ON LOCUTIONARY AND ILOCUTIONARY ACTS

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DENNIS HENRY

ADVISOR: DR. DAVID B. ANNIS

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
MUNCIE, INDIANA

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I recommend this thesis for acceptance by the Honors Program of Ball State University for graduation with honors.

[Signature]

Department of Philosophy

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The purpose of this paper is to examine John L. Austin's distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts (1). This will be done in light of criticism offered by professors John L. Searle (3) and L. Jonathan Cohen (2), both of whom hold that Austin's distinction is untenable. I will argue that the distinction may still be acceptable, though it is probably more tenuous than Austin believed.

Prior to propounding the locutionary-illocutionary distinction, Austin had suggested that there was a certain class of declarative sentences, named by him "performatives," which could not be correctly described as being either true or false. A person who utters one of these performatives, Austin suggested, performs a certain act. Of course, one act that he performs is the act of uttering the sentence. A speaker performs this act, no matter what sentence he utters. But in the case of performatives, the act of uttering the sentence is sufficient to guarantee that the speaker has performed some other act as well. For example, if Jones says to you "I bet you a dollar," Jones has not only performed the act of uttering the sentence, but in saying that sentence he has also made a bet. His uttering the sentence is the actual betting. In other words, in saying the above sentence Jones has performed a particular act over and above the act of simply saying something. Since his saying, "I bet you . . ." is the bet, Jones's utterance can not correctly be described as being either "true" or "false," because we do not normally use those terms to measure the propriety of acts. Notice that you would not say of Jones's betting you that the bet was true (or false).

Similarly a person who says "I promise you that . . ." is not only saying a sentence, but in saying that sentence is promising. By
saying "I promise" the speaker makes a verbal contract to do something. Likewise, utterances of "I warn you that . . .", "I order you to . . .", "I request that . . .", etc. are acts of warning, ordering, requesting, etc., and as such are not liable to be either true or false. This is in contrast to "constatives," Austin's term denoting the class of sentences which do not appear to be particular acts, and which are liable to truth and falsity. "Jones bet me that . . .", "I ran to the store . . .", and so on, are examples of constatives. They can be evaluated as being true or false depending on whether or not Jones did, in fact, bet me, whether I did run to the store, and so on. In uttering one of these constatives the speaker is not necessarily performing any act other than simply speaking. For this reason, the true-false dimension appears to be an adequate tool to evaluate them.

How shall we describe performatives, if not within a true-false dimension? Austin suggests that the notions "felicitous" or "infelicitous" be used to describe them. If the circumstances are such that a speaker successfully performs the act in making a performative utterance, the utterance is said to be "happy" or felicitous. If circumstances do not allow the successful completion of the act, the utterance is said to be "unhappy" or infelicitous. For example, if while saying "I bet you a dollar" Jones does not have a dollar, or if you do not agree to bet, the "bet" can not be successfully performed. Jones's utterance is infelicitous. But under no circumstances would the bet be "false." If, on the other hand, Jones does have a dollar, you do agree to bet, you shake hands on it, and so forth so that all the necessary conditions for completing the bet are fulfilled, Jones's utterance is said to be happy or felicitous.
A preliminary examination appears to indicate that performatives all follow a certain pattern. Our examples of performatives, thus far, have all been in first person, present tense, active voice, indicative mood. Furthermore, they have all generally followed the "I ___ (you) that . . ." formula. It appears that whenever the substitution of a verb into this formula generates an acceptable English sentence, that sentence is performative. For example, substitution-instances such as "vow", "command", "exhort" all generate acceptable English sentences which are acts done in the saying of the sentences.

This formula will not identify all performatives; Austin notes that some sentences in the second person, present tense also qualify as performatives. For example, "You are hereby sentenced to five years" said by a judge, qualifies as a performative since the utterance is the actual sentencing. Likewise, "You are hereby notified that you are trespassing on private property and liable to prosecution. (signed) J. Jones," although written, is the notification and thus qualifies as a performative. The class is then expanded even further by including "implicit" performatives as "the bull is about to charge," which, Austin contends, is equivalent under certain conditions to "I warn you that the bull is about to charge." The only difference between the two is that of implicit as opposed to explicit performance of the act. That is, the former is just as much a warning as the latter; we simply do not make explicit that we are warning.

Austin believed that the performatives and constatives should form two mutually exclusive classes of sentences, so that, given any particular declarative sentence S, S could be categorized either as a performative or
as a constative, but not both. In order to accomplish this, a set of
criteria needed to be found which would be sufficient to distinguish
whether 3 would be one or the other.

Vocabulary might appear to be a good criterion, since it appears
that verbs like "run", "go", "convinced", "attend" can never be performative verbs. Vocabulary as a criterion is not sufficient, however, to
guarantee that a sentence is performative. For instance, although "warn",
"order", "bet", or "promise" were seen to be performative when placed in
the "I ____ (you) that ..." formula, none of these verbs will generate
a performative sentence if they are used in sentences of the "He ____
(you) that ..." type. In the latter type of sentence, the speaker is
merely describing a particular situation and that description can be
either true or false. Nor does a combination of vocabulary and grammar
as a criterion satisfy Austin, since even this does not serve to distin-
guish why implicit performatives (as "The bull is about to charge.") are
performatives and why seemingly similar utterances such as "Jones is
going to the store," are not.

Throughout our discussion of performatives, we have relied on the
"fact" that constatives were assessable as being either true or false,
whereas performatives could be measured only in terms of felicity. Per-
haps this difference could serve as a sufficient criterion to distinguish
whether any one sentence is a performative or a constative but Austin
thinks that there are two reasons why even this criterion will not dis-
tinguish performatives from constatives in all cases. First, it appears
that there are some constatives which are more correctly described within
the happy-unhappy dimension than within the true-false dimension. For
example, would you say that Smith's utterance was "false" if he said, "All John's children are bald," when John has no children? Austin thinks that what we should say is that the remark was inappropriate. We would not say that the remark was "false," but rather say that since John does not have any children, the question of whether or not they are bald is beside the point. In other words, the utterance is "unhappy" in the same sense that Jones's bet was unhappy: one of the necessary conditions for the utterance being appropriate has not been fulfilled.

Secondly, the happy-unhappy dimension used to evaluate performatives is related to, and dependent upon some notion of "truth." Performatives, to be happy, must satisfy certain necessary conditions, as in the betting example. But these necessary conditions are met only when they correspond to experiential facts. Just as "Jones bet me a dollar," is true only if it corresponds with what actually takes place, so "I bet you a dollar," is happy only if the necessary conditions (describable as "I have a dollar," "You agree to bet," etc.) correspond to what actually is the case.

Austin concludes that there does not appear to be any criteria which will separate performatives and constatives into two mutually exclusive classes. Furthermore, the method of evaluating one is quite similar to the method of evaluating the other, since they both rely on a positive correspondence with certain facts. Underlying the breakdown of the performative-constative distinction is Austin's belief that the notions "true" and "false" on the one hand, and "felicitous" and "infelicitous" on the other, are very similar sets of terms. Both sets are used to designate the degree to which a sentence may be said to be the correct or proper thing to say under the prevailing set of circumstances (1:144).
For these reasons, Austin replaces the performative-constative distinction with one that he believes will set out more accurately what it means to do something in saying a sentence. Suppose that Smith says, "I am going to town." He has performed what Austin calls a "speech act." That is, he has said the sentence with meaning and, simultaneously, he has used the sentence to perform a particular act. That act may have been a statement of intent, a promise, a description of his actions, etc. The act of uttering the sentence with meaning is called the "locutionary act"; the use of that sentence as the performance of some act, its "force," is called the "illocutionary act." Since, as we noted, the locutionary and illocutionary acts are abstractions from the total speech act, any utterance which amounts to saying something will entail the speaker's having both performed a locutionary act and an illocutionary act by his uttering the sentence.

By "meaning," Austin explains that he means "sense and reference" as the term is commonly used by philosophers. Roughly, we might say that Smith says the words with "reference" when, by "I" he means himself, by "town" means a particular town, and so on. That is, he uses the words to refer to particular things. His words have a "sense" if he is using the English words in a particular way. For example, the "sense" of the phrase "go to town" might be equivalent to "transport oneself by one means or another to the nearest burg, town, or city." If Smith means something like this by "go to town," he is using the words with a particular "sense." What Austin is saying, then, is that he will consider
"meaning" to be equivalent to the product of the "sense" and the "reference" of the utterance.\(^1\)

The necessity of the notion of the "illocutionary act," according to Austin, is apparent in that no matter what the "meaning" of the utterance is, it may still be unclear as to how Smith used that utterance. That is, the utterance may have had the "force" of a prediction, or else a promise, or a warning, and so on. The meaning of the sentence alone will not tell us which force Smith's utterance actually had. Furthermore, Smith may on another occasion have said the same words with the same meaning and have used them with a different force than he did on this occasion. As a result, any account we wish to make of a complete speech act must necessarily include both the notion of a locutionary and an illocutionary act, since the same (or equivalent) locutionary act may be on two different occasions, two different illocutionary acts.\(^2\)

The locutionary act is abstractable into three different acts: the phonic act, the phatic act, and the rhetic act. The phonic act refers to the uttering of noise. "Flirmf ce," "sadly Jill have blue are," and

\(^1\)Austin does not say exactly what he means by "sense and reference." He says only that his notion is in line "with current views." (1:148) The question as to which current view he is referring, is unclear. The terminology is Fregean, but Austin apparently did not mean to follow Frege's analysis too closely, as Cohen points out. (2:120-121)

\(^2\)It may also include what Austin calls a "perlocutionary act," the act effected by the first two. For example, when Smith tells Jones "Get out," Smith performs a locutionary act by uttering the words with a particular sense and reference; he performs an illocutionary act by using the utterance as a warning; he performs a perlocutionary act by causing Jones to leave. Austin suggests the use of the "by saying ___ I ___" formula to distinguish them from the illocutionary "in saying ___ I ___."
"Row, row, row your boat" are all examples of phones, and an utterance of one constitutes the performance of a phonic act.

The phatic act is the act of uttering vocables "conforming to or as conforming to a certain grammar, and conforming to or as conforming to a certain vocabulary." Every phatic act is a phonic act, since every utterance that conforms to a vocabulary and grammar is in part always a series of sounds. The converse, however, is not true. "Nose go are pretty the tangerine" is a phonic act, but does not conform to a grammar and thus, is not a phatic act. The actual vocables uttered in a single phatic act is called a "pheme."

The rhetic act is the act of using a "pheme" with a certain meaning where "meaning" is equivalent to "sense and reference." A "rheme" is the utterance made in the performance of a rhetic act. For example, the words "I am going to town," uttered by some person who by "I" means himself, and who by "town" means some particular town, and who understands the use of the English phrase, "go to town," is a rheme. The person who uttered the words with a particular sense and reference has performed a rhetic act. Every rhetic act is a phatic act, but not conversely, since "the phatic act is essentially mimicable, reproducible"(1:96). The performance of the rhetic act, then, constitutes the whole of the locutionary act.

All this is contrasted to the illocutionary act, a description of which tells us in what precise way the utterance is being used on this particular occasion. "There are very numerous ways in which we use speech, and it makes a great difference to our act . . . in which way and which "sense" we were on this occasion "using" it (1:99)." Given Smith's utterance, "I am going to do it," we may well know what the senses of the words
are, and to what they refer, and still be in doubt as to whether on this occasion, spoken by that person, the utterance was really a threat, or simply a warning, whether it was a promise, or merely a statement of intent. Upon hearing it, we might well wonder, "I heard what you said, but are you promising me that...?"

What Austin has done, then, is to abandon the special performative-constative theory for the more general locutionary-illocutionary theory. The use of performative verbs in utterances serves to make explicit the illocutionary force of the utterance (1:114). The list of these special verbs includes, in general, all verbs which satisfy the "in saying _____ I was (doing) _____" or "to say _____ is to _____" formulae. The problem as to person is eliminated, since "he warns that..." may be said under the locutionary-illocutionary theory to express the same force as "I warn you that..." With the performative-constative distinction, we were in the awkward position of classifying "I warn you..." and "he warns you..." as two completely different kinds of sentences. Austin's preference for the locutionary-illocutionary distinction appears to allow us a broader scope for characterizing an utterance of an S as also being the performance of a particular act (apart from the simple act of uttering alone). Since all declarative sentences have some illocutionary force, the notion of what we do when we say something, is seen to be applicable not just to performatives, but to all utterances. Still, an utterance which uses the "explicit performative" is somewhat special since the "force" of the utterance appears to be uniquely determined by it. As will be seen, it is this unique role that performatives play in language which is the source of an important criticism of the entire locutionary-illocutionary distinction.
A fair appraisal of the locutionary-illocutionary distinction will depend in part on how we shall interpret what Austin means by the illocutionary act. Just what qualifies as an, or the, illocutionary act? There seem to be at least two possible interpretations. Consider the following example:

(1) I warn you that the cat is on the mat.

Now the locutionary act performed is the uttering of the sentence (1) with a certain more or less definite meaning. Austin is clear on this point, but not so clear on what the illocutionary act is supposed to be.

On the one hand, it looks as though we might say that the illocutionary act "was one of warning." If so, then in abstracting the locutionary act, we have not really abstracted the illocutionary act, although there is no question left as to how to describe it. Furthermore, the abstraction of the illocutionary act from (1) as one of "warning," in no way abstracts the locutionary act from (1). This is true since the locutionary act is defined in part by the vocables uttered, and we have not abstracted any vocables. On this interpretation, it looks as though locutionary and illocutionary acts must always be mutually exclusive, since one act could never be identical to the other.

We might try to justify this interpretation on the basis that the notion "illocution" is, after all, an abstraction, and to demand that simply because the locution is a physical act, that it must be too, ignores the basic characteristic of the illocution—that it is an abstraction.
Or we might say the following:

Of course the concepts "locution" and "illocution" are different. If we remain on the conceptual level in describing the locutionary act and the illocutionary act of the utterance, certainly they will always be mutually exclusive. But "describing" the acts conceptually does not amount to abstracting the acts from a particular utterance.

What is the illocutionary act performed in the utterance of (1)? We might be tempted to say simply that "it's how we use the utterance." But that reply is merely a conceptual description of the act. What is the actual illocutionary act on this occasion of that utterance? In the case of (1), the illocutionary act is Jones's use of the utterance "I warn you that the cat is on the mat" as a warning to Smith. That is the illocutionary act performed on that occasion. The illocutionary act must always involve the actual utterance, when there is one.

Throughout the remainder of the paper, we will discuss the locutionary-illocutionary distinction in terms of the latter interpretation, since both Cohen and Searle seem to interpret Austin roughly in this same way. Furthermore, the first interpretation is singularly uninteresting: on the conceptual level, the distinction will always hold.

The first question that presents itself is whether or not Austin intended for locutions and illocutions to be mutually exclusive. To say of two things that they are "mutually exclusive" means in general that the intersection of the two is equal to the null class. Applied to Austin's distinction, we should say that the locutionary act and the illocutionary act with respect to a sentence S, are mutually exclusive if any abstraction of the locutionary act from S will not be an abstraction of the illocutionary
act from S, and conversely; that is, nothing is both a locutionary act and an illocutionary act with respect to S.

We might suppose that Austin did intend for the two acts to be mutually exclusive, as he continually suggested that force and meaning are to be contrasted. If he did not intend that contrast to be complete, he does not mention anywhere in How To Do Things with Words this reservation. Still, he nowhere states that he does intend for the distinction to be mutually exclusive and notes (1:148) that there remains to be done "some weeding-out and reformulating in terms of the distinction. . . ."

So it is not clear just what Austin intended. As a result, we will examine the locutionary-illocutionary distinction as if it were intended to be mutually exclusive and, if it is not, attempt to find another, weaker, relationship that will hold and still be within the general guidelines that Austin has constructed for the distinction.

Related to this problem is the question of how Austin intended to determine the "meaning" of any given utterance. When dealing with sentences like

(2) The cat is on the mat

uttered with sense and reference, it seems to be Austin's intention that the "meaning" of (2) be determined in reference to the utterance as a whole, as opposed to just certain words or a certain part of the utterance. However, when dealing with sentences like

(1) α) I warn you that β) the cat is on the mat

where α denotes the performative prefix "I warn you" and β denotes the subordinate clause--it is unclear as to whether Austin intended for the "meaning" of (1) to be determined solely by reference to β, or by the
whole sentence; i.e., whether by $p$ alone, or by $a$ and $p$ together, in that order.

At first glance, this question looks trivial: after all, if the meaning of (2) is determined by the whole locution, surely the same method must be applied to (1). However, it should be remembered that Austin stated that the illocutionary force is made explicit by use of the performatives. This means that in the case of sentences like (1), the words "I warn you" are explicit evidence that the illocutionary force of (1) is a warning. Now if meaning is determined by the whole utterance, then it looks as if "meaning" and "force" are not mutually exclusive. That is, in attempting to abstract the locutionary act from the utterance, we would inadvertently be abstracting the illocutionary act as well. In reporting that the locutionary act performed in uttering (1) was the saying of the sentence "I warn you that the cat is on the mat" with a particular sense and reference, we have also reported that the illocutionary force was a warning. The semantical structure prescribes that the force of (1) must be a warning. Furthermore, any abstraction of the illocutionary act appears also to be an abstraction of the locutionary act: any abstraction of the actual warning of Smith via the utterance (1) necessarily abstracts the utterance with sense and reference.

Consequently, if meaning is a function of the whole sentence, the meaning-force distinction, and correspondingly, the locutionary-illocutionary distinction can not be mutually exclusive, since all cases like (1) where an explicit performative is used, any abstraction of one act will be the abstraction of the other act. And what if we wish to hold that meaning is a function of the $B$ clause alone? Jonathan Cohen lists at least two reasons why he believes this interpretation will not suffice.
First, he reasons that (1) and (2) must be two different locutionary acts, since the locution is defined in part by the uttering of certain vocables. Therefore the addition of a performative prefix α to (2) must be a different locutionary act from just (2) alone.

Secondly, given that every illocutionary act is a locutionary act, then whenever we utter certain "self-sufficient performatives," (performatives which by themselves constitute a complete sentence, such as "I protest," "I bless you," "I nominate Smith") they not only have an explicit force, but also a meaning. But what is the difference between the force of "I protest," and its meaning? They appear to be the same. And when prefixed to some β are we to assume that the performative loses that meaning it had when uttered alone? If not, meaning is not a function solely of the subordinate clause (2:122, 123).

To the first objection, we should reply that (1) and (2) must be different locutionary acts since they are comprised of different phonetic acts—and corresponding to them, different phatic acts. However, the objection has no force, so to speak, unless we supply the apparently intended conclusion:

"But then it follows that they are different rhetic acts, from which it follows that (1) and (2) must have different meanings."

Austin would not object to the first half of the revised conclusion. Certainly, since a "rheme" is defined in terms of the notion "rheme", and the rhemes in this instance are different, the rhemes must be, too (1:97). It is the final "therefore" that is objectionable, since it does follow only if a particularly underlying assumption is true: no rhetic act can have the same sense and reference (i.e. meaning) as another. This is clearly too strong, and Austin goes to the trouble (1:97) to give a name
to this type of situation, that of "rhetically equivalent" acts. To assert that (1) and (2) (or (1) and \( B \) of (1)) are not rhetically equivalent is tantamount to asserting that they cannot have the same sense and reference. But that is asserting that "meaning" in Austin's sense must range over more than just the subordinate clause--and that is moot. The second objection is more difficult to answer, as Cohen notes (2:122). There is, however, an avenue we may take in reply.

We might ask if these "self-sufficient performatives" are so self-sufficient after all. That is, do they comprise in and of themselves a complete speech act? They do not look very complete. Most appear to be simply elliptical expressions, convenient short-cuts within a language.

Still, when faced with an expression like "I protest," even if those are the first words we hear of a conversation, we would not want to say that the expression has no meaning. We do understand what it is to "protest," although we may not know what the protest is or even its cause. And if we grant even this much, then whenever one of these performatives is prefixed to a \( B \) clause, we will have to assert either that whatever meaning "I protest" had when uttered alone, is now lost, or else agree that "meaning" not be a function solely of the subordinate clause. The latter choice is eminently preferable, since even if it weakens Austin's distinction, at least it does not suggest the magical "now-it-has-meaning, now-it-doesn't" characteristic which the former appears to have.

In general we should say that although we have dismissed Cohen's first objection, we have not had such good fortune with the second. Our reply, though not without some merit, is admittedly weak. It looks as though given a particular utterance of type \( \alpha B \), its (explicit)
Illocutionary force is related to or included in its meaning. Consequently, it appears that the locutionary-illocutionary abstraction cannot be mutually exclusive, in the sense that a propos to certain kinds of utterance, one cannot be abstracted without abstracting, at least in part, the other.

Cohen, however, asserts that the distinction is even less clear than this preliminary examination of performative utterances would indicate. The notion of "force," according to Cohen, is unnecessary, since a clear notion of "meaning" will account for everything about an utterance that "force" is intended by Austin to account for.

... it is pretty clear that if you address the English sentence "Is it raining?" to your friend, as he looks out the window, your meaning would be made even more explicit if you added a moment later, "I ask whether it is raining." ... in your first utterance, let alone in your second, it is impossible to distinguish force from meaning. (2:123)

We have agreed that Cohen has shown in the case of explicit performatives that the locutionary and illocutionary acts are not separately abstractable. Here, he is attempting to broaden that criticism to include all utterances. He is arguing that just as in the case of the performatives, there is no abstraction of the force of "Is it raining?" which is not really also an abstraction of the meaning.

Note, however, that "your meaning" is used as if synonymous with Austin's "force," i.e. it answers "how were you using the utterance?". The objection becomes clearer when we replace "your" by "the." Would we say, then, that the meaning of $p$ is made more explicit by prefixing $\alpha$ to it? Is the sense and reference of $p$ made more "explicit" by $\alpha p$ -- or just different? Does the addition of "I ask ..." make more precise the sense and reference of "is it raining?" It would seem as if it does, only if such physical nuances as mood, tone, cadence, and emphasis are
not force-indicators as Austin suggests (1:73-74), but are sense and reference indicators. If they are, then an utterance of α with a particular cadence, emphasis on certain phones, and with a certain tone and mood may well be said to have a "meaning" beyond that of the rhemes. In this case, we could say that "meaning" is made more explicit by the addition of a particular performative. Whereupon, the notion of force becomes superfluous. If, however, these nuances are not functions of sense and reference, it would be improper to speak of "the meaning" of β being made "more explicit" by the addition of α. It would be more correct to say simply that the "meaning" of αβ "differs from" that of β (as shown earlier.) And we have no reason to suppose (assuming these nuances are not sense and reference indicators) that this difference is one from "implicit" to "explicit," as there is nothing in the sense and reference of β to indicate a hint of any "implicit" meaning to be explicated.

Further, it seems as though we can distinguish force from meaning in "is it raining?" and possibly also in "I ask whether it is raining." Analyzing the former as necessarily having the explicit force of the latter, i.e. that of asking, is similar to asserting the same relationship between "It is raining" and "I say that it is raining." Is the force that of "saying"? Perhaps, in an indeterminate sense. But "saying" does not make explicit how we are using the utterance. In "saying," we may well have been warning, stating, etc. Likewise, in "asking," we may have been inquiring, examining, quizzing, catechizing, and so forth.

1"Saying" is not illocutionary. This seems to be the reason Austin did not include it as illocutionary. Why he included "ask" is puzzling. (1:94-5,8)
But Cohen's question runs deeper than our analysis suggests. Certainly context and occasion play a role in determining the reference, just as context, and occasion (via mood, tone, cadence, etc.) play a role in determining the force. When viewed in this light the matters of "making explicit the force" and "making precise the meaning" tend to merge into the common problem of determining (in part via context) exactly what it is that we do when we say something.

There seems to be a dividing line that can be drawn between meaning and force, but the value of Cohen's arguments is to show that this line is perhaps more arbitrary than we had hoped. It does seem plausible that a notion of "meaning" could itself handle both the notions of sense and reference and of force. But the result of this would be to include such things as mood, tone, cadence, emphasis, sense, reference, gestures, and probably even intent under the same general "meaning-functions" heading.

One problem that this would entail is evidenced within Cohen's article as he vacillates between "meaning" as being equivalent to "the actual sense and reference" and "meaning" as "I meant it as . . . ." This is a blurring of the distinction between what sentences "mean" and what speakers "mean" in uttering them.

As a result of Cohen's criticism we have tentatively concluded that with respect to explicit performatives, the locutionary and illocutionary acts are identical. One can not be abstracted without abstracting the other. With respect to utterances with other than an explicit performative nature, Cohen has shown only that if mood, tone, cadence, etc. are elements of meaning, is the abstraction of one act the abstraction of the other. If they are not, his argument is inconclusive.
Searle took a somewhat different, though related, path in arguing against the locutionary-illocutionary distinction. His argument may be summarized briefly that since reports of rhetic acts invariably contain illocutionary verbs (at least of a very general type), every characterization of a rhetic act will also be a characterization of an illocutionary act. And since every sentence has some force-indicator (such as grammatical structure, tone, mood, etc.) built into its meaning, every specification of a locutionary act will determine a specification of an illocutionary act. Hence, every rhetic act is always an illocutionary act of one kind or another. All members of the class of locutionary acts are then members of the class of illocutionary acts.

To see just what it is that Searle is arguing, consider our old example:

(3) The cat is on the mat
(4) He told me that the cat is on the mat

Now any utterance of (3) is at least a phatic act, since (3) is a series of vocables which conform to a particular vocabulary and grammar (English); correspondingly, (3) is a pheme. (4), on the other hand, is a report of a rhetic act, since the use of the phrase "he told me that" implies that "he" uttered the particular words with meaning. Notice that if a parrot had squawked out "The cat is on the mat," one would not say of the parrot that he told me that the cat is on the mat. Similarly, we would not say of one who merely stumbled over the English words without using them to refer to a particular cat and mat, or who did not understand what he was saying, that he "told me that..." The use of the indirect quotation report implies that "he" did utter the sentence with meaning, i.e. that "he" performed a rhetic act. Thus (4) is the report of a rhetic act.
The point Searle is making is that it seems for any case where we wish to report a rhetic act we invariably use verbs like "told" "asked whether" and so on. Unfortunately, Searle claims, the verbs are illocutionary verbs. They are "more general" illocutionary verbs, but that is their only difference from verbs like "warn" "order," etc. For example, the verb "told" indicates a particular range of forces of which the actual force will be a member. "Warning," "stating," etc., are some possibilities and are all "species" of the "genus" verb "telling."

So then (4), according to Searle, is also a report of an illocutionary act in that it makes explicit that the force of (3) is "telling" or is a species of "telling."

There are two objections which can be made to this first premise of the argument. First, is it necessary that reports of rhetic acts contain these supposedly illocutionary verbs? Remember that Austin did not include them since they did not make explicit what force was used on a particular occasion. On Austin's interpretation we may infer that the use of these "genus" general illocutionary verbs served the purpose only to relate the fact that a particular phrase (3) was used with meaning. The use of the verb "told" would indicate this since, for example, we would not say of a parrot that he "told" me that. . . ." Theoretically, Austin could as well have distinguished the difference between the rhetic and the phatic by using

(4') He _____ me that the cat is on the mat.

where _____ merely indicates the fact that the speaker referred to uttered some phrase (the sense of which is denoted by the P clause) with meaning. Here the _____ is roughly equivalent to what might be called a "force-neutral say," so that the idea that a meaningful utterance has occurred is
conveyed without that conveyance tipping the hand as to what force or range of possible forces was used.

Secondly, the labeling of (4) as a report of an illocutionary act is faulty. (4) still does not make explicit what particular force utterer was using. This is the whole purpose of the illocutionary verbs (1:114). That is, (4) would not suffice as a description of the illocutionary act since the question as to what the force was, is still open: was he warning, admonishing, or merely stating?

But Searle's question might be put in this way: Is it possible for Jones to relate that Smith uttered S with a meaning without relating at the same time some force-indicator involved in the utterance of S? If not, the locutionary-illocutionary distinction will be weaker than we had thought, since in all utterances the force will be determined, at least in part, by the meaning.

The answer, however, appears to be "yes":

(4") Jones: Smith uttered the vocables, "the cat is on the mat," and he did so with a more or less definite meaning (as sense and reference).

Now (4") reports a rhetic act in the same way that (4) does, and yet does not commit Smith's utterances to having any particular force. Normally we don't talk in the manner of (4"). Nonetheless, the fact that it is possible to report a rhetic act in this manner is sufficient to show that the fact that we do use these "general illocutionary" verbs is more aptly described as "linguistic convenience" than as a necessary fact of language. Described as such, this relationship between the report of a rhetic act and the report of an illocutionary act is clearly contingent, and, consequently, of little value as a tool to discredit the locutionary-illocutionary distinction.
Even so, Searle might argue, any utterance of (4") will amount to a specification of at least a range of possible forces for (4"), since the mood, tone of voice, etc., as well as the grammatical structure, are determinants of meaning.

For Searle, as for Cohen, mood, tone, etc., are built into the meaning of an utterance, even though for Austin, as we have noticed, these latter are force-indicators, and as such are in contrast to the meaning. This, however, brings us back to the same wall we ran up against between Cohen and Austin. If we allow mood, tone, etc., to be meaning-functions, then it looks as if Austin's distinction is unnecessary. Austin, however, did not classify them as such, and if they are not, the distinction is much more viable.

What about the grammatical structure of the utterance? Searle asserts (3:412) that even the "old grammatical categories" such as indicative, imperative, and interrogative, will serve as indicators of illocutionary force. This is not so sure a test as it might seem:

(5) "Is it really right(?)" spoken with a certain righteous air

(6) "He's dead(?)" mumbled by a new widow in shock and disbelief

Austin asserts (presumably in reference to examples of this type) that we continually debate "whether or not they have the force of a question." (1:99) Certainly in these cases there is room for doubt. (Should I answer? Is he asking me?).

On Searle's side, it should be noted that the grammatical structure does eliminate the possibility that (5) or (6) could be, for example, a promise or a request. In other words, the combination of word-order, choice of person, etc., is sufficient to eliminate a few possible forces. So we must allow that the grammatical structure does serve to "indicate the range
of plausible forces," in the very broad sense that it eliminates a handful from all the possibilities.

Given this, Searle's argument (if it may be weakened as such) that every report of a rhetic act will serve as a report of the possible range of illocutionary force seem to hold, though not with such strength as Searle believes it to. The question, then, is whether this constitutes sufficient grounds to assert that the locutionary-illocutionary distinction breaks completely apart. Before we tackle this question, Searle's own brand of the distinction deserves a brief look.

Searle suggests that we replace the rhetic act with the proposition-al act, "the act of expressing the proposition (a phrase which is neutral as to illocutionary force.)" (3:420) By "proposition" Searle is referring to the "content" of a sentence, but apparently only that "content" which is force-neutral. The taxonomy of the speech act would include the phonic, phatic, and propositional acts on the one hand and the illocutionary act on the other. The proposition would have an advantage over the rheme, in that the proposition is not a sentence, and will not therefore generate the problems with punctuation (and, presumably, other grammatical structure) that the rheme does.

Furthermore, since the proposition is neutral as to illocutionary force, whereas the rheme is not always, the two acts (propositional and illocutionary) will be mutually exclusive.

The "advantages" of the proposition look, on my view, to be quite inconclusive. If the proposition does not include the force-indicators, then in an utterance of the explicit performative type ("I protest that β"), are we to assume that the proposition "β" is the sole bearer
of meaning? If so, then we should argue, as did Cohen against Austin, that we are faced with having to assert either that "I protest" uttered alone has no meaning, or else that it "loses" its meaning when prefixed to any typical clause. Neither choice, as we have shown earlier, is particularly desirable.

The "proposition" like the "rhetic act" must still be expressed in terms of some phraseology from which (though we may conceivably eliminate the punctuation) a word-order emerges--and as we have seen, this word-order alone is sufficient to determine (in a weak sense) the range of possible illocutionary forces. Therefore, if the locutionary and illocutionary are not mutually exclusive, it does not look as if the propositional- illocutionary distinction is mutually exclusive, either.

So it is precisely where Austin's distinction has been weak that Searle's replacement has fared little better. The question for both accounts is whether or not these difficulties constitute sufficient grounds to dismiss the distinction.

Thus far we have seen that Austin's locutionary- illocutionary distinction can not be mutually exclusive, since in utterances of the explicit performative type, the force of the utterances appears to be included within the meaning. Furthermore, in any utterance, certain factors relative to its meaning (its grammatical structure) may serve as indicators of the possible illocutionary forces of the utterance. This last, however, is quite a bit weaker than Searle's conclusion that "Every rhetic act is always an illocutionary act of one kind or another." (3:412) But Searle's conclusion seems too strong. It does not follow from the fact that a characterization of one specifies the range of the other, or that a report of one specifies the range of the other or even that a report of one is
the same as a report of the other, that one is the other. And the evidence
given only supports the former.

Thus far, we have assumed that, given our latter interpretation,
the locutionary act and the illocutionary act for an utterance of a "performative," such as

S₁: I warn you not to touch her.

were identical. That is, we could never abstract one without abstracting
the other. Even so, we did not find sufficient ground to dismiss the
distinction, since for all other utterances which are not explicit performatives, such as

S₂: Don't touch her.

we seem to be able to abstract the locutionary act without abstracting
the illocutionary act—the possible exception occurring if we arbitrarily
decide to classify mood, tone, etc., as elements of meaning.

A re-examination is needed, however, of our original position on
the identity of locutionary and illocutionary acts in an utterance of S₁.
There is some reason to believe that the locutionary and illocutionary are
never identical. The first clue that something might be wrong is that
under the second interpretation, the locutionary act of uttering S₁ with
sense and reference is the warning of Smith (illocutionary act). This
should lead us to ask why, if Jones utters S₂ under appropriate circum-
stances, would the locutionary act of uttering S₂ with sense and reference
not be the warning of Smith (illocutionary), just as it was for S₁?

The reply to this question should be that there is a crucial dif-
ference between S₁ and S₂: Any serious literal utterance of S₁ entails
that S₁ have the force of warning; not every serious literal utterance of
S₂ entails that S₂ have the force of warning. In other words, the utterance
of \( S_1 \) with sense and reference is the warning. But the utterance of \( S_2 \) with sense and reference is not by itself a warning. It needs certain force-indicators, such as mood, stress, etc., as well as context-reference, accompanying it to qualify it as a warning. Therefore, the locutionary and illocutionary acts of \( S_2 \) are identical only if these force-indicators are actually part of the locutionary act.

To put it another way, with reference to \( S_1 \), the act involved is the physical uttering with sense and reference. But this act is the act of warning. There apparently seems to be nothing that constitutes the warning apart from the utterance of \( S_1 \) with sense and reference. With reference to \( S_2 \), however, the act involved is the physical uttering with sense and reference. And this act alone does not constitute the warning. (This is apparent, since \( S_2 \) with the same sense and reference uttered on a different occasion might not be a warning.) It is in this sense that we may abstract an additional act: We warn. Certainly there are overlaps, but the abstraction of the locutionary act of \( S_2 \) will not reveal its unique force.

But then what is it about the illocutionary act of uttering \( S_2 \) that makes it an act, and at the same time sets it apart from the locutionary act? Apparently such things as mood, tone, stress, etc., plus the occasion of the utterance are the very real elements of the illocutionary act which make it an act, as opposed to just a reference to the concept "illocutionary act." Thus, the locutionary and illocutionary acts with reference to \( S_2 \) are separately abstractable, since the actual warning of Smith by Jones is something more than just Jones' making an utterance of \( S_2 \) with sense and reference.

What then about \( S_1 \)? Are the locutionary and illocutionary acts performed in the utterance of \( S_1 \) identical? Certainly an utterance of \( S_1 \)
with sense and reference is sufficient to guarantee that \( S_1 \) is used at least as a warning. But are mood, tone, stress, etc., to be ignored simply because the use of the performative verb leaves no room for doubt about the nature of the force? It seems that if we are to depend on these force-indicators to determine the illocutionary act in \( S_2 \), we ought not to completely disregard them with reference to \( S_1 \). That is, there is more to Jones's warning of Smith than simply the utterance with sense and reference. Mood, stress, etc., as indicators of force are part of the act of Jones warning Smith. Of course, even if we do not consider mood, stress, etc., we can get a warning from \( S_1 \), whereas we cannot from \( S_2 \). But the point is that "a warning" is not the illocutionary act abstracted from Jones's uttering \( S_1 \) to Smith, as we saw in the discussion of the second interpretation of the notion "illocution."

Because of this, the illocutionary act, even with reference to \( S_1 \), appears to involve more than the simple uttering "\( S_1 \)" (with sense and reference). The locutionary act (according to Austin) does not include the above force-indicators, and since it does not, the locutionary act can never be the same as the illocutionary act. Since, however, for Searle, the Austinian force-indicators are elements of meaning, it is easy to see why Searle asserted that the locutionary and illocutionary acts are always identical.

There is further evidence to believe that the locutionary and illocutionary acts of \( S_1 \) may not be identical. We indicated above that at least an illocutionary force of \( S_1 \) is the warning of Smith. It is apparent, however, that Jones may have used the utterance also as a threat or as a command, or as both. Given this, do we dare say that the locutionary act of \( S_1 \) is the illocutionary act? The utterance with sense
and reference uniquely specifies a particular illocutionary force of $S_1$. But "the illocutionary force" is supposed to answer "how exactly on this particular occasion" the utterance was being used. The fact that it was a warning does not seem to answer this question. Was it a warning, a warning and a threat, or what, exactly?

The locutionary-illocutionary distinction was intended to draw out clearly what it means to do something in the saying of a sentence. Locutionary acts and illocutionary acts were seen, at least tentatively, not to be mutually exclusive, since for all sentences of the explicit performative type, an abstraction of the one act was identical to the abstraction of the other. Thus, the locutionary act of Jones's uttering "I warn you that..." with a certain meaning was seen to be identical to Jones's warning Smith via that utterance. Cohen's attempt to dismiss the distinction altogether, was seen to hinge on the "necessity" of mood, stress, etc., being elements of "meaning" as opposed to "force." But it is not clear that Cohen's categorization of these pragmatic aspects has any advantage over Austin's.

Searle attempted to show an identity of locutionary and illocutionary for all utterances on the basis of an alleged identity between the illocutionary and rhetic acts. The evidence, however, only supported the idea that they are often reported in the same manner. A weaker conclusion, that the locutionary act, due to the grammatical structure of the utterance, determines a range of possible forces of the illocutionary act, was shown to hold, but only in the nearly trivial sense that it eliminates a handful of forces from the vast number of total possibilities.

What we are left with, then, is this: For all sentences of a non-performative type, Austin's locutionary-illocutionary distinction successfully
distinguishes between the meaning of the sentence, and its use as a particular act. For sentences of an explicit-performative nature, at least a particular illocutionary act is entailed by the locutionary act. However, strict adherence to our second interpretation of what Austin meant by "illocution," would seem to dictate that even in the case of explicit performative there can be no identity between the locutionary act and illocutionary act. It is not certain that our interpretation is what Austin intended, but it does not seem to be inconsistent with the guidelines he set for the distinction. And if, in fact, our interpretation is plausible, the locutionary-illocutionary distinction is mutually exclusive.
WORKS CITED

