition *p* is accommodated" can be read either as "*p* becomes a score element" or as "*p* is recognized as a score element by the participants in a game". Let us call the former sense *objective accommodation*, and the latter *subjective accommodation*. Having this distinction in mind, let us discuss the externalist background of the model proposed in section 3.

A personal or deontic presupposition of an act can be accommodated objectively without being accommodated subjectively. To illustrate this possibility, let us consider again the game played on the desert island by Alice and her colleagues. Alice's standing in the

required authority relation to her audience can become a score element without being so represented by the participants in the game. Let us note, namely, that the objective accommodation of her power to issue binding commands can involve nothing more than the re-occurrence of an appropriate pattern of interaction, *i.e.*, the pattern that involves Alice's uttering an imperative sentence and her colleagues' complying with what they are told; in other words, the actual force of Alice's utterance of (3) is subject to interactional negotiation. The Stalnakerian or pragmatic presupposition of an act, by contrast, cannot be accommodated objectively without being accommodated subjectively: no proposition can become part of the common ground among the communicating agents without being believed or at least accepted by them.

It is also instructive to note that the mechanism responsible for subjective accommodation of Stalnakerian presuppositions is in a sense *asymmetric*: it is the hearer, not the speaker, who is invited to subjectively accommodate the pragmatic presupposition of the speaker's act; the crucial point here is that the presupposition in question is a propositional attitude of the speaker. By contrast, the mechanism whereby Austinian presuppositions are subjectively accommodated is in a sense *symmetric*: depending on the situation, it is either the speaker or the hearer who is invited to recognize and accept deontic presuppositions of the speaker's act. To illustrate the former possibility, let us assume that in uttering sentence (3) Alice has no intention to make a binding command; as a matter of fact, the only purpose behind her utterance is to advise others or to think out loud. As the interaction proceeds, however, she can come to realize that her utterances of imperative sentences are systematically taken up to be binding orders. That is to say, she can find herself invited to recognize and accept her leadership as a score component.

Finally, let me say a word on the externalist background of the presented account. It is instructive to note, firstly, that the distinction between subjective and objective accommodation presupposes a view that can be called *externalism about uptake* or, for

short, *uptake externalism*. According to this view, at least in some cases the hearer's uptake is manifested in his or her response to the speaker's act and involves no conscious or occurrent representation of its force and meaning. For example, Alice's colleagues can be regarded as taking up her utterance of (3) to be a binding command because they comply with what they are told. In other words, the directive force of Alice's utterance can be tacitly negotiated without being mentally represented or, in a different perspective, it can be objectively accommodated without being subjectively accommodated. Secondly, according to a view that can be called *externalism about illocutionary agency* or, for short, *illocutionary agency externalism*, at least in some cases the actual force of an act can be determined by the hearer's uptake rather than by what the speaker has in mind and, as the corollary of this, that at least in some cases it is the hearer, not the speaker, that is in a privileged position to recognize the force of the speaker's act (for a discussion of this idea, see Navarro-Reyes, 2010; cf. McGowan, 2005, p. 95, f. 5). This view can be found among the assumptions of the proposed account, too. Consider, for instance, the asymmetric character of the mechanism responsible for the subjective accommodation of deontic presuppositions. Let as assume, for example, that in the desert island scenario it is Alice, not her colleagues, who is invited to subjectively accommodate the presupposition of her directive acts. To assume this, however, is to assume that her utterance of (3) can be a binding command despite her being unaware of its actual force. In other words, it is to accept the externalist idea that at least in some cases the force of an act "is not in the speaker's head".

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