

# Types of Speech Acts

Peter Hanks  
University of Minnesota  
pwhanks@umn.edu

## 1. Austin-Searle speech act theory

Let's start with some central and familiar elements of the prevailing theory of speech acts, as initiated by Austin (1975) and developed by Searle (1969, 1979). Perhaps the most basic element of the theory is the distinction between illocutionary force and propositional content. This is codified on page one of Searle's 'A Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts' in the form of the ' $F(p)$ ' schema, with ' $F$ ' for force and ' $p$ ' for propositional content (Searle 1979, ch.1). The idea is that every speech act can be factored into these two components, force and content, each of which can vary independently of the other. For example, an assertion that you will close the door and an order to you to close the door share the same propositional content (that you will close the door) but differ in illocutionary force. Conversely, an assertion that you will close the door and an assertion that you will open the door share the same illocutionary force (assertion) but differ in propositional content. With the illocutionary force/propositional content distinction in hand, the theory of speech acts is conceived of as the project of giving theoretical descriptions of the various kinds of illocutionary forces. As Searle puts it in the taxonomy paper, "the aim of this paper then is to classify the different types of  $F$ ," (1979, 1).

These classifications are made along three primary lines: illocutionary point, direction of fit, and expressed psychological state. Illocutionary point captures the speaker's primary purpose in performing the speech act. The illocutionary point of an

assertion is to commit the speaker to something's being the case.<sup>1</sup> The illocutionary point of an order is to attempt to get the hearer to do something. The illocutionary point of a promise is to commit the speaker to some future course of action.

Direction of fit is an abstract way of capturing differences in the satisfaction conditions of different kinds of speech acts. Assertions are satisfied when they are true, i.e. when they correctly describe the way things are. Assertions therefore have word-to-world direction of fit; an assertion has to match the world in order to be satisfied. Orders and promises, by contrast, require a change in the world, in the form of an action by the hearer or speaker, in order to be satisfied. Orders and promises have world-to-word direction of fit.

The third dimension of classification is expressed psychological state. In making assertions speakers express beliefs, in giving orders they express desires, and in making promises they express intentions. A speech act's expressed psychological state is closely related to its sincerity conditions. A speech act is sincere if and only if the speaker actually possesses the psychological state that she expresses in the performance of that act.

Using these three dimensions of classification, along with differences in propositional content, Searle classifies speech acts into five broad categories: Assertives, Directives, Commissive, Expressives, and Declarations. I will use Searle's notation in giving this taxonomy:

---

<sup>1</sup> This is how Searle puts it in (Searle 1979, 12). Elsewhere Searle writes that the point of an assertion is "to say how things are," (Searle and Vanderveken 1985, 87).

Assertives:  $\vdash \downarrow B(p)$

Examples: assert, state, predict, conclude, deduce, guess, hypothesize, suggest  
' $\vdash$ ' stands for the illocutionary point of assertives, which is to commit the speaker to something's being the case. ' $\downarrow$ ' stands for word-to-world direction of fit (words are above, the world is below). ' $B$ ' stands for belief, the expressed psychological state of assertives. ' $(p)$ ' is a variable ranging over propositional contents. This indicates that there are no restrictions on the propositional contents of assertives.

Directives:  $! \uparrow W(H \text{ does } A)$

Examples: order, command, request, ask, beg, plead, pray, entreat, invite, permit, advise

Special case: interrogatives

The illocutionary point of a directive (!) is to attempt to get the hearer to do something. The direction of fit for directives is world-to-word ( $\uparrow$ ), and expressed psychological state is desire, or want ( $W$ ). The propositional contents of directives can only be to the effect that the hearer,  $H$ , will perform some future action,  $A$ . Note that interrogative speech acts are classified as a special case of directives. Like many other philosophers, Searle regards the act of asking a question as a request for an answer from the hearer.<sup>2</sup> (I'll argue below that this is a mistake.)

Commissives:  $C \uparrow I(S \text{ does } A)$

Examples: promise, pledge, vow, swear, guarantee

' $C$ ' stands for the illocutionary point of commissives, which is to commit the speaker to a future course of action. Commissives have world-to-word direction of fit ( $\uparrow$ ), and their expressed psychological state is intention ( $I$ ). The propositional contents of commissives are always to the effect that the speaker,  $S$ , performs a future action,  $A$ .

Expressives:  $E \emptyset (P) (S/H + \text{action/property})$

Examples: thank, apologize, congratulate, condole, deplore, welcome

The illocutionary point of an expressive,  $E$ , is to give voice to a psychological state about an action or property of the speaker or hearer. For example, if I thank you for opening the door, I express a state of gratitude about your act of opening the door. Expressives have no satisfaction conditions — they are not true or false or fulfilled or unfulfilled — and hence have no direction of fit ( $\emptyset$ ). The expressed psychological states of expressives vary from one example to another, hence the variable ' $(P)$ '. The propositional contents of expressives always attribute an action or property to either the speaker or hearer.

Declarations:  $D \updownarrow \emptyset (p)$

---

<sup>2</sup> Others include (Hare 1949), (Hintikka 1974), (Lewis 1969, 186), and (Schiffer 1972, 85).

Examples: pronouncing two people man and wife, christening a ship, terminating someone's employment, adjourning a meeting, appointing someone chairman

Declarations are speech acts in which the speaker brings about a new state of affairs by declaring that that state of affairs is the case. For example, if I am your boss and I say 'You're fired' then I make it the case that you are fired. Typically, declarations require a background institution or conventional practice, and the new states of affairs they bring into existence are within these institutions or practices. The illocutionary point of a declaration, *D*, is thus to bring about a new state of affairs by way of the successful performance of the declaration. According to Searle, declarations have both word-to-world and world-to-word direction of fit ( $\updownarrow$ ). They are statements to the effect that things are thus-and-so (word-to-world), and at the same time attempts to make the world thus-and-so (world-to-word). Declarations lack sincerity conditions and consequently have no associated expressed psychological states ( $\emptyset$ ). Finally, the propositional contents of declarations concern the new states of affairs that are brought into existence by their performance, hence the variable '*p*'.

The only speech acts left out of this taxonomy are those lack propositional content, such as greetings ('Hello', 'So long') and exclamations ('Ouch', 'Damn'). Because they lack propositional contents these speech acts do not fit into the  $F(p)$  schema. Otherwise, the taxonomy is meant to be exhaustive.

I have been belaboring all of this in order to set it up as a target. In the remainder of this paper I am going to argue that this approach to speech acts is all wrong, and not just in the details but in its fundamentals. The basic problem for Searle's theory of speech acts is that it is wedded to a conception of propositional content that is explanatorily empty and unsustainable. This conception has had a distorting influence on the classification of speech acts — in particular, it has led Searle to find propositional content in places where there isn't any. Replacing this conception of content with one that is more viable leads to a different view of the nature of speech acts and a different taxonomy.

## 2. The Fregean picture of propositional content

Let's now step back in order to get a clearer sense of the conception or picture of propositional content operating in the background of Austin-Searle speech act theory. This picture of content is largely due to Frege (in particular, Frege 1918a), although Russell is also a major influence. (Russell, however, abandoned the picture when he adopted his multiple-relation theory of judgment.<sup>3</sup> For that reason I prefer to leave Russell out of it and call it the Fregean picture of content.) It should be kept in mind, though, that nothing in the Fregean picture, as I will use the term, depends on or involves Fregean senses or modes of presentation. The picture operates at one remove from debates between Fregeans and Millians about the nature of the constituents of propositions. It is a framework in which those debates are conducted.

There are three major elements of the Fregean picture of content. The first is that propositions are regarded as the original or primary bearers of truth conditions. Other things that have truth conditions, such as beliefs, assertions, and declarative sentences, derive their truth conditions from propositions. An assertion that the door is closed, for example, is true iff the door is closed because this assertion has as its content the proposition that the door is closed, and this proposition is true iff the door is closed. The possession of these truth conditions by the proposition is primary; the assertion inherits its truth conditions from its propositional content. The same goes for non-truth-conditional speech acts. Orders and promises also derive their satisfaction conditions from their propositional contents, although in these cases the truth conditions of a proposition have to be converted into fulfillment conditions. If I order you to close the

---

<sup>3</sup> See (Hanks 2007) for the historical details.

door my order is fulfilled iff you close the door. The order has these fulfillment conditions because its content is the proposition that you will close the door, and in giving the order I put this proposition forward with the force of an order. When that happens, the truth conditions of the proposition are converted into fulfillment conditions.

The claim that propositions are the *original* or *primary* bearers of truth conditions is thus explanatory in nature. It signals an explanatory order in which propositions are primary and speech acts are secondary. The nature of the explanation here is constitutive. Facts about the satisfaction conditions of speech acts are grounded in or (partly) constituted by facts about the truth conditions of propositions. To accept this element of the Fregean picture is to regard propositions as a source of truth conditions. That is their role in the theory — to serve as a repository of truth conditions, which we put to use in thought and speech. To explain why our thoughts and utterances have the satisfaction conditions that they have we must always look to the propositions that are deployed in their performance. This theory helps us understand how our thoughts and speech acts have satisfaction conditions only to the extent that we can understand how propositions have truth conditions.

The second major element of the Fregean picture is the distinction between content and force, crisply captured in Searle's  $F(p)$  schema. In fact, the  $F(p)$  schema combines two different ways of understanding the content-force distinction. The first, which I call the *taxonomic* version of the distinction, is the idea that there is a single kind of propositional content, which is truth conditional, and which is shared across all varieties of speech acts. On this form of the content-force distinction it is possible for an assertion and an order, for example, to share the same proposition as content. The

contrasting view would be one on which the contents of assertions are different in kind from the contents of orders, where these differences consist at least in part in differences in satisfaction conditions. On this view, an assertion that you will close the door and order to you to close the door would not share the same truth-conditional proposition as content. Rather, the order would have a distinct type of entity as content, where this entity has fulfillment conditions instead of truth-conditions. It is now standard in semantics to distinguish the contents of interrogative sentences, questions, from the contents of declaratives, and a similar view about imperative sentences is gaining currency.<sup>4</sup> Abandoning the taxonomic form of the content-force distinction involves making the same sorts of distinctions for speech-acts.

The second form of the content-force distinction, the *constitutive* form, is the idea that propositional contents are entirely devoid of any elements force. In particular, there are no assertoric elements in propositions. One way to put this is to say that in characterizing the nature of propositional contents we do not need to use any concepts of force, assertive or otherwise. Concepts of force characterize the actions that we perform with propositions. Propositions have their natures prior to and independently of these actions. This version of the content-force distinction goes to the heart of the conception of speech acts given to us by Austin-Searle speech act theory. To put it crudely, on this conception a speech act is something you do with a proposition.

The third major element of the Fregean picture is the view that any thought or speech act with propositional content can be factored into neutral and non-neutral components. In the case of mental acts or states, the neural components are acts or states

---

<sup>4</sup> See (Groenendijk and Stokhof 1997) on interrogatives, and (Portner 2004) on imperatives. (Charlow 2014a) is a useful survey of approaches to imperatives. Charlow develops his own account of imperatives in (Charlow 2014b).

of *entertaining* a proposition. To perform a judgment, for example, is to entertain a proposition (neutral) while endorsing or accepting that proposition (non-neutral). To form a desire is to entertain a proposition (neutral) while wanting that proposition to be true (non-neutral). In general, to adopt a propositional attitude requires singling out or entertaining a proposition and taking a non-neutral attitude toward that proposition. These need not be conceived of as separate and freestanding mental acts, but rather as abstractions from the overall act of forming a judgment or desire, which we can distinguish as theorists. In the case of speech acts, the factoring idea is prefigured in a dark way by Austin's distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts, which gets replaced and clarified in the form of Searle's distinction between propositional acts and illocutionary acts.<sup>5</sup> The thought is that every speech act can be factored into an act of *expressing a proposition* (neutral), while putting that proposition forward with a certain illocutionary force (non-neutral). As in the mental case, we do not have to view these as separate, individual acts but rather as theoretically distinguishable components of the overall act.

These three elements of the Fregean picture are all closely related, and it may be artificial to separate them out as distinct ideas. In fact, it is natural to see the second and third elements of the picture as reflexes of the first. Viewing propositions as the primary bearers of truth conditions involves regarding them as mind and language independent entities that have their truth conditions prior to and independently of what people do when they are thinking or speaking. Propositions are already there, with their truth conditions, waiting for us to latch onto them and put them to use in thought and speech.

---

<sup>5</sup> See (Searle 1968) for his criticisms of Austin's concept of locutionary acts, and (Recanati 2013) for discussion and an attempt to rehabilitate Austinian locutionary acts.



This leads directly to the conception of speech acts given by the  $F(p)$  schema and to the factoring idea captured by the concepts of entertainment and propositional acts. The three elements of the picture hang together in a coherent and elegant whole, which continues to exert considerable influence over philosophy of language and mind. The main difficulty for the picture, which Frege and Russell felt keenly, has only recently resurfaced.

### 3. The problem of the unity of the proposition

As I mentioned earlier, the Fregean picture of propositional content sheds light on how our thoughts and speech acts have satisfaction conditions only to the extent that we can understand how propositions themselves have truth conditions. This question — “How do propositions have truth conditions?” — goes to the heart of what is commonly known as the problem of the unity of the proposition. Given the explanatory structure of the Fregean picture, whatever answer we give cannot appeal to what people do when they are forming thoughts or performing speech acts. Propositions must have their truth conditions prior to those actions, and hence these acts are closed off from us in trying to explain how propositions are capable of being true or false. The natural reaction is to look to a proposition’s internal components (if it has any) and their relations to one another to explain how it has truth conditions. This is why it makes sense to call this a “unity” problem. The hope is that by understanding how the components of a proposition are bound together into a unified whole we will understand how the proposition represents the world as being a certain way and is truth-evaluable. The problem remains even if we give up the assumption that propositions are structured things with parts or

constituents, although in that case the label “unity problem” looks inappropriate. It is still possible to ask how a simple, structureless entity is capable of representing things as being a certain way and having certain truth conditions.

Both Frege and Russell saw the problem clearly. Although they differed over the nature of the constituents, both held that propositions have constituents and structure and both felt the need to say something about how these constituents are unified together. Frege’s solution bottoms out in a relation of saturation whereby a saturated sense completes an unsaturated one (Frege 1918c, 390). This solves the problem only by positing an unexplained relation that has the power to generate contents with truth conditions. This is like introducing a primitive “propositional” relation, which has the ability to combine propositional constituents into unified, representational wholes. This is not a satisfying way of solving the unity problem. The question we are trying to answer is about how propositions are capable of representing the world and having truth conditions. It is altogether facile and unilluminating to be told that there is a primitive relation that does all the work.<sup>6</sup>

Russell’s solution is even worse. His 1903 theory assimilates propositions to states of affairs or facts in which objects are joined together by relations-that-relate (Russell 1903). This has the notorious consequence that there are no false propositions. If the objects are not related by the relevant relation then there’s no fact available to serve as the proposition. Even if we put this problem aside, there are reasons to doubt the viability of Russell’s solution. On Russell’s view, the proposition that my computer is on my desk is the actual, concrete state of affairs consisting of my computer being on top of

---

<sup>6</sup> See (Hanks 2015, ch.2) for more on Frege’s account of propositional unity and the appeal to a primitive propositional relation.

my desk. But that state of affairs does not have truth conditions. It makes no sense to say that this arrangement of objects is true (or false). Even allowing for non-existent false propositions, Russell's 1903 theory fails to identify entities that are capable of being true or false. Russell was sensitive to these problems, of course. It wasn't merely the problem of non-existent false propositions that led him to abandon propositions in favor of the multiple-relation theory of judgment. He was also concerned to reinstate a correspondence theory of truth, on which the bearers of truth and falsity are recognizably representational entities that may or may not correspond to how things are.<sup>7</sup>

A natural reaction to the difficulties faced by Frege and Russell is to reject the question with which they began. Perhaps there is no need to explain how propositions have truth conditions. Maybe this is just a brute, unexplainable, primitive fact about propositions. Perhaps propositions are, by nature, entities that are true or false, in which case it is a mistake to think that we need to give an account of how this is so.

This is a tempting thought. Accepting it, however, generates pressure to take on additional metaphysical commitments about the nature of propositions. In particular, it leads to the view that propositions are simple, unstructured entities that are the primitive and primary bearers of truth conditions. Presumably, if a proposition were composite, then we could use its constituents and their relations to one another to explain why it has its truth conditions. But on the present proposal there is no such explanation to be had. Furthermore, as Trenton Merricks has recently pointed out (Merricks 2015, 201-4), if propositions have constituents and are also primitive bearers of truth conditions then there would be an unexplained correlation between the constituents of a proposition and

---

<sup>7</sup> See (Russell 1913, ch.5). I elaborate on these problems for Russell in (Hanks 2015, ch.2).

its truth conditions. Suppose the proposition that Russell is a philosopher has Russell and the property of being a philosopher as constituents. In addition, this proposition is true iff Russell is a philosopher, and primitively so. There is then a correlation between the constituents of the proposition, Russell and the property of being a philosopher, and the truth conditions of the proposition, Russell's possessing this property. But this correlation is coincidental and mysterious, since facts about the constituents of a proposition and its truth conditions are explanatorily independent. The fact that a proposition has its constituents cannot explain why it has its truth conditions, since by hypothesis there is no explanation for the latter. Conversely, the fact that a proposition has its truth conditions cannot explain why it has certain constituents, at least not in any robust sense of constituency. A robust sense of constituency would be one on which constituency is identified with something like set-membership or mereological part-hood — a relation on which the proposition is literally composed out of and contains its constituents.<sup>8</sup> If that is how propositional constituency works then the explanation for why a proposition has its constituents wouldn't need to appeal to anything about the truth conditions of the proposition. All the explanatory work would be done by the compositional machinery that goes into constructing the proposition. Alternatively, we could take constituency in a non-robust sense, in which case to be a constituent of a proposition is nothing more than to figure in the right way in the truth conditions of the proposition (see McGlone 2012). That would use facts about the truth conditions of a proposition to explain why it has its constituents, but the proposition still wouldn't be

---

<sup>8</sup> This distinction between robust and non-robust senses of propositional constituency is closely related to Jeff Speaks's distinction between "lightweight" and "heavyweight" senses of the claim that propositions are structured. See (King et. al. 2014, 221-25).

composed out of these constituents in any literal sense. Once again, the most natural view to take here would be that propositions are simple and unstructured.

The lesson is that if we decline to answer the question about how propositions have truth conditions then there is considerable pressure to regard propositions as non-composite and metaphysically primitive. But one cannot stop there. If propositions lack constituents then entertaining a proposition cannot be understood as some kind of mental operation performed on its constituents. What would it be to entertain a simple, structure-less proposition? It looks as though we will also have to regard this as primitive. The same goes for the act of judging a proposition. Again, judgment cannot be construed as an operation performed on the constituents of a proposition, since propositions lack constituents. Nor can judgment be analyzed as an act of taking a proposition to be true, since to take a proposition to be true is just to judge it to be true. This would analyze judging that  $p$  in terms of judging that  $p$  is true, which sets off a vicious regress: to judge that  $p$  is to judge that  $p$  is true, which is judging that <that  $p$  is true> is true, which is judging that <<that  $p$  is true> is true> is true, and so on. So the act of judging a proposition will also have to be regarded as primitive.<sup>9</sup> Rejecting the need to explain

---

<sup>9</sup> What about a functionalist analysis of entertainment and judgment, on which to entertain or judge that  $p$  is to be in possession of a mental state with a certain functional role? This is not an option for someone who accepts the Fregean picture of propositional content, with its commitment to the idea that propositions are the primary bearers of truth conditions. Part of what it means to say that propositions are the primary bearers of truth conditions is that beliefs and other propositional attitudes *derive* their representational features and truth conditions from propositions — truth conditions are *transmitted* from propositions to beliefs through the relations that believers bear to propositions. If that's right then any constitutive account of what it is to believe that  $p$  will have to make reference to a proposition, since without mentioning the proposition we won't be able to explain how a belief has the representational features and truth conditions that it has. On a functionalist account, however, we explain what it is to believe that  $p$  in terms of a mental state that bears causal connections to various sensory stimuli, other mental states, behavior, and so on. There's no mention here of the proposition that  $p$ . The picture

how propositions have truth conditions leads to a creeping primitivism in which more and more has to be taken as brute and unexplainable. Here is where we end up: there are simple, metaphysically primitive entities that are the primary and primitive bearers of truth conditions. We latch onto these entities via a primitive relation of entertainment, and then judge them via a primitive act of judgment. The resulting judgments take on the truth conditions of the propositions that are entertained and judged. As a philosophical account of how we represent the world in thought this whole story seems empty, unsatisfying, and faintly bizarre.

Stepping back a bit, there is something dissatisfying about the very idea that propositions are the primary bearers of truth conditions. As we saw earlier, to view propositions in this way is to regard them as a source of representation and truth conditions for our thoughts and utterances. This goes counter to the intuitive thought that we are the source of representation, not some abstract entities in another dimension. Representation and truth conditions originate with us, in our acts of thinking and speaking about the world. We are producers of representations, not consumers of them. But making good on this intuitive thought leads to a very different view about propositions and a very different conception of the nature of speech acts.

#### 4. The classificatory picture of propositional content

Instead of treating propositions as a source of truth conditions let's view them as classificatory entities, which we use for identifying, individuating, and classifying our

---

offered by functionalism is not one on which a belief derives its truth conditions from a proposition, but rather one on which the representational features and truth conditions of a belief can be accounted for directly in terms of its functional role. See (Hanks forthcoming b).

mental and spoken actions. The primary bearers of truth and satisfaction conditions are the particular mental and spoken actions that people perform when they are thinking or speaking about the world. Propositions are devices for distinguishing and classifying these actions. More precisely, they are *types* of these actions, which derive their satisfaction conditions from their tokens. To give the propositional content of a speech act is, on this view, to classify that speech act under a type and thereby individuate it from other speech acts. This reverses the order of explanation of the Fregean picture. On the classificatory picture, token speech acts are the explanatorily basic bearers of satisfaction conditions. Propositions are abstractions from these actions that inherit their satisfaction conditions from their tokens.

This leads to a very different conception of the nature of speech acts. Consider a simple, atomic assertion, e.g. an assertion that Russell is a philosopher. On the Fregean picture, to perform this assertion is to put a proposition forward as true — but we've now moved beyond that. So what does the speaker do in asserting that Russell is a philosopher? She does three things. She *refers* to Russell, *expresses* the property of being a philosopher, and *predicates* this property of Russell. To predicate the property of Russell is to attribute or apply this property to Russell; is to positively affirm that he has this property. Think of the act of predication as an act of sorting or categorizing. To predicate the property of being a philosopher of Russell is to sort Russell into a group with other philosophers.<sup>10</sup> Compare this with an act of *asking* whether Russell is a

---

<sup>10</sup> The sorting metaphor also helps clarify what it is to express a property. Sorting an object into a group with other objects requires a rule or principle for sorting, where the rule determines whether any particular act of sorting is correct or incorrect. Suppose I'm sorting a pile of marbles into two groups, the green ones and the others. My rule for sorting is given by the property of being green, and an act of sorting an object into the green group is correct iff the object has this property. To express a property, then, is to

philosopher. In asking that question the speaker does not attribute the property of being a philosopher to Russell. She doesn't sort Russell into the group of philosophers. Rather, she asks whether Russell belongs in this group. This is a different way of combining the property of being a philosopher with Russell. Unlike acts of predication, it does not make sense to say that this act of asking is true or false. Rather, an act of asking whether Russell is a philosopher is satisfied when it is *answered*. Whereas acts of predication have truth conditions, acts of asking have answerhood conditions.

To *order* Russell to be a philosopher is a third kind of act. In giving this order the speaker neither predicates nor asks whether Russell has the property of being a philosopher. Rather, she tries to bring it about that Russell has this property. Let's call this *ordering*, or the imperative mode of combination. Acts of ordering have neither truth conditions nor answerhood conditions — they have *fulfillment* conditions.

By abstracting away from these token speech acts we can arrive at three different types, i.e. three different propositions:

1.  $\vdash \langle \mathbf{Russell}, \text{PHILOSOPHER} \rangle$
2.  $? \langle \mathbf{Russell}, \text{PHILOSOPHER} \rangle$
3.  $! \langle \mathbf{Russell}, \text{PHILOSOPHER} \rangle$

(1) stands for a type of act in which someone refers to Russell (**Russell**), expresses the property of being a philosopher (PHILOSOPHER), and predicates this property of Russell ( $\vdash$ ). Read the notation here as a description of a complex type, which is composed of a type of reference act, **Russell**, a type of act of property expression, PHILOSOPHER, and predication,  $\vdash$ . (Note that I've redeployed the single turnstile to stand for the act of

---

give yourself a rule that determines whether your acts of predication with that property are correct or incorrect.



predication. This is not how Searle uses it in his taxonomy.) Token acts of this type are particular assertions that Russell is a philosopher. These tokens are the primary bearers of truth conditions; the type, (1), gets its truth conditions from these tokens. Similarly, (2) represents a type of act of referring to Russell, expressing the property of being a philosopher, and asking whether Russell has this property. Tokens of this type are particular cases in which someone asks whether Russell is a philosopher. Finally, (3) is a type of act like (1) and (2) except that it involves ordering Russell to have the property of being a philosopher. Tokens of this type are particular orders or commands to Russell to be a philosopher, which are fulfilled if and only if Russell obeys and is a philosopher. (The tokens of (3) are in fact more diverse than this and include, among other things, promises by Russell to be a philosopher. More on this below.)

This approach to propositional content and its attendant conception of speech acts abandons all three features of the Fregean picture. Propositions are not the primary bearers of truth conditions, nor do they serve as a source of truth conditions. Their role in the theory is classificatory; they are types that we use for making distinctions between speech acts. Furthermore, this approach gives up the content-force distinction, in both its taxonomic and constitutive forms. There is no single kind of propositional content running through all the varieties of speech acts. Rather, there are three kinds of contents, each with its own style of satisfaction conditions, which are the contents of speech acts with these respective satisfaction conditions. Furthermore, each kind of content has an element of force built into it, in the form of  $\vdash$ ,  $?$ , or  $!$ . In characterizing these different types we have to mention these three kinds of combinatory acts, and the concepts of these combinatory acts are concepts of force. This leads to an entirely different understanding

of the concept of force than the one given to us by Austin-Searle speech act theory. On that theory, the concept of an illocutionary force is the concept of something you do with a proposition. On the present classificatory alternative, at least in simple atomic cases, concepts of force are concepts of things you do with an object and property. Finally, this approach abandons the notions of entertainment and propositional acts. There is no factoring of mental states and speech acts into neutral and non-neutral components. To perform a judgment or assertion, on this view, is to predicate a property of an object. We cannot isolate within these acts any neutral core of entertaining or expressing a proposition.

Unlike the Fregean picture of content, which provides a single, all-purpose kind of proposition, the classificatory conception makes a three-way distinction between predicative, interrogative, and imperative propositions. This three-way distinction lines up with the three-way distinction in language between declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences. This three-way distinction in sentences is, as it turns out, a linguistic universal (König and Siemund 2007).<sup>11</sup>

The three-way distinction in contents also lines up with a three-way distinction between embedded clauses. English has that-clauses, e.g. 'Frege said that Russell is a philosopher', *whether* and *wh*-clauses, e.g. 'Frege asked whether Russell is a philosopher', and non-finite clauses, e.g. 'Frege told Russell to be a philosopher'. In English, non-finite clauses are used to report not just orders and commands, but entreaties, promises, desires and intentions:

---

<sup>11</sup> That is, every language has *at least* these three kinds of sentences, declarative, interrogative, and imperative. Many languages, such as English, have more, e.g. the optative mood, as in 'Would that Russell were a philosopher'. On the classificatory approach the contents of optatives are grouped together with imperatives, since they have fulfillment conditions and world-to-word direction of fit.

Frege told/ordered/commanded Russell to be a philosopher.

Frege begged Russell to be a philosopher.

Frege wants Russell to be a philosopher.

Russell promised to be a philosopher.

Russell intends to be a philosopher.

All of the speech acts and mental states listed here have fulfillment conditions with world-to-word or world-to-mind direction of fit. This is a unified category of acts and states, all of which have what I am calling imperative propositional content. The terms I used to characterize this kind of content, e.g. ‘ordering’ and ‘imperative mode of combination’, are thus misleading – although I am at a loss for coming up with something better. (A neologism might be called for, but I prefer to be suggestive, if potentially misleading.) The type of act of ordering, symbolized by ‘!’, has to be understood at a high enough level of generality to cover not just orders and commands, but all the other acts and states on this list. To *order* an object to have a property is thus to perform an act that can be fulfilled or unfulfilled and which has world-to-word/mind direction of fit. ‘Ordering’ is, I admit, a misnomer for this kind of act.

In fact all three kinds of combinatorial acts, predication, asking, and ordering, should be understood at this high level of generality. The type of act of predicating a property of an object admits of many different sub-types corresponding to the various species of assertion. Acts of predication can be statements, predictions, conclusions, deductions, guesses, explanations, confessions, warnings, conjectures, hypotheses, suggestions, etc. The type of act of asking whether an object has a property can be pointed, rhetorical, an examination question, mention-all or mention-some, open or

confirmation.<sup>12</sup> The three kinds of propositional contents are coarsely grained types that serve to make broad distinctions between three kinds of speech acts, where these broad distinctions are keyed to things like variety of satisfaction conditions and sentential mood. Fine grained distinctions between types of speech acts show up as finely grained distinctions within these three broad types. For example, a request to Russell to be a philosopher and a command to Russell to be a philosopher fall under distinct sub-types of the more coarsely grained imperative type !<**Russell**, PHILOSOPHER>. We can represent these sub-types as follows:

4a. !<sub>request</sub> <**Russell**, PHILOSOPHER>

b. !<sub>command</sub> <**Russell**, PHILOSOPHER>

The difference between these types is a difference in sub-types of !, one corresponding to acts of requesting and another to acts of commanding. I see no reason not to call these more finely grained types propositions. Insofar as the request and order fall under the coarsely grained type ! <**Russell**, PHILOSOPHER> they share a propositional content. Insofar as they fall under the distinct sub-types (4a) and (4b) they have different propositional contents. Remember that on this approach propositions play a classificatory role. Their job is to help us identify and individuate our mental states and speech acts. The identification of propositions with types allows us to make

---

<sup>12</sup> In a mention-all question, e.g. ‘Who is coming to dinner?’, a speaker is looking for a complete list of all the things that satisfy a certain predicate. By contrast, in a mention-some question, e.g. ‘Where can I buy an Italian newspaper?’, a speaker is only looking for some of the things that satisfy the predicate. See (Groenendijk and Stokhof 1997, 1111). The distinction between open and confirmation questions is due to (Fiengo 2007). In an open question a speaker is genuinely ignorant about the answer to the question and is seeking new information. In a confirmation question, e.g. I see you enter the room soaking wet and ask ‘Is it raining?’, the speaker is seeking confirmation for something she already believes (Fiengo 2007, 11).

classificatory distinctions at many levels of fineness of grain. This captures another difference between the classificatory picture and the Fregean picture. On the latter, for any pair of speech acts there will be a single, univocal verdict about whether they share a propositional content. On the classificatory picture, the issue of whether two speech acts have the same propositional content will be informed by our classificatory interests and purposes. In some cases it will be useful or productive to classify a request and a command under the same propositional content and in others not.

Like the three-way distinction between satisfaction conditions (truth, answerhood, and fulfillment) there is also a three-way distinction between directions of fit, although saying this requires bringing to light a heretofore unrecognized third direction of fit. Predicative propositions have word-to-world direction of fit. Imperative propositions have world-to-word direction of fit. What about interrogative propositions? These have what I call *word-to-word* direction of fit (more generally, *representation-to-representation* direction of fit). An interrogative speech act is satisfied when it is answered, and to answer a question you have to make an assertion. The words in an interrogative speech act are thus satisfied by more words.<sup>13</sup> This draws out why it is a mistake to classify interrogative speech acts as a variety of directive, i.e. as requests for an answer from the hearer. For a request to be satisfied, the hearer has to perform the required action. If I ask you to open the door and someone else opens the door then I got what I wanted but my request was not fulfilled. By contrast, if I ask you whether the door is open and someone else says ‘yes’, then my question was answered even though you didn’t answer it. Requests can be satisfied only by the person to whom the request is

---

<sup>13</sup> See (Hanks 2015, §9.2) for a semi-formal account of the relationship between an interrogative speech act and its answers.

given. Questions aren't like that. The answer to a question can come from anywhere, even if the question is addressed to a specific person.

Summing this up, on the classificatory picture of propositional content we have three different kinds of propositions, which correspond to three-way distinctions in satisfaction conditions, direction of fit, sentence mood, and embedded clauses:

Type	Satisfaction conditions	Direction of fit	Sentence mood	Embedded clauses
┆	truth conditions	word-to-world	declarative	that-clauses
?	answerhood conditions	word-to-word	interrogative	whether and wh-clauses
!	fulfillment conditions	world-to-word	imperative	non-finite clauses

In the last part of this paper I am going to use this approach to content to give a new taxonomy of speech acts. First, however, I need to remove the main obstacle in its way.

## 5. Cancellation

Accepting the classificatory conception of propositional content as I've articulated it here requires giving up the content-force distinction in both of its forms.<sup>14</sup> In particular, it requires giving up the constitutive form of this distinction. On the classificatory account, propositions are constitutively characterized by elements of force. The proposition that Russell is a philosopher is a type of act of predicating the property of being a philosopher of Russell, where the kind of predication involved is inherently assertoric in nature.

---

<sup>14</sup> As we saw earlier (note 4), the taxonomic version of the distinction has largely been abandoned in semantics. The constitutive form of the distinction is still alive and well among philosophers and semanticists, although (Barker 2004) is an exception.

This runs headlong into Frege's forceful argument for keeping assertion out of propositional content (see Frege 1918b and Geach 1965). Frege's argument is based on the fact that in many practical and linguistic contexts it is possible to use a sentence, without any change in meaning or content, without asserting the content of that sentence. This occurs when actors use sentences on stage, or when poets write lines in poetry, or when someone utters a sentence inside a conditional or disjunction. In all of these cases speakers uses sentences with their normal meanings without in any way committing themselves to the propositional contents of those sentences. How could that be possible if these contents were inherently assertoric? Frege concluded that propositions must be devoid of any judgmental or assertoric components. This line of thought is central to the constitutive version of the content-force distinction and to the wider Fregean picture of propositional content in which it is embedded.

Here is a different way of thinking about it. Let's focus on the actor. When a person utters a declarative sentence as part of a play she is in a special sort of context in which performing an act of predication does not have its usual requirements or consequences. The actor says 'Russell is a philosopher' and predicates being a philosopher of Russell, but the actor need not believe this, nor is she committed to its truth. In other words, the actor performs an act of predication in a context in which that act does not have the status of an assertion. Call this sort of context a *cancellation* context, and an act of predication performed within it an act of *cancelled predication*. The reason that the actor's utterances are not assertions, then, is that they take place in a cancellation context. Similarly, when you utter a sentence inside a conditional, your use of 'if' creates a cancellation context for the acts of predication you perform with the

antecedent and consequent.<sup>15</sup> So you do perform acts of predication with these embedded sentences, but these acts of predication are cancelled.<sup>16</sup> That's why your utterances of the antecedent and consequent are not assertions. It's not that there is *less* going on when you utter a sentence inside a conditional, e.g. the expression of a proposition without assertion. Rather, there is *more* going on. You have performed an act of predication in a special sort of context generated by your use of 'if', and in that kind of context acts of predication do not count as assertions.

There are reasons for thinking that cancellation does a better job of accounting for these cases than the Fregean approach. On Frege's view, the reason the actor's utterances are not assertions is that they lack assertoric force – the actor is not putting propositions forward as true:

When playing his part the actor is not asserting anything; nor is he lying, even if he says something of whose falsehood he is convinced. In poetry we have the case of thoughts being expressed without being actually put forward as true, in spite of the assertoric form of the sentence. (Frege 1918a, 330)

---

<sup>15</sup> I think this is part of the meaning of the word 'if' (or, at least, some kinds of English conditionals). This is an instance of a general semantic distinction between sentence-embedding expressions. Sentence-embedding expressions come in two varieties: those that create cancellation contexts and those that do not. Examples of the former include 'or', 'not', and 'possibly', examples of the latter include 'and', 'true', and 'necessarily'. See (Hanks 2015, ch.4; forthcoming a) for discussion.

<sup>16</sup> In a discussion of cancellation and disjunction I once wrote that in an utterance of 'George is clever or Karla is foolish' "a speaker neither predicates cleverness of George nor foolishness of Karla," (Hanks 2011, 21). That was a mistake. I did not understand my own concept of cancellation when I wrote that paper. The speaker *does* perform these acts of predication – it's just that these acts do not count as assertions. Green (this volume) argues that my account of cancellation in (Hanks 2011) is inconsistent, and he is right to do so.



If this were right then the actor's utterances would count as assertions if the actor were to supply the missing assertoric element. So, suppose the actor intends to put her utterances forward as true. Give her whatever intentions or beliefs or mental states you like. The problem is that nothing will suffice for turning her utterances into assertions. As long as she is acting her role in the play nothing she says counts as her own assertion. The only way for the actor to make assertions for herself is to leave the play — to get herself out of the fictional context of the play. This provides a strong indication that it is the special context of the play, and not any missing intentions or actions on the part of the actor, which explains why the actor's utterances are not assertions. The cancellation context generated by the play makes it impossible for her to perform assertions for herself. Something similar can be said about 'if', although here the situation is more complex because of the enormous complications surrounding conditionals in English.

I find the following analogy to be helpful in thinking about cancellation contexts and cancelled predication. In football (the American kind) when the defense commits a penalty the referees allow the play to continue, which typically results in a free play for the offense. Suppose this happens, e.g. a defensive player commits a holding penalty. Suppose also that after the penalty a defensive player does something good for the defense, e.g. tackles the opposing quarterback in the endzone. Normally this would count as a safety and the defense would get two points. However, because of the penalty, the play is called back and run over again. The defense has not scored a safety and does not get two points. Notice, though, that in this scenario the defense did exactly the same sort of thing they would normally do to score a safety. A defensive player actually tackled the quarterback in the endzone. But because of the penalty the act of tackling the

quarterback does not count as a safety. This act of tackling the quarterback does not have the status of a safety within the game.

We have something similar in our language game. Predication is to tackling the quarterback as assertion is to scoring a safety. In an act of cancelled predication a speaker does exactly what she normally does when she performs an act of predication. Absent the cancellation context this act would count as an assertion with all of its usual requirements and commitments. But because the act of predication is performed on stage, or as part of a poem, or after the use of ‘if’, or inside a disjunction, this act of predication does not count as an assertion.<sup>17</sup> Acts of predication are inherently assertoric in the sense that to perform a stand-alone act of predication in a normal context is to perform an assertion. The fact that there are embedded acts of predication that are not assertions, or acts of predication in special environments that are not acts of predication, just shows that the assertoric character of predication can be overridden by the use of certain words or in special contexts.

Frege’s argument for the constitutive form of the content-force distinction is therefore not compelling.<sup>18</sup> The concept of cancellation provides us with a better way of understanding why we do not assert the antecedents or consequents of conditionals,

---

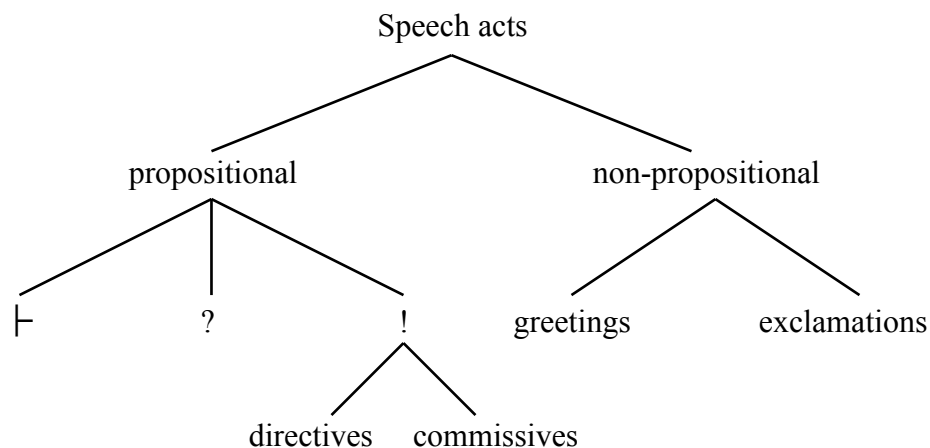
<sup>17</sup> If the acts of predication found in antecedents and consequents and disjuncts are cancelled and non-assertoric then what accounts for their unity, and how do we still have truth-evaluable inputs for conditionals and disjunctions? (Jespersen 2012), (Reiland 2013), and (Hom and Schwartz 2013) all press these questions. I don’t have the space to answer them here, but see the account of target-shifting in (Hanks 2015 ch.4) and (Hanks forthcoming a).

<sup>18</sup> That said, I don’t think there is anything *incoherent* about Frege’s content-force distinction. Green (this volume) takes an argument I have given for the incoherence of Soames’s concept of predication to be a general argument for the incoherence of the content-force distinction. I never intended to give such a general argument. See (Soames 2010; King et. al. 2014) for Soames’s account of predication, and (Hanks 2015, ch.1) for the argument against it that Green criticizes.

which is consistent with acknowledging an assertoric element in the contents of declarative sentences. This removes, I think, the main barrier in the way of the classificatory conception of content.

## 6. A new taxonomy

The first major distinction in the taxonomy is between speech acts that have propositional content and those that don't. On the non-propositional side we have acts like greetings ('Hello') and exclamations ('Ouch'). On the propositional side we have a three-way distinction between speech acts with assertive, interrogative, and imperative contents:



This is incomplete, since we still need to find places for Searle's categories of expressives and declaration. But before doing that I would like to highlight two aspects of the taxonomy as it currently stands. First, interrogatives are treated as a separate category all to themselves, not as a special case of directives. This reflects the fact that interrogatives have their own distinctive kind of satisfaction conditions and direction of fit. Second, Searle's categories of directives and commissives show up as sub-types of

the wider category of speech acts with imperative content. Remember that the term ‘imperative content’ is a misnomer. The imperative kind of content has to be understood at a level of generality high enough to cover any speech acts with fulfillment conditions and world-to-word direction of fit. Both orders and promises fall into this category. Searle’s taxonomy, by contrast, treats directives and commissives as two independent taxonomic categories, despite the fact that they have the same direction of fit. Searle was unhappy with this aspect of his taxonomy. As he put it, he could not avoid the “inelegant solution of two separate categories with the same direction of fit,” (Searle 1979, 15).

Where do Searle’s categories of expressives and declarations fit in? They belong on the *non*-propositional side of the taxonomy, alongside greetings and exclamations. It is a mistake to think that expressives and declarations have propositional content. This is what I meant earlier when I said that the Fregean picture of content led Searle to find propositional content where there isn’t any.

Let’s start with declarations. The first clue that declarations lack propositional content comes from looking at the kinds of sentences we use to report declarations.

- 5a. He pronounced them man and wife.
- b. She christened the ship the S.S. Minnow.
- c. I fired him.
- d. The chairman adjourned the meeting.
- e. The board appointed her chairman.

There are no embedded content clauses in these sentences, which is a strong indication that the actions they report lack propositional contents. The verbs in these sentences express simple relations between people and other people, or people and things like ships

or meetings. To pronounce two people man and wife is not to do something with a proposition. It is to do something to the bride and groom (or to the social institution of marriage of which they are now participants).

Perhaps an even more telling fact about declarations is that they lack satisfaction conditions. Declarations are not true or false, nor are they fulfilled or unfulfilled. It makes no sense to say that an act of pronouncing two people man and wife is *true*, or that it was *fulfilled*. It is crucial here to distinguish between satisfaction conditions and *success* conditions. An act of marrying two people can, of course, be successful or unsuccessful. If the bride or groom is already married, or if the person doing the pronouncing is not in a position to do so, or if any number of other things have gone wrong, then the act of marrying has not gone off successfully. Like all speech acts, declarations have conditions for their successful performance. But success conditions are not the same as satisfaction conditions. Declarations have the former but not the latter. This draws out another mistake in Searle's taxonomy. According to Searle, declarations have *both* word-to-world and world-to-word direction of fit. If that were so then we should expect declarations to be *both* true or false and fulfilled or unfulfilled. But neither of these distinctions applies to declarations. Declarations have no direction of fit because they lack satisfaction conditions altogether.

One might try to resist this by pointing to examples of declarations that clearly can be evaluated for truth and falsity, e.g. when an umpire in a baseball game says 'You're out', or a judge says to the defendant 'You are guilty'. These are examples of what Searle calls "assertive declarations," cases in which an authority figure performs a

declaration by asserting that something is the case (Searle 1979, 19-20).<sup>19</sup> Given that the authority figure can get the facts wrong (the runner beat the throw, the defendant didn't do it), it seems like these kinds of declarations can be assessed for truth and falsity. But this doesn't threaten my claim that declarations lack satisfaction conditions. The categories of assertives and declarations are just types of speech acts, and any particular token speech act can fall under multiple types. When the umpire says 'You're out', he does two things at once: he asserts that you are out, and he makes a declaration to the effect that you are out. Only the former has truth conditions. Note the different ways of reporting the umpire's utterance:

6a. The umpire said/asserted/stated that the runner was out.

b. The umpire called the runner out.

(6a) has an embedded clause, (6b) does not. This reflects the fact that (6a) reports the umpire's utterance as an assertion with propositional content and truth conditions, whereas (6b) reports it as a declaration with neither.<sup>20</sup> The umpire's utterance *qua* assertion was true or false, but *qua* declaration it was neither. In terms of our new taxonomy, then, declarations belong on the non-propositional side along with greetings, exclamations, and other speech acts that lack satisfaction conditions.

The same goes for expressives, although here the case is a bit harder to make. The sentences we use to report expressives do contain embedded sentences, in the form of gerundive clauses:

---

<sup>19</sup> See also Bach and Harnish's distinction between effectives and verdictives (Bach and Harnish 1979, ch.6).

<sup>20</sup> Of course (6a) can also be used (indirectly, I would say) as a report of a declaration. The point is that (6a), unlike (6b), attributes propositional content and truth conditions to the umpire's speech act.

- 7a. He thanked her for opening the door.
- b. She apologized for stepping on his toe.
- c. He congratulated her for finishing her dissertation.

Like infinitive clauses, gerundive clauses, e.g. ‘for opening the door’ and ‘for stepping on his toe’, are thought to contain a null pronoun, PRO, in subject position (Haegeman 1994, 275-6). So, for example, the form of (6a) is held to be ‘He thanked her<sub>i</sub> for PRO<sub>i</sub> opening the door’. We have something fully clausal, then, in the complement positions of these reports. On Searle’s account, these clausal complements express the propositional contents of the reported expressives. But now compare the examples in (7a-c) with the ones in (8a-c):

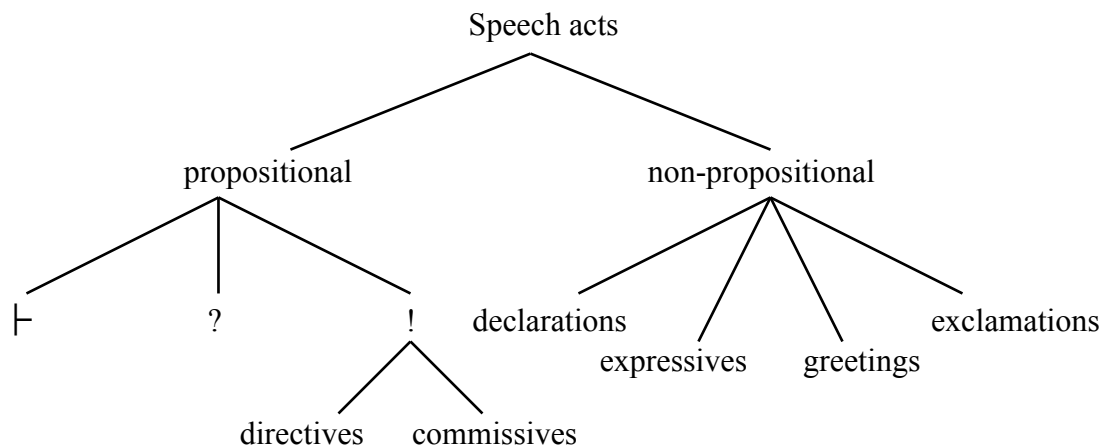
- 8a. He hugged her for opening the door.
- b. They punished her for stepping on his toe.
- c. He paid her for finishing her dissertation.

No one thinks that acts of hugging, punishing, or paying have propositional contents. The gerundive clauses in (8a-c) are not being used to express the propositional contents of the acts they report. They are being used to give reasons or explanations for why these acts were performed. The *reason* he hugged her is that she opened the door. The same goes for the gerundive clauses in (7a-c). The gerundive clause in (7a) does not give the content of his act of thanking; it gives a reason for that act of thanking. It is a mistake, then, to think that the embedded clauses in reports of expressive speech acts give the propositional contents of those speech acts.

Another giveaway that expressives lack propositional contents can be found in Searle’s own description of them. According to Searle, expressives have no direction of

fit. This means that they lack satisfaction conditions. Like all speech acts, an expressive speech act can be successful or unsuccessful (which in this case is largely a matter of being sincere or insincere). But they are not true or false or fulfilled or unfulfilled. Given this fact about expressives, it would be surprising to find that they had propositional contents. The role for propositional content in Austin-Searle speech act theory is to determine satisfaction conditions. Attributing propositional content to a speech act that lacks satisfaction conditions looks entirely otiose.

Here, then, is the completed taxonomy, with declarations and expressives filled in on the non-propositional side:



Expressives and declarations provide a good illustration of the way in which the Fregean picture of content and the  $F(p)$  schema have had a distorting influence on our philosophical understanding of speech acts. Only by rejecting this Fregean picture can we come to have a clearer view of the nature of speech acts, a clearer view of the nature of force, and a proper scheme for categorizing speech acts into types.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> I presented earlier versions of this paper at the New Work on Speech Acts Conference at Columbia University in September 2013, Ohio State in February 2014, Manitoba in



## References

- Austin, J.L. 1975: *How to Do Things with Words*. Second edition. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bach, Kent and Robert Harnish 1979: *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Barker, Stephen 2004: *Renewing Meaning: A Speech-Act Theoretic Approach*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Beaney, Michael (ed) 1997: *The Frege Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Charlow, Nate 2014a: "The Meaning of Imperatives". *Philosophy Compass*, 9/8, pp.540-55.
- Charlow, Nate 2014b: "Logic and Semantics for Imperatives". *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 43, pp.617-64.
- Fiengo, Robert 2007: *Asking Questions: Using Meaningful Structures to Imply Ignorance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Frege, Gottlob 1918a: "Thought". In Beaney 1997, pp.325-46.
- Frege, Gottlob 1918b: "Negation". In Beaney 1997, pp.346-62.
- Frege, Gottlob 1918c: "Compound Thoughts". In Frege 1984, pp. 390-406.
- Frege, Gottlob 1984: *Collected Papers on Mathematics, Logic, and Philosophy*. Edited by Brian McGuinness. Translated by Max Black, V.H. Dudman, Peter Geach, Hans Kaal, E.H.W. Kluge, Brian McGuinness, and R. H. Stoothoff. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Geach, P.T. 1965: "Assertion". *The Philosophical Review*, 74, pp. 449-65.
- Green, Mitchell forthcoming: "A Refinement and Defense of the Force/Content Distinction," this volume.
- Groenendijk, Jeroen and Martin Stokhof 1997: "Questions". In van Benthem and ter Meulen 1997, pp. 1055-1124.

---

October 2014, and St. Cloud State in November 2015. Thanks to the audiences at these events, with special thanks to Ben Caplan, Dan Harris, Bjørn Jespersen, and Chris Tillman. My greatest debt is, of course, to John Searle.

- Hanks, Peter 2007: "How Wittgenstein Defeated Russell's Multiple Relation Theory of Judgment". *Synthese*, 154, pp. 121-46.
- Hanks, Peter 2011: "Structured Propositions as Types," *Mind*, 120, pp.11-52.
- Hanks, Peter 2015: *Propositional Content*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hanks, Peter forthcoming a: "On Cancellation". *Synthese*.
- Hanks, Peter forthcoming b: "The Explanatory Role of Propositions". *Analysis*.
- Hare, R.M. 1949: "Imperative Sentences". *Mind*, 58, pp. 21-39.
- Hom, Christopher and Jeremy Schwartz 2013: "Unity and the Frege-Geach Problem". *Philosophical Studies*, 163, pp. 15-24.
- Hintikka, Jaakko 1974: "Questions about Questions". In Munitz and Unger 1974, pp. 103-58.
- Jespersen, Bjørn 2012: "Recent Work on Structured Meaning and Propositional Unity". *Philosophy Compass*, 7/9, pp. 620-30.
- King, Jeffrey, Scott Soames and Jeff Speaks 2014: *New Thinking About Propositions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- König, Ekkehard and Peter Siemund 2007: "Speech Act Distinctions in Grammar". In Shopen 2007, pp. 276-324.
- Lewis, David 1969: *Convention: A Philosophical Study*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- McGlone, Michael 2012: "Propositional Structure and Truth Conditions". *Philosophical Studies*, 157, pp. 211-25.
- Merricks, Trenton 2015: *Propositions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Munitz, Milton and Peter Unger (eds) 1974: *Semantics and Philosophy*. New York: New York University Press.
- Portner, Paul 2004: "The Semantics of Imperatives within a Theory of Clause Types". In Young 2004, 235-52.
- Reiland, Indrek 2013: "Propositional Attitudes and Mental Acts". *Thought*, 1, pp. 239-45.
- Recanati, François 2013: "Content, Mood, and Force". *Philosophy Compass*, 8/7, pp. 622-32.

- Russell, Bertrand 1903: *Principles of Mathematics*. New York: Norton.
- Russell, Bertrand 1913: *Theory of Knowledge, The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, Volume 7. Edited by Elizabeth Eames*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Schiffer, Stephen 1972: *Meaning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Searle, John 1968: "Austin on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts". *The Philosophical Review*, 77, pp. 405-24.
- Searle, John 1969: *Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, John 1979: *Expression and Meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, John and Daniel Vanderveken 1985: *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Soames, Scott 2010: *What is Meaning?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Shopen, Timothy (ed) 2007: *Language Typology and Syntactic Description, Volume I, Clause Structure*. Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Benthem, Johann and Alice ter Meulen (eds) 1997: *Handbook of Logic and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Young, Robert (ed) 2004: *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory 14*. Ithaca, NY: CLC Publications.