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Between Performatives and Constatives: Construal in Speech Acts

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Abstract

This paper will show that differences between constative (or descriptive) and performative uses of a sentence arise from differences in construal regarding the relation in which the utterance stands to the world. Austin (1962) claims that the sentence 'I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*' may have a performative use, in which it does not describe or report anything at all, hence is neither true nor false, and to utter it is just to perform the illocutionary act of naming. The sentence may also have a constative use, in which it is either true or false, as has been traditionally assumed for declarative sentences in general. In the two uses, the utterer performs different illocutionary acts, while performing the same locutionary act. In the performative (in the narrow sense), the utterer names a ship, whereas in the constative, she makes an assertion. The performative is construed, in a projective manner in Recanati's (2000) sense, as one of the symbolic acts constituting the ritual, from which it obtains its illocutionary force. The assertion, on the other hand, is construed, in a reflective manner, as an act intended to describe the ritual from outside, which is successfully performed if uptake is secured. This analysis is in line with Ducrot's (1972, 1977/1991, 1980) and Fauconnier' (1979) views on the origin of performativity, and enables us to account for the fact, pointed out by Strawson (1964), that, unlike performatives, assertions are tied to no fixed set of felicity conditions.

1. Introduction

Declarative sentences have traditionally been considered to describe or report some state of affairs which hold in the world. If they correctly describe the state of affairs, they are judged to be true; otherwise, they are judged to be false. The notion of truth or falsity is, the standard semantics assumes, intrinsically tied to declarative sentences. Austin (1962) challenges this accepted wisdom, observing that certain verbs, put in the first person singular present indicative active as in (1a-c), occur in sentences which do not describe or report anything at all, hence are neither true nor false, and the uttering of which is, or is a part of, the doing of an action (Austin 1962: 5).

(1) a. (Uttered when smashing the bottle against the stem) I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*.
b. (In a will) I give and bequeath my watch to my brother.

c. I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow.

Austin calls such utterances as (1a-c) 'performatives' as opposed to 'constatives'. The distinction between performatives and constatives is "a distinction between doing and saying" (Austin 1962: 47). Thus, to utter (1a) is to name a ship, to utter (1b) is to bequeath the watch, and so on. The utterance of a sentence like (1a-c) is characterized as "the performance of an 'illocutionary' act, i.e. performance of an act in saying something as opposed to performance of an act of saying something[1]" (Austin 1962: 98). The illocutionary act of naming a ship or bequeathing a watch is no more true or false than, say, the physical act of opening the window or running a mile. By contrast, constative utterances, illustrated in (2), are either true or false (Austin 1962: 46, 54)[2].

(2) a. (I state that) Stockholm is the capital of Sweden.
    b. (I state that) The cat is on the mat.

To utter (2a) is to say something true, and to utter (2b) is to say something true or false, depending on the states of affairs which obtain. Instead of being true or false, performative utterances are either happy (felicitous) or unhappy (infelicitous) (Austin 1962: 14, 53, 67, 132). If, for example, the utterer of (1a) is not the person chosen to name the ship, then the utterance of (1a) is unhappy (infelicitous). Likewise, if the utterer of (1b) has no watch at all, then the utterance of (1b) is unhappy (infelicitous).

The distinction between performatives and constatives bear on utterances rather than sentences; for one and the same sentence can have performative or constative use, depending on the context.

> The first person singular present indicative active may be used to describe how I habitually behave: 'I bet him (every morning) sixpence that it will rain' or 'I promise only when I intend to keep my word'. (Austin 1962: 64)

> It is fairly easy to make allowances for certain normal enough but different uses of the first person of the present indicative active even with these verbs, which may well be constative or descriptive, that is, the habitual present, the 'historic' (quasi-) present, and the continuous present.
>
> (Austin 1962: 68)

Thus, "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" in (1a) is a constative utterance if interpreted as saying, in certain peculiar contexts, that I usually name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*, or that I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth* only when it rains. A "deplorable solution" to this duality, as Fauconnier (1979: 5) puts it, would consist in postulating a semantic ambiguity for the verb 'name'; 'name' has a performative

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1 The act of saying something is called 'locutionary act' (Austin 1962: 94).

2 This is an oversimplification. Austin (1962: 142) says that (i) is only true "for certain intents and purposes".

(i) France is hexagonal.

(i) may be good enough for a top-ranking general, but not for a geographer. Austin claims that it is a rough description rather than a true or false one.

sense and a constative sense, both of which are encoded in the lexicon. This view would force us to postulate performative and constative senses for ‘bequeath’ and ‘bet’ as well, and leave the link between the two senses unaccounted for. Obviously, it is preferable, as the Modified Occam’s Razor tells us, to find a pragmatic solution in which one sense is systematically linked to the other[3].

Another deplorable solution would be to say that the constative sense is a literal one, the performative use being an implicature calculated in context[4]. This solution is certainly pragmatic in nature, but it is no more acceptable than the solution based on lexical ambiguity. On this view, “I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*” in (1a) would, as far as semantics is concerned, be describing a state of affairs and hence be either true or false, the act of naming a ship being performed only at the level of what is implicated. This line of thought would ruin the whole program that Austin and his followers undertook, luring us into what Austin (1962: 3, 100) calls ‘descriptive fallacy’, a fallacy consisting in taking every (declarative) sentence to describe certain state of affairs.

> In [(1a-c)] it seems clear that to utter the sentence (in, of course, the appropriate circumstances) is not to *describe* my doing of what I should be said in so uttering to be doing or to state that I am doing it: it is to do it. None of the utterances cited is either true or false: I assert this as obvious and do not argue it. (Austin 1962: 6, emphasis in the original)

It is not allowed, if we are to be faithful to the fundamental principles of speech act theory, to derive the performative use of a verb from its constative sense, to the extent that “the illocutionary act is a conventional act: an act done as conforming to a convention” (Austin 1962: 98)[5].

If such is the case, the relation between the performative and constative uses of a verb is constrained by the following two factors: (i) the two uses are not due to lexical ambiguity, and (ii) the performative use is not pragmatically derived from the constative sense. These two constraints might appear to be at odds with each other. If, as (i) indicates, the performative use is not postulated as a lexical sense, then it will naturally be relegated to the realm of pragmatics. But this move seems to be forbidden by (ii). In what follows, we will explore how it is possible to reconcile (i) and (ii).

2. Meaning and Force

The key to reconciling (i) and (ii) is the recognition that implicature is not what pragmatics is all about. The performative interpretation of (1a-b) is not an implicature produced in context; it is rather associated with the use of the sentences from the beginning. Still, there is a sense in which that interpretation is not purely semantic. In both performative and constative uses, the utterance in (1a), hence the verb ‘name’, has the same meaning, i.e. the same sense and reference (Frege 1892/1960, Austin

[3] Modified Occam’s Razor: Senses are not to be multiplied beyond necessity. (Grice 1989: 47)

[4] The opposite derivation of the constative use from the performative sense is worth exploring. As will be seen in Section 4 below, Ducrot (1972, 1977/1991, 1980) defends, from a historical perspective, this kind of derivation for some verbs.

[5] Austin’s ‘convention’ should not be taken to mean ‘linguistic convention’, since every speech act including (2a-b) is done as conforming to some linguistic conventions (Strawson 1964: 442). The term ‘convention’ refers rather to social institutions.

1962: 94, 100). The difference between the two uses resides in what Austin calls the (illocutionary) force of the utterance as opposed to its meaning (Austin 1962: 33ff). The distinction between force and meaning, Austin (1962: 100) claims, is no less essential than that between sense and reference within meaning. In its performative use, "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*' has an illocutionary force that its constative use lacks. This force enables (1a), in its performative use, to perform the illocutionary act of naming[6].

The notion of force lies at the borderline between semantics and pragmatics. In some cases, the meaning of an utterance exhausts its force (Strawson 1964: 440). The utterance of (3) is a case in point.

(3) I apologize. (Austin 1962: 45-47, 53-55, 71, 79-80, 83, 86-87, 145, Strawson 1964: 440)

It hardly makes sense to talk about the truth-conditional content of (3), i.e. what the world must be like for (3) to be true. To learn the meaning of (3) amounts to learning its force, i.e., the fact that to utter (3) is just to apologize. The lexical semantics of the verb 'apologize' refers exclusively to the force of the utterance in which it occurs. Thus, on the one hand, the force of the verb is in the realm of semantics in that it is encoded in the lexicon. It is, on the other hand, in the realm of pragmatics in that it is a matter of social rules or conventions which govern the utterances in which the verb occurs. Here we have the 'pragmatic meaning' of an expression as opposed to its 'descriptive meaning' (Recanati 1981: 25-27, 1987: 15-17).

> The descriptive meaning of an expression is that by virtue of which the expression contributes to fixing the condition of satisfaction of any utterance containing it. The pragmatic meaning of an expression, on the other hand, does not influence the condition of satisfaction of utterances and therefore does not contribute to picking out the states of affairs they represent. To characterize pragmatic meaning, the notion of condition of satisfaction needs to be replaced by that of "conditions of use." (Recanati 1987: 15-16)[7]

This conception of meaning makes it possible to talk, without any contradiction, about the pragmatic meaning of 'apologize' encoded in the lexicon.

While the meaning of (3) can be equated with its force, it is sometimes the case that the meaning of an utterance does not exhaust its force.

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[6] This is an oversimplification, as Strawson (1964: 440) says: "These two notions are not so closely related that to know the force of an utterance is the same thing as to know what illocutionary act was actually performed in issuing it. For if an utterance with the illocutionary force of, say, a warning is not understood in this way (that is, as a warning) by the audience to which it is addressed, then (it is held) the illocutionary act of warning cannot be said to have been actually performed." Thus, Austin (1962: 117) stresses that "the performance of an illocutionary act involves the securing of *uptake*".

[7] « Si le sens descriptif d'une expression est ce en vertu de quoi cette expression contribue à déterminer les conditions de satisfaction des énoncés de toute phrase où elle figure, en revanche le sens pragmatique d'une expression n'influe pas sur les conditions de satisfaction des énoncés, sur les états de choses qu'ils représentent. Pour caractériser le sens pragmatique, il faut recourir, plutôt qu'à la notion de conditions de satisfaction, à la notion de « condition d'emploi ». » (Récanati 1981: 25-26)

(4) I shall be there. (Austin 1962: 33)

The uttering of (4) may enable one to perform an act of promising. And yet, it is possible to ascribe to the auxiliary 'shall' such descriptive meaning as [+future] [+intention]. Indeed, in certain contexts, the uttering of (4) may be taken to be a prediction rather than a promise. The meaning of (4) then cannot be equated with the illocutionary force of promising that the uttering of (4) may have. In such cases, we must distinguish, as Austin (1962: 92ff) claims, between "the locutionary act […] which has a *meaning*", and "the illocutionary act which has a certain *force* in saying something (Austin 1962: 121)[8]. The determination of locutionary acts is a matter of linguistic conventions, whereas that of illocutionary acts, whether force may be exhausted by meaning or not, is a matter of social conventions.

> We must refer, Austin would say, to linguistic conventions to determine what locutionary act has been performed in the making of an utterance, to determine what the meaning of the utterance is. The doctrine now before us is the further doctrine that where force is not exhausted by meaning, the fact that an utterance has the further unexhausted force it has is also a matter of convention; or, where it is exhausted by meaning, the fact that it is, is a matter of convention. (Strawson 1964: 442)

"To determine what illocutionary act is so performed we must determine in what way we are using the locution" (Austin 1962: 98)[9], i.e. in accordance with which convention we are using the locution.

We may say, drawing on this distinction, that the performative and constative uses of (1a-c) have the same meaning but different illocutionary forces due to the different social conventions they rest upon. One may wonder, however, whether it is justified to say that the constative use of (1a-c) rests upon social conventions in addition to linguistic conventions. To be sure, the performative use of (1a-c) is governed by "an accepted conventional procedure having a certain effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances" (Austin 1962: 14). Thus, the uttering of (1a) serves to perform the act of naming a ship only "in, of course, the appropriate circumstances" (Austin 1962: 6). But the constative use of (1a-c) does not seem to be governed by such accepted conventional procedures. Indeed, it is, in Austin's original conception, the lack of such procedures that characterizes constative utterances as opposed to performative utterances. This explains why performative utterances, but not constative utterances, are subject to felicity conditions. If, for example, the utterer of (1a) is not the person chosen to name the ship, the performative use of (1a) is not felicitous. But, even in this case, the constative use of (1a) is felicitous; it is just false. In order to be able to say that the constative use of (1a-c) also has an illocutionary force, we must show that a simple statement of fact can give rise to infelicities. This is exactly what Austin tries to show in the course of his lectures.

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[8] The other act Austin discusses is "the perlocutionary act which is *the achieving of* certain *effects* by saying something" (Austin 1962: 121). Perlocutionary acts are irrelevant to the argument made in this paper.

[9] This sentence has been dropped in the second edition published in 1975.

3. Assertive Force

How to do things with words (Austin 1962) consists of twelve lectures. In Lecture I, Austin contrasts statements of fact or constatives with performatives. As we have seen in Section 1, while statements are either true or false, performatives are either happy or unhappy (Austin 1962: 14). In Lecture V, Austin says: "[W]e might not like to class [statements] as performatives" (Austin 1962: 65). In Lecture VI, he draws attention to the fact that statements beginning with 'I state that' are as much in the first person singular present indicative active as explicit performatives beginning with 'I name' or 'I promise'. Nevertheless, he still hesitates to treat statements as performatives.

> 'I state that' seems to conform to our grammatical or quasi-grammatical requirements: but do we want it in ? Our criterion, such as it is, seems in danger of letting in non-performatives.
>
> (Austin 1962: 68)

In Lecture VII, Austin continues to contrast explicit performatives with explicit constatives.

> […] perhaps we could insist that every performative *could* be in principle put into the form of an explicit performative[10], and then we could make a list of performative verbs. Since then we have found, however, that it is often not easy to be sure that, even when it is apparently in explicit form, an utterance is performative or that it is not; and typically anyway, we still have utterances beginning 'I state that …' which seem to satisfy the requirements of being performative, yet which surely are the making of statements, and surely are essentially true or false. (Austin 1962: 91)

A sea-change occurs when Austin says, in Lecture XI, that "to state is every bit as much to perform an illocutionary act as, say, to warn or to pronounce" and that "'[s]tating' seems to meet all the criteria we had for distinguishing the illocutionary act" (Austin 1962: 133). This view is supported by (5a-b), where stating is put on a level with betting, arguing, warning, and protesting.

(5) a. In saying that it was raining, I was not betting or arguing or warning: I was simply stating it as a fact.
b. In saying that it was leading to unemployment, I was not warning or protesting: I was simply stating the facts.

Austin finally abandons the distinction between performatives and constatives, admitting that "there is no necessary conflict between (a) our issuing the utterance being the doing of something and (b) our

[10] For example, (ia-b) can be paraphrased as (iia-b), respectively (Austin 1962: 32, 69).
(i) a. Go. b. I shall be there.
(ii) a. I order you to go. b. I promise that I shall be there.
Utterances in (i) are called primary performatives, whereas utterances in (ii) are called explicit performatives (Austin 1962: 69). Explicit performatives serve to make explicit what precise action is being performed by the issuing of the utterances (Austin 1962: 61). Austin (1962: 69) stresses that "'making explicit' is not the same as describing or stating […] what I am doing".

utterance being true or false" (Austin 1962: 134), and that "[s]tating, describing, etc. are *just two* names among a very great many others for illocutionary acts; they have no unique position" (Austin 1962: 147-148).

This new conception is consistent with the fact that "statements *are* liable to every kind of infelicity to which performatives are liable" (Austin 1962: 135). The statement in (2a) above implies that the utterer believes that the capital of Sweden is Stockholm. Likewise, the statement in (2b) implies that the utterer believes that the cat is on the mat. This is, Austin claims, parallel to the sense as that in which (6) implies that the utterer intends to be there and that the utterer believes that he shall be able to be there (Austin 1962: 135).

(6) I promise to be there.

If these implications are not true, then the utterances in question are all infelicitous. There is accordingly no reason to distinguish (2a-b) and (6). The alleged statements in (7) equally serve to establish a parallel between statements and other performatives.

(7) a. The king of France is bald.
b. John's children are all bald.

If there is no king of France, the putative statement in (7a) is null and void (Austin 1962: 136). The same holds for (7b), if John has no children. Austin concludes that the notion of the purity of performatives "was essentially based upon a belief in the dichotomy of performatives and constatives" and "has to be abandoned in favour of more general *families* of related and overlapping speech acts[11]" (Austin 1962: 149). On this view, as Recanati (1987: 70) points out, "[w]hat were originally taken to be constative utterances are nothing more than primary performatives bearing the force of an assertion[12]".

It may be noted that the view Austin comes to endorse is similar to Frege's (1918-1919a/1956), which puts assertions on a level with requests.

> An interrogative sentence and an indicative one contain the same thought; but the indicative contains something else as well, namely, the assertion. The interrogative sentence contains something more too, namely a request. (Frege 1918-1919a: 62[13]/1956: 294)

In fact, Frege was the first to draw a distinction between meaning (content) and force[14].

[11] Statements fall into the class of speech act called expositives, a category which, Austin admits, is difficult to define (Austin 1962: 151).

[12] « Les énoncés originellement réputés constatifs ne sont rien d'autre que des performatifs primaires ayant la « force » d'une affirmation. » (Récanati 1981 : 84)

[13] „Fragesatz und Behauptungssatz enthalten denselben Gedanken; aber der Behauptungssatz enthält noch etwas mehr, nämlich eben die Behauptung. Auch der Fragesatz enthält etwas mehr, nämlich eine Aufforderung." (Frege 1918-1919a: 62)

[14] Frege also notes: "Language has no special word or syllable to express assertion; assertive force is

Therefore two things must be distinguished in an indicative sentence: the content, which it has in common with the corresponding sentence-question, and the assertion. The former is the thought, or at least contains the thought. So it is possible to express the thought without laying it down as true. Both are so closely joined in an indicative sentence that it is easy to overlook their separability." (Frege 1918-1919a: 62[15]/1956: 294)

Although it contains much insight, Austin's view as such raises difficulties. As Ducrot (1972: 47-49) points out, infelicities which involve a breakdown of reference that we have seen in (7) are not specific to statements. The act of promising in (8a) and the act of bequeathing in (8b) fail to be felicitously performed for the same reason why the statements in (7a-b) do.

(8) a. I promise to meet the king of France.
b. I bequeath my watch to John's children.

In this connection, Ducrot calls into question Fillmore's (1969) analysis of the utterance in (9).

(9) Please shut the door.

Fillmore (1969: 95-96) observes that the happiness conditions of (9) include (10a-e).

(10) a. The speaker and the addressee of this sentence are in some kind of relationship which allows the speaker to make requests of the addressee.
b. The addressee is in a position where he is capable of shutting the door.
c. There is some particular door which the speaker has in mind and which he has reason to assume the addressee can identify without any further descriptive aid on the speaker's part.
d. The door in question is, at the time of utterance, open.
e. The speaker wants that door to become closed.

(10a-d) as opposed to (10e) are really preconditions for the use of (9), Fillmore claims, because only (10e) is affected by negation.

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supplied by the form of the assertoric sentence, which is specially well-marked in the predicate." [„Die Sprache hat ja kein besonderes Wort, keine besondere Silbe für die behauptende Kraft, sondern diese liegt in der Form des Behauptungssatzes, die sich besonders im Prädikate.] (Frege 1918-1919b: 152/1997: 356) As a matter of fact, there is an expression which expresses assertion. As Austin (1962: 90) says, 'I state that P' is unambiguously an assertion. Frege's remark must be held to mean that language has no special word that is a constituent of the clause P and indicates that P has the force of an assertion.

15 „In einem Behauptungssatz ist also zweierlei zu unterscheiden: der Inhalt, den er mit der entsprechenden Satzfrage gemein, hat und die Behauptung. Jener ist der Gedanke oder enthält wenigstens den Gedanken. Es ist also möglich, einen Gedanken auszudrücken, ohne ihn als wahr hinzustellen. In einem Behauptungssatze ist beides so verbunden, dass man die Zerlegbarkeit leicht übersieht."

(11) Please don't shut the door.

The request in (11), namely the negation of (10), still presupposes (10a-d), affecting only (10e). What is overlooked in this analysis is the fact that (10c) does not have the same status as (10a), (10b) and (10d). Unlike (10a), (10b) and (10d), (10c) is preserved, Ducrot observes, in whatever illocutionary act one may perform, as illustrated in (12).

(12) a. Threat: If you don't come, I will shut the door.
b. Question: Did you shut the door?
c. Wish: If only you shut the door!

It is then not possible to characterize the act of stating a fact by possible breakdowns of reference. Insofar as any illocutionary act can suffer from infelicities of the same sort, Austin's argument fails to establish a conventional procedure which specifically defines statements *qua* illocutionary acts.

A similar argument applies to the fact, mentioned above, that 'I state that P' implies that the utterer believes that P. This may constitute one of the felicity conditions for the act of stating a fact, any breach of which would make the statement infelicitous. As the utterance in (13) indicates, however, 'I warn you that P' equally implies that the utterer believes that P.

(13) I warn you that the bull is about to charge. (Austin 1962: 55)

If the implication is not fulfilled, the warning is infelicitous. Statements can certainly be infelicitous just like other performatives, but this does not entail that there exists a specific procedure which applies only to statements. As Recanati (1987: 78) says, "Austin's view that every illocutionary act (even if purely linguistic) is performed in accordance with a special kind of convention is therefore false"[16].

Strawson (1964: 456ff) draws a distinction between illocutionary acts which are not essentially conventional and illocutionary acts which are wholly convention-governed. Acts of the first type are successfully performed if uptake is secured, that is, the speaker's intention is recognized by the hearer[17]. Such acts are often accompanied by the speaker's further intention to secure a definite response from the addressee. Thus, the uttering of (14) enables one to perform the act of issuing a warning if the hearer recognizes it as a warning and reacts in an expected way.

(14) The ice over there is very thin. (Strawson 1964: 444)

[16] « En bref, la thèse d'Austin, selon laquelle un acte illocutionnaire – fût-il purement linguistique – s'accomplit en conformité avec une convention d'un type spécial, cette thèse est fausse [...]. » (Récanati 1981: 93)

[17] The precise definition of 'intention' as used here is a complicated issue. See Strawson (1964) and Recanati (1981, 1987), among others.

For acts of the second type, on the other hand, the securing of uptake is not sufficient, and the reference to accepted conventions of procedure assumes a greater importance. In this case, the utterer does not have to intend to secure a definite response from the addressee. Thus, for the uttering of (15) to enable one to perform the act of giving the man out in a baseball game, it is not sufficient for the hearer to recognize the utterer's intention.

(15) Out. (Austin 1962: 42, Strawson 1964: 443)

It is also required that the utterer be the duly appointed umpire and that the addressee be a batman or a runner playing in the game. Otherwise, the act is not successfully performed. In contrast to (14), however, no definite response from the addressee is expected here. If, in saying (15), the umpire abides by the accepted rules of baseball, he successfully gives the batsman or the runner out, regardless of the latter's reaction.

Obviously, statements are of the first type[18]. The utterer of (2a) above, for instance, succeeds in performing the act of stating a fact if the hearer recognizes his intention and comes to believe that the capital of Sweden is Stockholm. The success is not owed to conventions of any special kind other than purely linguistic conventions. Now, recall that the sentence "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" may have performative or constative uses, depending on the circumstances under which it is uttered. Now that, as Austin claims, stating a fact counts as an illocutionary act, this must be rephrased as: one and the same sentence may be used to perform either the act of naming a ship or the act of stating or asserting a fact. The question to be addressed is why the performative but not the assertive use of the sentence is tied to established conventions of procedure, or equivalently, how it is the case that there exists no fixed set of felicity conditions for the assertive use.

4. Incorporation and Reduction

Performative utterances have what Benveniste (1963/1966: 273-274) calls 'self-referential' (sui-référentiel) character. While, for example, the constative or statement in (2a) talks about Sweden (at least when 'I state that' is omitted), the performative in (1a) talks about the utterance of (1a) itself. As Langacker (2008: 159) puts it, "a performative represents the special case where the event profiled by the sentence is the speech event itself". Accordingly, the word 'hereby' can occur with performatives but not with constatives or statements (Austin 1962: 57, Ginet 1979: 245).

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[18] It must be borne in mind, however, that, as Strawson (1964: 459-460) notes, there may be intermediate cases. Strawson depicts the following scenario:

> But it would certainly be wrong to suppose that all cases fall clearly and neatly into one or another of these two classes. A speaker whose job it is to do so may offer information, instructions, or even advice, and yet be overtly indifferent as to whether or not his information is accepted as such, his instructions followed, or his advice taken. His wholly overt intention may amount to no more than that of making available – in a "take it or leave it" spirit – to his audience the information or instructions or opinion in question; though again, in some cases, he may be seen as the mouthpiece, merely, of another agency to which may be attributed at least general intentions of the kind that can scarcely be attributed, in the particular case, to him. (Strawson 1964: 460)

(16) a. I hereby name the ship the *Queen Elizabeth*.
b. I hereby sentence you to 30 days in jail. (Ginet 1979: 245)
c. *The capital of Swede hereby is Stockholm.
d. *I hereby run to the station.

From the self-referentiality of performatives emerges what Fauconnier (1979: 4) calls their 'self-verifying' (auto-vérifiant) character[19]. As Austin (1962: 6) emphasizes, performative utterances are no more true or false than, say, 'damn' is. This is obvious to the extent that performatives constitute social acts, describing no state of affairs. Truth or falsity is a property of descriptions or constatives, not of acts. Nevertheless, there is a systematic relation between performatives and corresponding constatives.

> We might say: in ordinary cases, for example running, it is the fact that he is running which makes the statement that he is running true; or again, that the truth of the constative utterance 'he is running' depends on his being running. Whereas in our case it is the happiness of the performative 'I apologize' which makes it the fact that I am apologizing: and my success in apologizing depends on the happiness of the performative utterance 'I apologize'. This is one way in which we might justify the 'performative-constative' distinction - the distinction between doing and saying.
>
> (Austin 1962: 47)

The constative in (2a) is made true by the fact that the capital of Sweden is Stockholm. By contrast, the sentence in (1a) *qua* constative is made true by the fact that the sentence in (1a) *qua* performative is successfully uttered. If, in uttering (1a), I successfully name the ship the *Queen Elizabeth* on September 1st, 2019, then the corresponding statement 'I named the ship the *Queen Elizabeth* on September 1st, 2019' is true accordingly. In general, the happiness or felicity of the performative 'I V…' automatically makes the corresponding statement 'I V…', 'I am Ving…' or 'I Ved…' true. Such is the self-verifying character of performatives as defined by Fauconnier (1979: 4).

Fauconnier (1979: 8ff) accounts for this 'verbal magic' exhibited by performatives in terms of the two operations called 'Incorporation' and 'Reduction'. The Incorporation is a process by which a constative description D that accompanies a ritual becomes an integral part of it, as illustrated in (17)[20].

(17) Incorporation:
Ritual R: [A, B, C, …]/ U: felicity conditions + D: constative description of R
→ R: [A, B, C, …, D]/U

The ritual R consists of the elements A, B, C…, which, if the felicity conditions U are satisfied, can be described by the constative utterance D, say, 'I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*'. Through Incorporation, D is integrated into R, such that R consists of [A, B, C, …D]. Now, the utterance D, 'I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*', is an integral part of R. After the Incorporation, D exhibits a

19 Ducrot (1977/1991: 297) uses the term 'auto-confirmant'.
20 We modify Fauconnier's (1979: 9) diagrams.

self-referential property; D, an element of R, refers to R. Underlying this process is the arbitrariness of rituals in the sense of structuralism. Insofar as the overall effect of R remains the same, it can contain any elements. [A, B, C, …D] as well as [A, B, C, ...] serves for the purpose of the ritual R. The arbitrariness of R equally makes it possible to apply the operation of Reduction, illustrated in (18).

(18) Reduction:
R: [A, B, C]/U → R: [A, B]/U

[A, B], where C is dropped, serves as much for the purpose of R as the original structure [A, B, C] does. Given the two operations, Incorporation and Reduction, R can, in principle, lose all its elements but D, resulting in the structure shown in (19).

(19) Incorporation + Reduction:
R: [D]/U

At this stage, D, the only element of R, obtains a self-verifying property in addition to a self-referential property. The mere uttering of D under U makes the constative description corresponding to D automatically true, resulting in the successful conduct of R. The self-verifiability exhibited by performatives is not their primitive feature, but the result of Incorporation and Reduction. We can see that Fauconnier's analysis nicely captures the reason why one and the same sentence can have both constative and performative uses, depending on the context of utterance.

Even though Fauconnier (1979) provides no explicit argument, Incorporation should not be viewed as reflecting a historical process. If it were a historical process, we would be committed to the claim that, for any sentence, the constative use preceded the performative use. This claim embodies not only what Austin (1962: 3, 100) calls 'descriptive fallacy', touched upon in Section 1 above, but also what Ducrot (1980: 52) calls 'performative fallacy' ('illusion performative' in French), which consists in taking the verb occurring in a performative to have a descriptive meaning which corresponds precisely to that performative. Consider the German sentence in (20).

(20) (Ich) danke (Dir).
I thank you
"Thank you." / "Thanks."

At first blush, the verb 'danken' in (20) might appear to literally mean 'thank'. On this view, the utterer of (20) would be performing the act of thanking by describing his act. Ducrot (1980: 52-53) argues against this standard view[21]. To be sure, from a purely synchronic view, it is harmless to say that 'danken' means 'thank'. But this meaning description blinds us to a general mechanism by which the verb acquires that meaning. Ducrot provides an alternative account based on 'delocutivity', a notion first put forward by

[21] For a detailed presentation of Ducrot's (1972, 1977/1991, 1980) view in English, see Recanati (1987: Ch. 4).

Benveniste (1958/1966). Delocutivity is a phenomenon where the sense, or one of the senses, of an expression alludes to an act performed by uttering a certain conventional formula ('locution'). Thus, Benveniste (1958/1966: 277-278) advances the view that the Latin verb 'salūtāre' ('greet') derives from the formula in (21), which is conventionally used to greet.

(21) Salūs!

The meaning of 'salūtāre' is, on this conception, described as 'to perform the act one performs in saying 'Salūs!''. Verbs of this sort are called 'delocutive verbs' ('verbe délocutif'). Cornulier (1976) objects to this scenario, however, by saying that the formula in (21) already involves a delocutive derivation. The Latin substantive 'salūs' means 'health' as well as 'greeting'. The verb 'salūtāre' (greet) is, Cornulier claims, an ordinary denominative verb, formed from the stem of the noun 'salūs' in the sense of 'greeting'[22]. There is no delocutive process here, contrary to the scenario depicted by Benveniste. Delocutivity, if any, should rather be found in the relation between the two senses of the substantive "salūs'. The sense 'greeting' of 'salūs' alludes to the use of the word in the formula in (21), in which the word originally meant 'health'. The process Cornulier (1976) defends can be summarized as in (22), following Anscombre (1979: 73).

(22) a. The Latin noun 'salūs' means 'health'. (= sense S1)
b. The noun 'salūs' is used, with S1, in the formula in (21). (Just as 'Good morning' in English is used to wish the addressee a good morning, so 'Salūs!' is used to wish the addressee good health.)
c. The noun 'salūs' acquires a new sense S2 such that S2 = act one performs in saying 'Salūs!', i.e. greeting.
d. The noun 'salūs!' as occurring in the formula 'Salūs!' is reinterpreted as meaning S2 rather than S1.

No new word is created in this process. Rather, the noun 'salūs' acquires a new sense, S2, which alludes to the use of the word in the conventional formula 'Salūs!'. Given the process in (22), S2 can be characterized as an 'auto-delocutive' sense (Cornulier 1976: 118).

Ducrot applies the notion of auto-delocutivity to the analysis of performatives. As said above, the German verb 'danken' is generally considered to mean 'thank'. But Ducrot (1980: 52) draws our attention to the fact the 'danken' also means 'owe', as we can see in (23).

(23) Paul dankt ihm das Leben.
Paul owes him the life
"Paul owes him his life"

[22] When 'salūs' is converted into 'salūtāre', the noun ending '-s', namely the nominative marker of the third declension, is dropped. If 'salūtāre' were derived, as Benveniste says, from the formula 'Salūs!' as such, the disappearance of '-s' would remain unaccounted for (Cornulier 1976: 117). This is part of the reason why Cornulier dismisses Benveniste's view.

Ducrot takes 'owe' to be the original sense of 'danken', which gives rise to its second sense 'thank', through the process articulated in (24).

(24) a. The German verb 'danken' means 'owe'. (= sense S1)
b. 'danken' is used, with S1, in the formula in (20), to express one's gratitude to the addressee.
c. 'danken' acquires a new sense S2 such that S2 = act one performs in saying '(Ich) danke (Dir)', i.e. thanking.
d. 'danken' as occurring in the formula '(Ich) danke (Dir)' is reinterpreted as meaning S2 rather than S1.

Of particular importance here is the fact that, on Ducrot's view, the emergence of the sense 'thank' of the verb danken' is posterior to the establishment of the convention by virtue of which the formula in (20) serves to perform the act of thanking. As a consequence, it is logically impossible to consider that 'danken' as occurring in the formula in (20) describes the act of thanking. Ducrot's analysis, based on the notion of auto-delocutivity, enables one to avert both the performative fallacy and the descriptive fallacy. It is not always the case that a performative verb has a descriptive meaning which corresponds precisely to its performative use[23]. We must rather "take it as a fundamental and irreducible fact that certain utterances are socially dedicated to the performance of certain acts" (Ducrot 1972: 73[24], cited in Recanati 1987: 94).

If such is the case, the operation of Incorporation as defined by Fauconnier (1979) cannot be held to reflect historical processes whereby the constative or descriptive utterance 'I V…' is integrated into a convention in which the utterance obtains the illocutionary force corresponding to the original meaning of V. What then is the operation supposed to capture?

5. Incorporation as Construal

Let us take stock. One and the same sentence can have a performative use and a constative (or

[23] Recanati (1981: 122-126, 1987: 103-108, 2002) claims that Ducrot's hypothesis is not likely to hold universally.

> The illocutionary meaning of a verb may be derived aut-delocutively from its use with another meaning, but this is not certainly necessary; other, more familiar kinds of derivation are possible."
> (Recanati 1987: 197)

A more radical position is adopted by Ginet (1979), who claims:

> The explanation that I propose [...] needs to appeal only to the conventions that determine the descriptive meaning of the performative verbs and the performative verb phrases they head, in any person or tense; it does not need to invoke any extra conventions to give them a 'performative meaning' in one particular person and tense. (Ginet 1979: 247)

But Ginet refers to none of the works done by French authors such as Anscombre, Benveniste, Cornulier, Ducrot, Fauconnier, and Recanati. This paper will not go into the debate between conventionalism and anti-conventionalism.

[24] « Prendre pour fait premier et irréductible que certains énoncés sont socialement consacrés à l'accomplissement de certaines actions […] » (Ducrot 1972: 73)

descriptive) use. "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*", for example, can be used, on the one hand, to perform the illocutionary act of naming a ship and, on the other, to describe what I do. As discussed in Section 1, the two uses cannot be attributed to the lexical ambiguity of the verb 'name'. As discussed in Sections 2-3, although the two uses have the same meaning, they are associated with different illocutionary forces; the performative use of "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" has the illocutionary force of naming, whereas the constative use has the illocutionary force of an assertion. Unlike the performative use, the assertive use is tied to no fixed set of felicity conditions. In Section 4, we have seen that a sentence which has the force of an assertion can obtain the force of naming, by virtue of the operation called Incorporation. This does not entail, however, that the performative use is historically derived from the assertive use.

The key to understanding the operation of Incorporation from a synchronic perspective is provided by Recanati (2007).

> Assertive force is thus a matter of the utterance's standing in an appropriate relation to the world, a relation in virtue of which the sense of the utterance can be evaluated as incorrectly or correctly describing the world. (Recanati 2007: 125)

The performative use and the constative use of a sentence stand in different relations to the world. Put another way, the distinction between the two uses arises from differences in construal in Langacker's (2008) sense. A performative utterance is an integral part of an accepted convention of procedure, from which it gets the illocutionary force. The uttering of a performative, along with, say, the smashing of a bottle, is construed as a symbolic act. What makes the uttering of the performative a symbolic act is that social convention which has it as a constituent. As Austin (1962) emphasizes, the mere uttering of "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*", under the appropriate circumstances, enables one to perform the illocutionary act of naming. This is, as Ducrot says, "a fundamental and irreducible fact" (Ducrot 1972: 73, cited in Recanati 1987: 94). If the utterance of the performative conforms to the conventional procedure, it is felicitous; otherwise, it is infelicitous.

The uttering of a constative, on the other hand, always takes place outside the state of affairs it is supposed to depict. This relation follows from the obvious fact that the signifying is construed as a conceptually distinct entity from the signified. What makes the uttering of a constative an assertion is the utterer's intention along with the relevant linguistic conventions. Put simply, performing such illocutionary acts as naming a ship or bequeathing a watch is largely a matter of social convention, while making an assertion is largely a matter of intention (Strawson 1964). This is exactly the reason why, unlike the performative use, the assertive use is tied to no fixed set of felicity conditions.

In Section 4, we have seen that, in general, the happiness or felicity of the performative 'I V…' automatically makes the corresponding statement 'I V…', 'I am Ving…' or 'I Ved…' true. Crucially, however, "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" *qua* performative utterance, for instance, is a different entity from "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" *qua* assertive utterance, although they stand in a systematic relation to each other in such a way that the latter has a self-verifying character whenever the former has been felicitously uttered. The uttering of the former is a symbolic act constituting the ritual in question, namely the ceremonial ship launching, and is no more true or false than the act of smashing the bottle. By contrast, the latter is the true or false description of the ritual from outside. This difference between performatives and constatives can be represented with the help of a situation-theoretic notation adopted by Recanati (2000). The notation in (25) represents the relation "a certain situation *s*, which is included in the real world @, supports a state of affairs in which an entity *e'* participates".

(25) $s \vDash_{@} \ll \ldots e' \ldots \gg$

"I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" *qua* performative utterance is construed as instantiating *e'*, one of the entities that participate in the ceremonial ship launching. "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" *qua* assertive utterance, on the other hand, is construed as an assertion made in *s*, intended to describe the ceremony $\ll \ldots e' \ldots \gg$. As is clearly seen, *e'* finds itself within the ceremony, whereas an utterance made in *s* remains outside the ceremony. This shows that, unlike an assertion, a performative can only obtain its force from the social convention of which it is a constituent. Such is what Fauconnier (1979) tries to capture in terms of Incorporation.

If we deprive, as we do here, the Incorporation of its historical connotation, it can be assimilated with what Recanati (2000) calls 'projection'.

> Two cognitive mechanism at work in discourse can be characterized in this framework: *reflection* and *projection*. […] Let us consider […] our subject who says and thinks: 'It is raining'. If she comes to *reflect on* the situation which the representation concerns, and makes it explicit, she will entertain a more complex representation: the simple representation 'It is raining' will be replaced by 'It is raining here' or 'It is raining in Paris'. (Recanati 2000: 65)

When we think, 'It is raining', we find ourselves within the situation which the thought concerns. Those who are in Paris rarely think, 'In Paris, it's raining'; they just think, 'It's raining'. It is only when the subject conceptually places herself outside the situation in question that she comes to think, 'In Paris, it's raining'. A similar contrast can be found between performatives and constatives. When we utter a performative, we conceptually place ourselves within the ritual from which the performative obtains its illocutionary force. By contrast, when we utter a constative, we reflect on the ritual from outside. This explains why the utterance in (26) can only have the constative reading.

(26) In this ceremony, I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*.

In order to perform an illocutionary act which rests on a social convention, one must be placed within that convention; otherwise, the performative we utter is infelicitous. As 'In this ceremony' indicates, the utterer of (26) places himself outside the ceremony, thus failing to perform the illocutionary act defined by the ceremony[25].

[25] A similar account can be given of the contrast between (i) and (ii).

6. Conclusion

The question addressed in this paper has been why one and the same sentence can have a performative use and a constative (or descriptive) use. The two uses cannot be attributed to the lexical ambiguity of the verb occurring in the sentence. Neither is it possible to consider, without demolishing the whole program launched by Austin (1962), the performative use to embody an implicature calculated from the constative meaning of the sentence along with the context of utterance. Austin advances the view that, although the two uses have the same meaning enabling us to perform the same locutionary act, they correspond to different illocutionary forces; the performative use of "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" has the illocutionary force of naming, whereas the constative use has the illocutionary force of an assertion.

The performative and the constative stand in a systematic relation to each other; in general, the happiness or felicity of the performative 'I V…' automatically makes the corresponding constative 'I V…', 'I am Ving…' or 'I Ved…' true. Such is the self-verifiability of performatives. It must be kept in mind, however, that "I V…" *qua* performative utterance is a different entity from "I V…" *qua* assertive utterance. The former is a symbolic act constituting the ritual in question and is no more true or false than the act of smashing the bottle, for example. The latter is a true or false description of the ritual made from outside. The difference between the performative and constative uses of a sentence is reduced to differences in construal in Langacker's (2008) sense. When we utter 'I V…' *qua* performative, we think in a projective manner in Recanati's (2000) sense; we conceptually place ourselves within the ritual from which the performative obtains its illocutionary force. When, on the contrary, we utter 'I V…' *qua* constative, we think in a reflective manner; we reflect on the ritual from outside.

This difference in construal enables one to account for another important difference: unlike the performative use of a sentence, the assertive use is tied to no fixed set of felicity conditions. This is due to the fact that a performative can only obtain its force from the social convention of which it is a constituent, whereas an assertion can be made without conforming to any social convention. The uttering of a performative is felicitous if and only if it conforms to the relevant conventional procedure. The uttering of a constative, on the other hand, is successful only if uptake is secured. The account given here of the relation between performatives and constatives, it might be said, is in line with the views advocated by such French scholars as Ducrot (1972, 1977/1991, 1980), Anscombre (1979) and Fauconnier (1979) several decades ago, and by now largely forgotten.

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(i) (Uttered by an actor in a movie) I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*.
(ii) (Uttered by an actor) In this movie, I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*.
Austin would say that (i) is a parasitic use of language which is 'not serious' (cf. Austin 1962: 104). It must be recognized, however, that the actor pretends to name the ship in (i), while he even fails to pretend to do so in (ii). This contrast should be attributed to the different relations in which the utterances of (i)-(ii) stand to the pretended ceremonial ship launching.

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行為遂行と事実確認のあいだ

―言語行為における捉え方―

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キーワード: 事実確認的発話　行為遂行的発話　発語内効力　適切性条件　捉え方

要旨

本論文では、文の事実確認的ないし記述的用法と行為遂行的用法の違いが、発話と世界の関係の捉え方の違いに由来するものであることを示す。Austin (1962)は I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth* という文Sを発話することはすなわち命名という発語内行為を行うことにほかならず、この発話は真でも偽でもないと考えた。他方、S には事実確認的用法もあり、その用法のもとでは、S は通常の平叙文の発話と同じく真理値をもつ。行為遂行的用法と事実確認用法は、同一の発語行為に対応する一方、異なる発語内効力をもつ。S の発話者は(狭義の)行為遂行的用法においては命名行為を、事実確認的用法においては主張行為を遂行する。行為遂行的発話は Recanati (2000)の言う没入的な捉え方に対応し、儀式を構成する象徴的行為の一つとして捉えられる。このとき、発話は当該の儀式によって規定される発語内効力をもつ。他方、主張的発話は Recanati (2000)の言う反省的な捉え方に対応し、儀式を外側から記述することを意図した行為として捉えられる。このとき、発話は発話者の伝達意図に沿って解釈される。この分析は、遂行性に起源に関する Ducrot (1972, 1977/1991, 1980)や Fauconnier (1979)の考え方と整合的であり、かつ、Strawson (1964)によって指摘された、主張的発話が(行為遂行的発話と異なり)独自の適切性条件をもたないという事実をも説明することができる。

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