TYPES OF SPEECH ACTS

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There are several types of speech acts:

A.   According to its general function:

American philosopher John Searle analyzed illocutionary acts and discovered that there are at least a dozen linguistically significant dimensions that differentiate them. Based on this, he made a taxonomy.

1.Assertive or representative. This type of acts engage the speaker with the truth of an expressed proposition. Some of the illocutionary acts are: affirm, suggest, declare, present, swear, describe, boast and conclude. Example: "There is no better cook than me."

2. Managers. Direct speech acts seek the recipient to perform an action. Among others, illocutionary acts are: order, request, challenge, invite, advise, beg and beg. Example: "Would you be so kind as to pass me the salt?"

3. Commissives. These acts commit the speaker to do something in the future. The different types are: promises, threats, votes, offerings, plans and bets. Example: "I will not let you do that."

4. Expressive. This type of act expresses how the speaker feels about the situation or manifests a psychological state. Among these are: thanks, apologies, welcome, complaints and congratulations. Example:"Really, I'm sorry I said that."

5. Declarations. Speech acts classified as statements change or affect a situation or state immediately. Example: "I now pronounce you husband and wife".

B. According to its structure

In addition to distinguishing speech acts according to their general function (giving an order, asking permission, inviting), these can also be distinguished with respect to their structure.

In this sense, Austin argued that what is said (locutionary act) does not determine the illocutionary act that is performed. Therefore, speech acts can be direct or indirect.

1.   Direct speech acts. Generally, direct speech acts are performed using performative verbs. This class of verbs explicitly convey the intention of the utterance. Among others, they include: promising, inviting, apologizing and predicting. Sometimes, a performative verb is not used; however, the illocutionary force is perfectly clear. Thus, the expression"shut up!"In a given context can clearly be an order.

2.   Indirect speech acts. On the other hand, in indirect speech acts, the illocutionary force does not manifest itself directly. Thus, inference must be used to understand the intention of the speaker. For example, in a work context, if a boss tells his

secretary:"Do not you think that skirt is not appropriate for the office?", Is not really consulting his opinion, but ordering him not to use that garment anymore.

Here some examples for each type of speech acts:

Assertive or representative

- The best seller in the company is the one that makes the most sales, and I was the one who made the most sales! (Boasting, indirect).

- I suggest you go and ask for forgiveness. (Suggestion, direct).

- Why do not you go and ask for forgiveness? (Suggestion, indirect).

- I conclude that this was the best decision. (Conclusion, direct).

- Definitely, this was the best decision. (Conclusion, indirect).

- I boast of being the best seller in my company. (Boasting, direct).

Managers

- Because of our friendship, I ask you to reconsider your attitude. (Request, direct).

- I beg you not to tell her anything yet. (Supplication, direct).

- Do not tell anything to her yet, please. (Supplication, indirect).

- For our friendship, can you reconsider your attitude? (Request, indirect).

- I invite you to meet my house next Saturday. (Invitation, direct).

- Come and meet my house next Saturday. (Invitation, indirect).

Commissives

- Well, you know how it is... I could tell everything to her if you do not come. (Threat, indirect).

- I promise I'll be there before nine. (Promise, direct).

- Relax, I'll be there before nine. (Promise, indirect).

- I assure you that if you do not come, I will tell everything to her. (Threat, direct).

- I bet he will not have the courage to appear before his parents. (Bet, direct).

- If you have the courage to appear before your parents, I invite you to lunch (Bet, indirect).

Expressive

- I appreciate all the support given in this terrible situation. (Gratitude, direct).

- Sorry if I did not take you into account. (Sorry, direct).

- I already know that I should have taken you into account. (Sorry, indirect).

- Congratulations for having achieved this success. (Congratulations, direct).

- You must be very proud of having achieved this success. (Congratulations, indirect).

- I do not know how to pay all the support given in this terrible situation. (Thanks, indirect).

Declarations

- By the confession of your mouth I now baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Baptism).

- By the power conferred by law, now I declare you husband and wife." (Declaration of marriage).

- I end the session. (End of a session).

- I declare him innocent of all the charges against him. (Legal acquittal).

- As of this moment, I renounce irrevocably. (Resignation).

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