‘Yo!’ and ‘Lo!’

The Pragmatic Topography of the Space of Reasons

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sition to note that the speech act was entitled and successfully performed—the declarative was true, the imperative was appropriate, the vocative properly recognized the one it hailed—and to note this evaluation in speech. While we can evaluate the propriety of a speech act with a third-personal declarative ("Sue had every right to tell Joe not to buy that car"; "Sarah's version of the proof was correct"), we can *acknowledge* our uptake of the normative claim made by a speech act only by way of a speech act with an agent-relative input. (Only Joe can acknowledge Sue's telling him not to buy that car, even while we can stand by and note her propriety in doing so.)

The necessarily agent-relative, individuating input of acknowledgments will be significant in the next chapter. What it shows is that while many speech acts have agent-neutral outputs, *all* speech acts, *insofar as they call for normative uptake and acknowledgment,* must call upon *particular* individuals to acknowledge them, and therefore must to that extent have agent-relative outputs. So, for instance, even if a declarative makes an agent-neutral truth-claim that belongs in public space, the way it calls upon *me* to give it normative uptake is never interchangeable with the way it calls upon *you* to do so. Only I can acknowledge its call upon me; only you can acknowledge its call upon you.

Any kind of speech act can be acknowledged. However, acknowledgments bear a special relationship to vocatives. Acknowledgments of vocatives crystallize and purify the acknowledging function of discourse, because acknowledgment *just is* what vocatives call for. The acknowledgment of a vocative is self-referential, in the specific sense that the normative uptake to which it gives expression just is the uptake of the demand for this expression. Indeed, the second-personal vocative-acknowledgment exchange, in its pure form, *just is* the discursive expression of mutual recognition, in its pure form. This equivalence will be important to us in our final chapter, when we argue that, as Hegel thought, mutual recognition is a constitutive condition for the possibility of a community of agents subject to the claims of the world and of one another. First, in the following chapter, we argue that the second-personal vocative call for acknowledgment, whose function is to forge such mutual recognition, is an essential pragmatic component of all discourse.

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The Essential Second Person

Riddle: "What do you call a boomerang that doesn't come back to you?"
Answer: "A stick."

—*Anonymous*

In *The Dialogic Imagination,* Mikhail Bakhtin argues for what he calls the "internal dialogism" of speech: "The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it, and structures itself in the answer's direction."[1] This structural call for an answer is the essence of the vocative. In this chapter we argue that in order for a speech act to perform *any* normative function—that is, in order for it to count as a speech act at all—it must have a vocative function, in addition to whatever other functions it has. This vocative function is a condition for the possibility of the speech act's doing or meaning whatever else it does or means—or as we shall put it, all speech acts contain a *transcendental vocative.* Speech acts not only strive to make normative claims upon those whom they target, but they call second-personally upon those to whom they speak to recognize themselves as bound by these normative claims, and to acknowledge this uptake. That is to say, to speak is to hail.

Because vocative speech is necessarily second-personal, this means that, on our account, language has an essential second-personal pragmatic dimension. In Chapter 2 we argued that the ability to mark the first-personal perspective in language in a way that deictically attaches speech acts to points of view is essential to the possibility of discourse.

1. Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays,* trans. Vadim Liapunov (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 280.

We also claimed that Brandom did not have the resources to make sense of the pragmatic structure of this first-personal ownership of speech acts, because he treated normative commitments and entitlements exclusively as impersonal scorecards rather than as inherently owned by embodied subjects with points of view. In this chapter we make a parallel claim, not about the *owner* of a speech act, but about its *target*. The ability to mark the *direction* of a speech act within language is essential to the possibility of discourse. The direction of a speech act cannot be reduced to or cashed out in terms of any combination of its impersonal and contextual features; rather, this direction is a basic structural feature of the speech act itself. Any account of the pragmatics of discourse must build in from the beginning the fact that speech acts are directed (though not necessarily direct) transactions *between* agents, as opposed to just shifts in abstract scorecards of commitments and entitlements.

Our argument in Chapter 2 was that discursive communities have to have the capacity to express their first-personal uptake in recognitives, and hence that the ability to express the first-personal perspective is essential to discourse. There, we did not draw the conclusion that *every* speech act has to give expression to this first-personal perspective, but only that it has to be possible to give such expression in speech. At the same time, as Austin and others have made clear, any particular speech act will depend for its felicity and success upon a host of commitments and statuses of various kinds, and so our capacities to perform speech acts have a generally holistic, interdependent character. Our claim in this chapter is quite a bit stronger in form than either of these: here we claim not just that any language must have the resources to enable directed, second-person speech, nor even just that the ability to produce some vocatives is a holistically necessary condition upon the ability to engage in discourse at all. Rather, we claim that *each* felicitous speech act contains a vocative, second-personal call. Although we will consider some partial exceptions to this universal claim later in the chapter, the exceptions will turn out to be derivative variants on the basic vocative structure of speech; they will not detract from the fundamental role that the vocative call plays in making it possible for a speech act to execute any discursive pragmatic function.

Now this is not, of course, to make the absurd claim that the second-person voice is the *only* voice in which we can speak. Many declaratives, prescriptives, etc., are clearly spoken in the third-person or impersonal voice. Our claim will be that speech acts have a second-personal, vocative function *in addition* to whatever other function they have. There is, as we have seen, nothing odd about a single utterance serving more than one pragmatic function. The utterance "That music is awfully loud" can function simultaneously as a declarative description of the sound level (in a third-person voice, with an agent-neutral input and output) and as an imperatival order to turn it down (in a second-person voice, with an agent-relative input and output). "How's it going?" can serve as an interrogative, a vocative, and an acknowledgment of a vocative all at once. We seek to uncover the transcendental place of the second-person voice and its vocative call within language, not to exclude or diminish the many other voices and functions that make up discourse.

7.1 Concrete Habitation of the Space of Reasons

Throughout this book we have taken it as a core principle that what a speech act—as a material act performed by and among agents within a discursive community—does is to draw upon the normative entitlements of its speaker in striving to change the normative commitments and entitlements of others. As such, in speaking, we make normative *claims* upon others. A genuine speech act can have an agent-relative or an agent-neutral output but it cannot have a null output, which is to say that it must seek to make claims on *someone* (though it may not succeed). Once we situate speech acts within a social context, the insight that they must seek to make a claim on someone can appear fairly trivial.

But this, in and of itself, does not yet show that this claim-making is essentially second-personal. For, we might ask, why can't it just be *true* that a speech act by person A makes a claim upon person B, without the speech act being second-personal? Even once we recognize that all speech is structured so as make a claim *on someone*, we might still think that it can be an objective fact that such a claim has been made, without the speaker attempting to *transmit* the claim through a second-personal call. When the government changes the tax laws, the claim on me to pay taxes changes, whether or not I receive a second-personal communication informing me of this. And every legal play in football changes the normative status of every other player, but the plays are not directed *at* anyone. The hard part will be arguing that, in speech, claims must be issued in an essentially second-person voice, and that they must seek up-

take and recognitive acknowledgement of that uptake. We must show that speech acts not only make claims on *someone*, but are essentially directed claims made *by me, on you*.

Since the beginning of this book we have portrayed speech acts as *striving* to change the normative status of others. Performing an utterance does not magically transform the normative status of others in the community without any mechanism or possibility of failure; rather, it is through concrete communicative interactions that involve holding one another responsible, granting entitlements to one another, and making demands upon one another that our speech acts strive to effect their normative functions. Normative statuses are not abstract entities that shift around in some kind of ideal space—on some great, abstractly characterizable Platonic scoreboard, as it were. To think of language in this way would undercut the point of putting pragmatics front and center, which requires recognizing language as a concrete normative phenomenon, grasped in the first instance as a body of skillful interactions among speakers.

But in order for my performances to constitute discursive speech acts that are entitled by my normative positions and that make normative claims upon others, at least two conditions must be met. On the one hand, I must *have* a determinate normative position within the space of reasons; I must be located, not just *inside* the space of reasons, but at some particular place inside it. On the other hand, my speech acts must constitute *interactions* with particular other people upon whom I make claims. No normative scorecards will actually shift except through the material efforts of determinately located speakers making claims upon other determinately located speakers.

Yet when authors such as McDowell and Sellars speak of our habitation of the space of reasons, there is something oddly missing in their use of the metaphor. While the space of reasons is richly articulate in the sense that it displays normative and rational structure (by definition), it doesn't seem, in the work of these authors, to provide much by way of articulate locations for the *people* who inhabit it. We get the sense from their writing that one is *in* this space only by having access to the reasons that give it its structure; one is either in or out, but in contrast with typical spaces, one does not occupy any *particular* location within this one.

However, we inhabit the space of reasons not just by being able to recognize it, but by *negotiating* it—we use reasons, are claimed by them, are thwarted by them, and attribute them to others, for instance, and these negotiations help fix our particular normative position within this space. Each of us will occupy a unique, non-fungible place in this space, if only because we are open to at least slightly different deliverances of sensibility, and hence entitled to different observatives (though our place will also be unique because it is articulated by every interpersonal relationship, every social role, etc., that makes a normative claim upon us).

Brandom gives us language for talking about individual locations within the space of reasons, by introducing his 'scorecards' of commitments and entitlements, which mark the social distinction between undertaking and attribution. Out of all the normative statuses that there are, Brandom suggests, some particular set of them attaches to each agent, and this set defines her place in normative space. Furthermore, we can 'move' others around in this space by altering their scorecards through the claims we ourselves make—we can pass entitlements on, impute commitments, and so forth.

But what does it take for a normative status to *belong to me*? As far as Brandom's account goes, my scorecard simply attaches to me like legal property. He tells us nothing about the pragmatic relationship between me and my scorecard that makes the scorecard meaningfully mine, rather than just somehow correlated with me. Nor does he explain the "motion" of statuses: how your utterance of a declarative, for instance, manages *in practice* to pass on an entitlement to me and thereby change my place in normative space, by making a *claim* upon me and demanding my uptake of a normative status.

In Chapter 5 we extended John Perry's argument for the essential indexical, arguing that in order for my commitments and entitlements to exert governing force upon my practices, I must have a practical, first-personal grasp that they are *mine*. This perspectival grasp of the space of reasons is a logical condition for any of my statuses making a difference to me at all. In other words, normative space requires essentially indexical knowledge for its negotiation analogous to what Perry showed was required for the negotiation of material space. Recognizing all the commitments and entitlements that attach to subject position **x** (including the commitment to be bound by one's commitments, etc.), and recognizing that Mark is the inhabitant of subject position **x**, gets me,

Mark, no closer to genuine normative commitment. It is only when I first-personally recognize that *I* am the one who is so committed that I enter practical normative space. Hence I must not only recognize my commitments and entitlements but also have practical, perspectival uptake of the fact that they are *mine*—they commit and entitle *me*.

Nor is our practical grasp of our first-personal relationship to our own normative statuses a kind of knowledge that is a required *accompaniment* to these statuses. Rather, our normative statuses are not in a position to have a hold over us at all, and cannot be said to make a normative claim on us, except insofar as we have such a first-personal grasp of our own place in normative space. Thus the point here is not the reasonably familiar one that normative commitments must be materially enacted and not just theoretically attached to us, but the more specific one that such material enactment requires first-personal ownership of our place in normative space in order to be so enacted.

Yet the ability to locate ourselves first-personally in normative—or for that matter material—space is not sufficient to render our knowledge of such space practically deployable. For crucially—although Perry does not make this point—in order to usefully place ourselves in any space we need to be relationally anchored. For all the theoretical knowledge I want *plus* the first-personal knowledge of where I am on a theoretical map will still leave this "I" an empty point with no substantive or usable relationships to the rest of the world. That is, knowing my place on the map provides me with neither scale nor orientation in a form deployable in practical inference. I am here now, and there is a bottle three feet off to my right. But how much is three feet and which way is right? What I need is *both* a place on the map *and* some practical ability to orient myself from this place *to* some other place, in order to have any practical knowledge at all. In the case of my practical placing in a world of things, then, I need both first-personal knowledge of where I am on the map and also practical knowledge of how to find something else *from here*. I must understand not only that "I am here," but also that *that* is the lake, *she* is over here, *this* is how long a foot is. I must grasp how other things are located and locatable relative to me. Indeed, I need a great deal of such relational and demonstrative knowledge in order to give any usable bite to my theoretical and indexical knowledge.

But we can run a parallel argument for the ability to negotiate normative space. In order to have a place in the space of discursive reasons, we have seen, I need to understand not just some abstract list of normative statuses, but that some of these statuses are *mine* and have a governing hold over *me*. What does it take to have such practical, first-personal grasp of a normative status? Among other things, it requires understanding how the claims of *others* make claims on me, and likewise, the kinds of claims that I can make on others. In order to grasp the import of an imperative or a vocative, for instance, I must understand when such a speech act is directed at me. Likewise, to understand my position in normative space is to understand, in part, to whom I can legitimately address various speech acts and what sorts of claims I can make upon which others. I must know not only that I am entitled to speak differently to my children than to others' children, but also that *this* is *my* child. Given the inherently communicative nature of discourse, without such a relational understanding of *others'* positions in normative space, my understanding of my own position is reduced to something empty and undeployable. Even when we are primarily dealing in declaratives, negotiating a conversation involves grasping that I disagree *with Rebecca* by saying P, I agree *with Mark* by saying Q, and so forth. Hence the practical, deictic understanding that is a condition for habitation in the space of reasons and participation in discourse includes understanding of my own position in this space, and, interdependently, understanding of others' positions in relation to me.

From all this it follows not only that my grasp of the space of reasons must be both first-personal and relational, but also that I must have an understanding—as both user and recipient—of the *directedness* of speech. For in order to deploy all this perspectival and relational knowledge, I must be able to direct my speech acts to others and to recognize when they have been directed at me. Knowing *that* a speech act can be directed at me, or at others, is not equivalent to knowing *how* to direct it at others or how to hear that it is directed at *me*.

In Chapter 2 we argued that Brandom's account of the pragmatics of language, with the primacy it accords to declarative utterances, did not have the resources to make sense of how commitments and entitlements could be first-personally *owned*, nor of how such ownership could be expressed in language. For all of the same reasons, his account also cannot make sense of the second-personal, directed force of speech acts. His speech acts make a difference to others, but they do so agent-neutrally and automatically—for Brandom, shifts in normative commitments and

entitlements simply *happen* because of speech acts, and while he surely grants that this 'happening' is incarnated in a material process, he leaves it as a separate question for others to worry about how this material process might go. He realizes that this process occurs through communicative acts that we direct at one another, but for him, this is contingent. It strictly makes no difference to my normative position, for Brandom, whether I am *told* things or whether they are simply 'said', in some impersonal way (see section 3 of this chapter for a discussion of this distinction).

What we have uncovered, however, is that the normative discursive practices that Brandom describes cannot exist at all except insofar as they occur between speakers with a rich, relational, deictic grasp of their position in the space of reasons, as well as a grasp of first- and second-person voice and the directedness of utterances. We concretely inhabit the space of reasons first- and second-personally, and not just as spectators.

So far we have offered no argument that *each* speech act has a second-personal component, let alone a specifically vocative component. What we have shown, rather, is that it is a global condition upon being a member of a discursive community that one be able to locate oneself first-personally, address others second-personally, and understand oneself as the second-personal target of others' speech acts. Thus competence at second-personal discursive interactions is a necessary condition for linguistic competence in general.

7.2 Second-Person Speech

Earlier we explained that the second-person voice that interests us is not that which is marked in the surface grammar of a sentence. Sentences with a second-personal grammatical structure can function, at the level of pragmatics, as impersonal declaratives ("You are wearing a red sweater"), and utterances that do not include the word 'you' or its cognates can function second-personally, by having an address to another person built into their pragmatic function ("Please close the door!"). Not all speech acts that are, in fact, directed at another person are primarily spoken in the second-person voice, in this pragmatic sense. If they were, then given the communicative nature of language, there would be no room left for third-personal speech. Rather, some but

not all speech acts primarily execute a normative function that cannot be coherently understood except as a directed address from a speaker to a particular audience. For example, all imperatives are second-personal in this sense. As we saw earlier, an imperative must be issued *to* someone in order for it to count as an imperative at all. The idea of "translating" an imperative into the third or first person while retaining its meaning or force does not get any conceptual traction. "Close the door!" makes a specific demand upon someone in particular (or upon several particular people) *by* addressing the target of this demand. A "translation" into the third person, such as "Mark ought to close the door," is a prescriptive with a different pragmatic structure and function; it does not constitute an order at all.

A speech act can have normative implications for someone even if it is not structurally directed *to* that person as an address. For instance, declaratives, we have argued, have normative implications for everyone. If I take a speaker to be authoritative, I can recognize myself as having new commitments and entitlements simply by overhearing a declarative utterance of hers, even if it was not particularly addressed to me. Prescriptives have agent-relative normative implications for the person about whom they make an ought-claim, whether or not they are uttered *to* that person. But the way in which an imperative (for instance) makes a claim on someone *by* addressing her is not simply reducible to the fact that it has normative implications for her, nor even that it has an agent-relative output for her. If I tell Richard "Mark should close the door," my utterance (assuming it is properly entitled) has normative implications for Mark, but it does not *address* Mark. But if I tell Mark "Close the door!" I make a claim on Mark by addressing him (assuming, again, that my utterance is properly entitled). Indeed, I make a constative claim on him, imputing a commitment produced by the act of address itself. The imperative is second-personal because its normative function is carried by a directed address. More generally, second-personal speech acts are those in which the act of addressing is central to the normative function of the speech act.

But what is it to *address* someone in speech, as opposed to simply speaking in a way that makes a normative claim upon her? An address does not merely shift the normative status of its target; rather, it makes a *demand*. It *calls upon* its target, not only to recognize the force of the normative claims made upon her by the speech act, but also to *acknowledge*

her uptake of these claims to the speaker. As Darwall puts it, the second-personal address is a *summons* to respond by recognizing the force of the speech act.[2] When we address someone, our speech has misfired if that person does not acknowledge the address in turn. Of course, not every address calls for an acknowledgment in the form of an explicit speech act. As we pointed out in Chapter 6, acknowledgments often take the form of actions; one typically (though not always) acknowledges an imperative by simply following it, for instance. All the same, a suitable acknowledgment of an address must be a recognitive that is itself directed at the addressing speaker.

Second-personal speech forges a transactional normative relationship with the target of that speech, and asks that target to participate appropriately in that relationship. Part (though usually not all) of the participation it demands is reciprocal acknowledgment of the normative uptake of that speech. Speech that does not call for such acknowledgment fails to be second-personal. For example, you do not actually issue an imperative if you whisper "Close the door" either to no one in particular or "to" someone from whom you could in no way hope to receive acknowledgment. Rather, in issuing an imperative, you must recognize an appropriate target for your imperative, and demand something of him, and in demanding you must call upon him to recognize himself as the one targeted by your demand, and to respond appropriately, expressing his normative uptake of the demand. His response to your imperative, whether it is compliance, pointed refusal, or anything in between, serves as a second-personal acknowledgment of your speech act.

But this is just to say that the addressing function of language is interchangeable with its vocative function. The vocative moment in second-personal speech is what makes the difference between a speech act directed at *you* and a speech act that merely has normative implications for the person who happens to be you. If you understand the semantics of a second-personal speech act such as an imperative, but do not practically recognize that *you* are its target, you have not in fact understood its import. As Darwall repeatedly points out, the address is a call for mutual recognition. The vocative, as we saw in the last chapter, is the discursive distillation of such a call. Hence all second-personal discourse performs a vocative function, albeit usually (or perhaps always) an impure one; indeed, *it is this vocative dimension that makes it second-personal.* All structurally second-personal speech acts—imperatives, ostensions, promises, entreaties, invitations, and so forth—therefore have a vocative function. Imperatives include a vocative call that seeks acknowledgment in the form of uptake of that which the imperative demands. This is true even of alethic imperatives, wherein I call you to do something you were committed to doing anyhow. In this case, if you fail to honor your commitment, you now fail *me,* and not just the commitment itself.

Since it turns out that the second-personal address and the vocative call are one and the same thing, the claim that all speech has a vocative function and the claim that all speech has a second-personal dimension are in fact equivalent. Our task, then, is to show that even speech acts whose primary voice is *not* second-personal—for example, declaratives, observatives, and prescriptives—must at the same time function as second-personal addresses.

2. Stephen Darwall, *The Second-Person Standpoint: Morality, Respect, and Accountability* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 161.

7.3 Tellings, Holdings, and Transcendental Vocatives

Brandom offers us a framework for thinking about speech acts as normative functions: what a speech act does is transform the commitments and entitlements of those who fall under the scope of its output. We have filled in this framework by arguing that such functions must be incarnated within a concrete discursive space structured by first-personally-owned normative positions and second-personally-directed speech acts. A concrete speech act is a performance by an agent who is positioned first-personally in discursive space, and who strives, at least partly through directed speech, to change the status of others who are also so positioned. Furthermore, competent speakers must be skilled at recognizing the direction of various speech acts, and concomitantly, at recognizing when they are themselves the second-personal target of a speech act.

In such a concrete space thus articulated by owned subject positions, a speech act succeeds in having any pragmatic force at all only when (1) it is the kind of thing that *can* be concretely recognized and taken up as having such force, and (2) it is part of the structure of the act that it seeks to be recognized and taken up in this way. If it is not part of the structural aim of a speech act to make a claim on someone and demand recognition of this claim, then that speech act fails to have any actual,

lived pragmatic force at all; part of what makes a speech act a *claim* is that it seeks normative uptake from agents capable of recognizing normative claims.

This seeking attaches to the performance of the speech act itself, regardless of whether the speech act in fact gains all the recognition it ideally seeks. This is to say that the speech act strives to change the normative statuses of various agents, even though many of them will never be in a position to recognize its claim. (As we saw, this is obvious in the case of a warranted declarative, which rarely receives universal uptake.) But how, then, can we maintain our core pragmatic insight, that successful normative changes can never be *mere* shifts in Platonic status, but must rather be registered in the embodied uptake of concrete agents? The only possibility is that any given output of the speech act—whether or not this output is recognized by everyone who falls under its scope—must be constituted by someone's concrete recognition.

Interestingly, the person who gives the speech act concrete recognition need not always be the person most directly affected by its claim. For instance, if I tell my lawyer that Richard is the beneficiary of my estate, then Richard's normative status changes in an agent-relative way, even if he is in no position to give my speech act recognitive uptake. However, I have not succeeded in changing Richard's normative status if *nobody,* including my lawyer, gives my speech act this uptake. (At other times, the person from whom a speech act seeks concrete recognition must coincide with the person targeted by the speech act, for instance in the case of imperatives.) A speech act, that is, succeeds in having real normative consequences only if someone successfully recognizes it. Therefore, speech can structurally *seek* to alter the normative status of anyone by actually *holding someone* accountable for its uptake. (Plenty of speech acts are unsuccessful, and strive for recognition while being taken up by no one and changing no one's normative status—speech acts may go unheard, their legitimacy may be rejected, etc. But *most* speech acts must be at least partially successful in order for discursive practices as a whole to get off the ground.)[3]

3. Prayer, for instance, is a type of second-person speech act that always fails to receive the acknowledgment it seeks. If someone prays silently, or by herself with no one there to hear, then her speech act will totally fail to be recognized. But it still strives for recognition and acknowledgment. Working out the pragmatics of prayer as a distinctive type of speech would be interesting, for either a theist or an atheist. It is not clear if prayer is best understood as a regular attempt to converse with a (nonexistent) being, or whether it has a different structure, given that the purported target of the speech act is omniscient, not materially embodied, etc. We would like to take up this analysis, whose interest was pointed out by an anonymous referee, in a later work.

But we saw in the previous chapter that *holding accountable* is itself a second-personal normative act that establishes and engages others in a normative relationship. Indeed, it is just the act that constitutes the vocative call. I can alter someone's normative status third-personally, but I can hold her accountable for this status only second-personally, by recognizing her as a target of my speech act and calling her to recognize herself as targeted by it. Abstract 'scores' become genuine normative statuses only when they are taken up in practice. In speaking in a way that actually has pragmatic force within a discursive space structured by first-personal positions and second-personal relations, in other words, we speak by calling to others to recognize and take up the force of our words for them. Whatever else speech does, including drawing upon agent-neutral entitlements and making agent-neutral claims, it does it by seeking to forge such a relationship of mutual recognition between speaker and target audience through a vocative call. This is the transcendental vocative moment that underwrites all other pragmatic functions of speech. In some sense, QED.

This conclusion is hardest to accept in the case of declarative speech acts with agent-neutral inputs and outputs, which seem to be paradigmatically impersonal rather than second-personal. The pragmatic function of a declarative is by definition not anchored in entitlements that are specific to any particular agent, nor is the claim it makes specific to any particular audience. Hence it seems a stretch to claim that any concrete, functional declarative must involve a second-personal call. The trick is to show how even a speech act with an agent-neutral input and output can have a built-in vocative function. In other words, we need to show that the vocative function of a speech act is necessary, regardless of the primary structure of its input and output. If we can prove this necessity, then that ought to be sufficient to convince us that other non-second-personal speech acts such as observatives and prescriptives also have an analogous vocative, second-personal dimension.

In "Getting Told and Being Believed," Richard Moran explores the pragmatics of *telling.* When I tell you something, I do not merely issue a declarative within the range of your hearing. Rather, I *offer you my word*

that something is true. I take responsibility for my words and give you the entitlement to hold me to this responsibility. In telling you something, then, I invite you into a relationship of trust and normative responsibility. Edward Hinchman, arguing similarly in "Telling as Inviting to Trust," distinguishes the way that we merely make an entitlement available in asserting, from the way that we *offer* an entitlement in telling. Brandom claims that assertions pass on entitlements, but he is concerned only with assertions that, as it were, are offered up impersonally into public space. Moran and Hinchman suggest instead that entitlements to declaratives are actively passed on through tellings, and not just impersonal assertions (although an entitlement can certainly be picked up from an impersonal assertion, without it's having been specifically offered).[4]

Moran points out that often my reasons for believing what someone tells me can be internal to the second-personal relationship between us. I may accept the call to trust that is built into her act of telling something *to me*. When someone tells me something, Moran argues, I can take her words merely as evidence for the truth of what she tells, or I can do something quite different: I can accept the normative commitment that she makes in her act of telling. In doing so, I perform an act that is not just belief-formation but the establishment of a normative relationship of commitments and responsibilities. We "place ourselves in another's hands," as he puts it, rather than just adding to our evidence base. "It is the special relations of telling someone, being told, and accepting or refusing another's word that are the home of the network of beliefs we acquire through human testimony. And these relations . . . provide a kind of reason for belief that is categorically different from that provided by evidence."[5]

Brandom and others recognize that any issuing of a declarative (or any other speech act) requires taking responsibility for what I say. But in Brandom's account of assertion, we do not particularly take on a responsibility *to* anyone in particular in asserting. In contrast, a telling, in Moran's sense, involves taking on a specific normative responsibility to the person we address in speech. Telling forges a distinctive, second-personal relationship that is different from the mere transfer of information—a transfer that may perfectly well occur merely because we overhear someone say something, though not to us. Tellings are pragmatically structured discursive acts that presuppose and constitute a relationship based not only on each party's recognition of background norms and authority but also on the agent-specific acts of inviting and offering trust. Unlike pure declaratives, tellings have both agent-neutral and agent-relative inputs and outputs: only the speaker can offer his words as a telling, and only the person he addresses can take the address as a telling. Some third party can overhear the telling and take it as a perfectly good reassertable declarative, but she is not invited into the second-personal normative relationship forged by the act of telling.[6]

Such acts of telling are second-personal speech acts that call for theoretical belief. As such, they must at the same time have agent-neutral outputs. However, their function is to call for the *uptake* of these agent-neutral outputs, and as we have seen, such uptake is always agent-specific. Hence insofar as the teller calls upon the told to put her trust in *this particular* directed speech act and the normative relationship of trust and responsibility in which it is embedded, it also has agent-relative outputs; my friend may call on me to trust her telling—to take myself as committed by her words in virtue of our relationship to one another—in a way that she would not expect to transfer to another listener. In turn, I may trust her because of our distinctive relationship, but this cannot make what she tells me true *for me* but not for others. Indeed, I demean and dismiss her act of telling if I claim to accept it as making a claim on me but not on others; to do so is to fail to take it as a truth-claim. In the language of Chapter 5, such tellings, while agent-relative in their input and outputs, have alethic rather than constative entitlements. Like holdings based on oughts, they call for recognition within the context of a second-personal holding, but they do so on the basis of the speaker's entitlement to agent-neutral public facts.

To treat the movement of normative commitments and entitlements to belief from speaker to speaker as rooted in such acts of telling is to understand second-personal normative relationships as a primary medium by which discourse—notably including declarative discourse—succeeds in changing normative statuses and thereby fulfills its structural func-

4. Richard Moran, "Getting Told and Being Believed," *Philosophers' Imprint* 5 (2005): 1–29. Edward Hinchman, "Telling as Inviting to Trust," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 70 (2005): 256–287.

5. Moran, "Getting Told," 4.

6. See ibid., 27, for a similar point not couched in our lingo.

tion. In contrast, Moran argues, in most contemporary philosophy of mind and language, "speech is seen as a kind of interpretable human behavior like any other," whose normative implications are accessible from a third-personal, outsider's perspective. Likewise, Hagi Kenaan claims that most philosophers employ a language "whose essence is 'instilling information', . . . a language indifferent to whom one speaks of, to whom one listens."[7]

In contrast with Moran and with the picture we have just drawn, Darwall draws a sharp distinction between 'moral' and 'theoretical' claims, and flatly denies that the latter make second-personal claims. He insists that "moral obligations are . . . *to* others in a much more robust way than those of logic are."[8] But even if this is right, it does not follow that we *hold* one another second-personally only to moral obligations, and not to logical or theoretical obligations. Indeed, we seem to do the latter regularly. From our point of view, it is not the moral/theoretical distinction that cuts the difference between the obligations that are and are not grounded in second-personal transactions. Ostensive speech acts, for instance, can call upon you second-personally to attend to and recognize theoretical facts. When I address another second-personally, I call upon her to express normative uptake of my speech act through what she does and says. Whether this is a call to take up an epistemic obligation—to look, to infer, to reconsider, to believe—or to do something else seems irrelevant to the basic second-personal structure of the address.

Darwall points out correctly that "by its very nature, belief is responsible to an independent order of fact, which it aims to represent in a believer-neutral way," and thus that epistemic "authority is not second-personal all the way down," in contrast to the kind of moral authority he is interested in, which "derives from normative relations that reciprocally recognizing persons assume to exist between them."[9] But the publicity of the *facts* to which beliefs are accountable is a separate issue from the pragmatic structure of the various kinds of speech acts that hold us to these facts. We saw in Chapter 5 that moral claims, including second-personal moral holdings, are themselves normally grounded in entitlements to public facts, namely facts about normative statuses. Darwall

7. Hagi Kenaan, *The Present Personal: Philosophy and the Hidden Face of Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 47.

8. Darwall, *Second-Person Standpoint*, 27.

9. Ibid., 56, 57, 60.

is certainly right that our entitlement to utter declaratives ultimately derives from relation-independent facts—or as we would put it, from agent-neutral facts; indeed this has been a major theme for us in this book. But this does not mean that in each speech act of giving reasons for belief, the second-personal dimensions of the act can be stripped away from its core normative function. As Moran makes clear, the call to trust and the offer of responsibility, or the invitation to let someone put herself in your hands with respect to her beliefs, is not reducible to the presentation of impersonal evidence for one's trustworthiness or epistemic reliability. Tellings, like promises and apologies, are speech acts that are directed to another person, inviting him into a normative relationship.[10]

Speech acts that function *primarily* as second-personal tellings, in Moran's and Hinchman's sense, are invitations to trust based on a specific relationship between speaker and audience, even though what they invite their audience to trust is the agent-neutral entitlements of the speaker—entitlements that would be available to everyone, were it not for epistemic defect. This is the kind of speaking and listening that can go on between doctors and patients, teachers and students, parents and children, and even political representatives and their constituents. Here the second-personal dimension of the speech act is reasonably manifest.

But at other times, we engage in purer versions of declarative speech: we draw upon our agent-neutral entitlements to speak not *as* one who has a special normative relationship to her listeners, but *as* a representative of the 'we' who has taken up a normative entitlement that, short of epistemic defect, is available to all. Likewise, even though in practice we can at most expect a few people to hear us speak, we may speak to others not as particular others bound to us by a particular second-personal relationship, but as representatives of the 'we' who are inheriting public entitlements. In such cases, we are speaking as anyone, to anyone. This is the kind of speech that we find in newspaper reporting, formal expert testimony, and academic writing. It is also the kind of speech that brings us closest to *pure* declarative speech that is agent-neutral in both input and output. In such cases, it is particularly tempting to deny the presence of any second-personal, vocative dimension at all. (It is worth pausing to notice that, at this point, such speech seems

10. Moran, "Getting Told," 23–24.

rather rarified and not particularly typical of everyday conversation, and yet it has consumed the lion's share of philosophical attention.)

Even in maximally impersonal declarative speech, it's not *quite* right to say that I speak *as anyone, to anyone.* Rather, I speak *as* someone who has already taken up a normative entitlement that *would* be available to anyone under the right epistemic conditions—for why else would I have the authority to speak and be listened to at all? And my speech act strives to impart this entitlement to anyone who has not yet taken up this entitlement—for why else should I bother to speak at all? That is, when I engage in such impersonal, declarative speech, I issue a generalized call to take up the normative entitlement passed on by my speech. I recognize my audience, not as holders of a distinctive normative position, but as generic members of the 'we' who serve as legitimate recipients of the public normative statuses I pass on. As such, I call for normative uptake from them. I ask them to acknowledge my call, not by acknowledging my distinctive normative position, but by acknowledging my entitlement to speak as one who has already taken up my entitlement to public reasons. In such maximally impersonal declaratives, I speak as a representative of the 'we', to you as a representative of the 'we'. This is a generalized version of the vocative structure that is common to all speech. Thus even in this most impersonal form of speech there exists an attenuated but genuine vocative dimension.

We must be careful not to confuse the structural second-personal dimension of speech in general with the (occasional) intimacy of the speaker/audience relationship that enables it. For instance, in explaining the purported essential second-personal dimension of a particular speech act, Kenaan writes: "Your speech was not part of a neutral exchange between an unspecified pair of addresser and addressee who, in this specific case, happen to be us. Rather, it grew out of a meeting whose essence was precisely the meeting between *you* and *I*. It was born of the singular encounter between us."[11] But this kind of intimate particularity is structurally irrelevant to the issue of voice. I can speak second-personally in the course of neutral exchanges with total strangers ("Do you have the time?"), to people who I have never directly encountered ("If you have high cholesterol, try Lipitor"), and, as we have just seen, as a generic speaker who just happens in this case to be me to a generic audience member who just happens in this case to be you. In addition, I can utter speech acts that make no sense at all outside the context of my particular, concrete relation with another person and yet that are not second-personally directed at that person—for instance when I delight lovingly and protectively in my child's quirks when describing her to someone else. Our argument here has not been about the intimacy or context-bound character of (some) speech, but rather about its inherent directedness and its structural call for recognition and uptake.

11. Kenaan, *Present Personal,* 144.

7.4 Speech as Communication and as Calling

Given our analysis of addressing and telling, all of this is just to say that in order to actually incarnate their defining normative functions, speech acts must be addressed to a concrete audience, and as such they must have a vocative, second-personal dimension. Speech is inherently directed and responsive, as Bakhtin put it. But it is perilously easy to confuse our claim that all speech acts must function as second-personal addresses with an importantly different, far weaker claim, namely the completely obvious, uninteresting point that language is primarily used for *communication.* That language is fundamentally communicative was in fact our starting point; it would be rather anticlimactic if it turned out to be one of our main conclusions as well.

Philosophers of language, of course, never deny that language is communicative, in that we *use* it in order to have effects on particular other people, through our interactions with them. However, according to traditional, impersonalist pictures of language, this function is strictly speaking external to the linguistic act itself. On such a picture, bits of discourse have their identities independent from their use in conversation, but we happen to use them almost exclusively for conversational purposes, and perhaps wouldn't have bothered inventing language if we didn't want to communicate (or, if you prefer, language evolved because of the selectional advantages of communication). Bits of language are almost always *addressed to* other people, but the address is not generally integral to their structure, on this view—it's something we do *with* them.

Consider an analogy: a house is the house it is whether or not anyone lives in it. However, we wouldn't bother building houses did we not intend for them to be lived in, and the overwhelming majority of houses are lived in. Most philosophy of language treats conversation as

something—indeed the main thing—that we "do with" utterances, just as living in them is the main thing we do with houses. That the use of language in second-personal, conversational address is external to its structural identity, in most philosophy of language, is clear from the fact that almost all analyses of language proceed by bracketing this second-personal function entirely.[12]

In the case of philosophers who privilege semantics or syntax over pragmatics, the meaning or syntactic structure of a speech act is taken as self-sufficient and independent of its normal use in conversation. But notice that even for someone like Brandom, who privileges pragmatics and identifies speech acts by their pragmatic functions, the *addressing* function of speech is external to its structure. Brandom's pragmatic analysis of speech acts not only focuses entirely on speech acts with agent-neutral inputs and outputs, but also employs an *ideal* sense of commitments and entitlements; for his purposes, a (declarative) speech act shifts the (ideal) commitments and entitlements of *everyone* in the discursive community automatically. In this sense, it doesn't matter at all, for Brandom, whether the speech act was actually addressed to or heard by the people it targets—it achieves its function and shifts the normative status of everyone in the community in the relevant way simply by being uttered. Such an account requires no directionality of discourse, nor any particular normative engagement between speakers.

Brandom does not deny that we generally do care who in particular hears and can make use of our speech acts—it's just that this actual uptake is not part of his story of the pragmatic individuation and analysis of speech acts. Likewise, the addressing function of language makes no appearance in the work of other pragmatists such as McDowell or Sellars. Interestingly, even Davidson, who entitles one of this papers "The Second Person" and privileges interpretive encounters between individuals in his analysis of language, restricts himself entirely to an observer's perspective *on* the speech of another person, rather than discussing addresses *to* another.[13]

In contrast, we have argued that the addressing function of language is built into its defining normative structure, as a precondition for its having whatever other function it has. Addressing others second-personally is not something that we happen to do with language, even all the time, nor is it even just the reason we bother to have language—it is a transcendental condition of discourse as such. We have analyzed speech acts as holdings and demands for normative uptake, which themselves have a second-personal, vocative structure. The inputs and outputs that constitute the vocative dimension of speech are part of its defining form.

To see the difference, it is perhaps helpful to look at some other acts that we do for and with others. I throw a ball so that another may try to catch it; I take off my clothes in order to entice someone to have sex with me; I drop my pants in the direction of the president in order that he might feel ashamed of his foreign-policy decisions. These are acts that are directed and second-personal. It would be stretching the boundaries of the notion to call these acts discursive, but they are certainly communicative. Now of course, I can throw a ball without another person there to catch it, and I regularly take off some or all of my clothes without trying to get anyone to do or feel anything. As such, these are actions that *can* be directed second-personally, and *can* be used to make normative claims on another that demand recognition, but they need not be. There is nothing about the action of throwing a ball that requires that it seek normative uptake from someone to whom the ball is thrown. The traditional picture of language treats speech acts as analogous to such inherently impersonal, contingently communicative acts.

However, we can also think of these as examples of different, thicker actions: throwing a ball *to someone* (passing), undressing *for someone* (seducing), and dropping my pants *at someone* (mooning). We claim that throwing a pass is not just the same action as throwing a ball plus the extra intention that someone catch it, but rather a distinct activity. In the throwing of a pass, the recognition and response of the other are *intrinsic* goals of the action and are key to its success. At least as plausibly, *undressing for someone,* as an act of seduction, is a distinct action that is

12. It's hard to imagine how one could bracket the second-personal addressing function of vocative speech; perhaps tellingly, vocative speech barely shows up on the radar for philosophers of language.

13. Donald Davidson, "The Second Person," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 17 (1992): 255–267. What these views have in common is a conception of the normativity of linguistic performances from the point of view of a "referee." For Davidson, it is the interpreter who gathers data so as to postulate a truth theory, and if we do it ourselves, it is by taking on the strange stance of external theorist toward those we talk to (or sometimes even to ourselves, for Quine). Brandom focuses less on the figure of the external referee, but nonetheless on the product—universally changing scores—that would seem to be accessible only to such a referee.

not just the act of undressing plus the intention that this act have the effect of producing a desire for sex in someone. And so forth. These are actions that are intrinsically second-personal in their pragmatic structure. Indeed, insofar as we consider these acts in their thicker, second-personal sense—as *addresses*—they are incarnating normative functions, making claims upon and seeking recognition from a target audience, just as speech does. We claim that discourse must be understood as second-personal in this second, more robust sense; any act that can count as a discursive act at all must have this thicker structure.

Now that we have argued that the vocative function is a universal, transcendental component of speech acts, we need to consider some possible exceptions and determine whether any backpedaling is called for.

The most obvious type of apparent exception is a speech act that the speaker does not intend anyone else to know about, such as an insult or a command that I mutter under my breath, or an entry in my diary. We do not think that these are actually exceptions, and this is precisely because the intrinsic addressing function of language is not reducible to its extrinsic communicative function—speaking is not making noise along with some Gricean intention to get others to react. Such speech acts are 'perverse', in the sense that we design them to fail at their own structural function—but this is a common perversity we have seen before. In Chapter 1, when we first introduced declaratives, we separated the intrinsic structural function of the speech act from its external social use. We pointed out that the fact that we can utter a declarative as a secret, for instance, does not detract from the agent-neutrality of its output (though, we can now add, the act of telling a secret also forges a different, special kind of second-personal normative relationship in the act of telling). Likewise, the *output* of a muttered or private speech act is just the same as it would be if it were intended to be heard.

So for instance, if I write in my diary "I found Waldo," then my statement makes a standard-issue, agent-neutral truth-claim upon anyone who manages to read my diary, while if I mutter under my breath "Just leave him already!" when I am listening to my friend tell me about her horrible boyfriend, then this utterance would make an agent-specific claim on *her* if (contrary to my intention) she managed to hear me. In the latter case, it seems clear that this second-personal speech act is still *addressed* to my friend, even if (perversely) I go out of my way to prevent

the address from succeeding in making a claim on its target. In the former case, it seems that I am just using myself as the generic but concrete representative of the 'we' to whom my truth-claim is structurally addressed.

We have to distinguish such 'secret' speech acts from a different type of act that has no structural communicative function, even in the ideal. We sometimes make sounds—including sounds that in other contexts would constitute speech, and sounds that serve various social purposes—that simply do not have the structural function of transforming normative statuses. These can range from involuntary expletives ("Ouch!"; "Oh crap!"), to singing, to practicing a tongue twister. These may have no vocative component at all. Sometimes such acts (for example singing) are parts of social activities, but they are not *addressed* to the other participants. We claim that these are not exceptions to the transcendental necessity of the vocative, because they are not speech acts at all. As one of our referees put it, they are acts that may "exploit one's speech capacities." Some sufferers of Tourette's syndrome curse, and only in their native tongue, for instance. But we do not think that this makes such sounds into speech, any more than the fact that drawing someone a map exploits my artistic capacities makes my map a work of art. These actions do not seek to make a claim on anyone, and they have no normative output of the sort characteristic of speech. Because they don't have *any* output, they also don't seek to realize that output through a second-personal address.

We can, of course, worry about borderline cases—it will not always be clear whether or not I am singing a song in order to execute a discursive function (calling you to shared attention, reminding you of a lost love, conveying a coded message that the revolution is about to begin). It will also be difficult to determine where the merely causal impact of an act lets off and the properly discursive function begins; when does a curse, for instance, affect others merely causally, and when does it serve a discursive purpose? But the difficulty in determining where speech begins and ends is beside the point; our claim is that to the extent that an act seeks to execute a discursive function, *to that extent* it must include a second-personal address—though, as we just saw, not necessarily an actual intention to communicate.

We also should not be distracted by another class of speech acts that appear to lack an audience, namely, those in which we *cast about for* an

audience—for instance when we speak into a dark room or broadcast over a ham radio, unsure whether there's anyone there to hear us. Earlier we pointed out that vocatives themselves can have this non-recognitive, casting-about structure, but that this is a derivative form of speech act that can be understood only as a variation on the traditional recognitive vocative that retains its essentially vocative function. Similarly, we may grant now that these are cases that lack the traditional second-personal structure of an address, since there isn't yet a determinate answer to *who* it is we are addressing, if we're managing to address anyone at all. But such exceptions seem harmless, given their clear structural dependence upon and kinship with standard addresses.

Finally, we will just mention here a class of complicated cases that we also mentioned in Chapter 6 and will return to in great detail in Chapter 8. These are speech acts that do not simply address a recognizable subject, but rather play a role in *constituting* that individual as an addressable subject. The most intuitive contenders are 'speech acts' 'addressed' to babies. We 'address' babies before they can really serve as the targets of second-personal speech acts, and in fact, such 'addresses' are among the most important tools that we use to induct them into the discursive community and to help them develop into addressable subjects. In Chapter 8 we will claim that to the extent that babies are not yet addressable second-personally, things we 'say' to them do not actually function as speech, but merely as causal tools for such induction and development. In any case, as above, such quasi-addresses are clearly tight variants on vocatives that exist and function only because they are riffs on the general structure of addresses, and as such, we do not think they challenge our core claim about the universality of the transcendental vocative.

Language, then, is spoken *by* agents who own their normative positions first-personally, *to* other agents who are called upon to take up the normative import of speech. This can seem like a conclusion that ought to need much less argumentative buildup than we have given it. The point may seem to verge on the trivial now, given that we have been governed throughout this book by a typology of speech acts that *began* by asking *who* is entitled to speech acts and at *whom* they are targeted. However, the point remains invisible if we think about speech acts merely as shifting scorecards of commitments and entitlements in abstract space (or, perhaps even less promisingly, as mere physical productions backed by independent hopes that certain causal consequences will result). Given the typology with which we began, it is not surprising that we have ended up with an analysis that makes vivid the essential role of the speaker-audience relationship in discourse, and likewise ended up understanding speech acts in a way that shows off their vocative component. Once we understand discourse as essentially incarnated in a space of first-personally-owned positions, agent-relative statuses, second-personal and third-personal relations to others, and directed speech acts, the status of speech acts as addresses becomes no big surprise.

In contrast, if our philosophy of discursive pragmatics doesn't have the resources to articulate these deictic, agent-relative, and owned dimensions of speech—for instance if we believe that the primacy of the declarative is secure enough that we can base our theory only on this type of speech act—then all of these dimensions of speech disappear from view. The difference between first-, second-, and third-personal dimensions of speech acts will not show up as salient, and there will then be no cash value to the sense in which *these* are *my* commitments and entitlements and *those* are *yours*, and this speech act is *directed from me to you*. Indeed, so deep goes the declaratival bias in contemporary analytic philosophy that—as we have seen—even an author like Darwall, who is specifically interested in the structure of the second-personal address, is sure that his analysis applies only to moral claims rather than to speech acts in general.

But we have shown that speech acts essentially place agents in normative relationships structured by the claims we make upon one another. We must speak to one another as a 'me' and a 'you' as opposed to just a collection of normative-status-trading engines. The way in which we make these claims upon one another is through calls to mutual recognition: we recognize others as appropriate targets of our claims, and we call to them to in turn recognize the force of our claims upon them.