USE OF THESES

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STUDIES IN J. L. AUSTIN'S PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

by

Maxwell Wright

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Australian National University, June 1965
Of course comments on comments, criticisms of criticisms, are subject to the law of diminishing fleas.....

Unfair to facts
This thesis is my own work, written while I was a research scholar in the Research School of Social Sciences in the Australian National University.
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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in citations.

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<td>SS</td>
<td>Sense and Sensibilia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJP</td>
<td>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAS</td>
<td>Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society</td>
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<td>PASS</td>
<td>do., Supplementary Volume</td>
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<td>PR</td>
<td>Philosophical Review</td>
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<td>Philosophical Quarterly</td>
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<td>ECA</td>
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What follows is a series of loosely related studies of some aspects of J.L. Austin's philosophy of language and of what I have called his 'grammatical investigations' into the usage of such verbs as 'I know' and 'I can'. Perhaps I had better say: Some aspects of philosophy of language as they arise out of Austin's work. For, while the starting point is always Austin, and the subjects discussed - meaning, use, force, statements, facts, speech-acts and so on - figure prominently in Austin's work, I have, in discussing them, drawn not only on Austin's work, but also on related contemporary writings; for example, work by P.F. Strawson on statements, by Gilbert Ryle on the use of language, by J.O. Urmson on non-descriptive, force-showing verbs.

I am hesitant to advance any large thesis about Austin, preferring rather that this work be thought of as constituting a small part of that 'patient accumulation of many small truths' with which Austin, according to G.J. Warnock,¹ may have hoped to pave 'the road to large truths'. However, before turning to the minutiae, I should like to say two quite general things about Austin, one of them completely untendentious.

The concluding words of Austin's *Philosophical Papers* are as follows:

...life and truth and things do tend to be a bit complicated. It's not things, it's philosophers that are simple. You will have heard it said, I expect, that over-simplification is the occupational disease of philosopher, and in a way one might agree with that. But for a sneaking suspicion that it's their occupation.

I should claim that Austin's occupation was, at least very often, philosophy, that is, over-simplification, even though, elsewhere (HTDTWW 38), he remarked that over-simplification must at all costs be avoided.

It is of some interest to compare the following two quotations, the first from *Philosophical Investigations* (1:23) the second from Austin's *Performatives Utterances* (Papers 221)

But how many kinds of sentence are there? Say assertion, question, and command? There are countless kinds: countless different kinds of use of what we call 'symbols', 'words', sentences (Wittgenstein's italics).

...I think we should not despair too easily and talk, as people are apt to do, about the infinite uses of language. Philosophers will do this when they have listed as many, let us say, as seventeen; but even if there were something like ten thousand uses of language, surely we could list them all in time. (Austin's italics).

Now if Wittgenstein is right any attempted schematization of ordinary language will be either incomplete or an 'over-simplification'. And Wittgenstein may well be right. Nevertheless I believe that we ought to follow Austin in attempting the schematization even if it means
engaging in a bit of over-simplification or philosophy. For, notice that Austin's ten thousand uses of language would be almost as dull as Wittgenstein's countless uses if it were impossible to categorize these uses, subsuming them under the simplest possible schema. And, in fact, when Austin does list a great variety of speech-acts (HTDTMW chap.12) he classifies some as, for example, expositive uses of language, as opposed to verdictive, exercitive, commissive and behabitive uses of language. Furthermore, all verdictive, exercitive, commissive, behabitive and expositive uses of language are alike in being illocutionary uses of language as opposed to, for example, perlocutionary uses of language. The attempted schematization may be an over-simplification, but the fun is in the trying.

Secondly, I want to say that I have found in the close study of Austin's philosophical writing what Austin claimed to find in the study of excuses, namely, 'what philosophy is so often thought, and made, barren of - the fun of discovery, the pleasures of co-operation, and the satisfaction of reaching agreement' Disagreement too, of course, as I shall try to make clear. For I am acknowledging, gratefully, that it is always possible, even when Austin's argument is most complex and difficult, to be clear what the argument is. So that, agreeing or disagreeing, we can know what we are agreeing or disagreeing with. Who will say that it is always so in philosophy?
My thanks go to the Australian National University whose generous research scholarship made this work possible: And to Professor John Passmore and Dr Robert Brown for a great deal of patient, sympathetic criticism.

Canberra, June 1965.
Chapter 1

I examine Austin's paper *How to Talk* from the point of view of the theory of meaning (sense and reference) there adumbrated.

Chapter 2

I describe the operation of 'fitting' and 'matching' by means of which Austin, in *How to Talk*, claims to generate four distinct speech-acts from a given speech-situation. I then argue, against J.W. Roxbee Cox, that it is neither vacuous to speak of fitting an item to a given name while matching the 'item-type' to the 'sense' of the name, nor impossible to speak of fitting an item to a name while matching the 'sense' of the name to the 'item-type'. I go on, however, to claim that 'statements', 'descriptions', etc., the speech-acts schematized by Austin, are not distinguished in ordinary language in the way that Austin suggests they are.

Chapter 3

I consider the role played by statements in the controversy between Austin and Strawson about Truth; I argue that some of the confusion about facts which that debate engendered rests on a prior confusion about statements.
Contemporary philosophers often speak of the use of (units of) language for (units of) speech. I examine some recent 'use-talk' as it is found in the writing of Austin, Ryle and Strawson, and try to show that it is neither particularly consistent nor particularly sensible. I except, with some reservations, the later use-talk of Austin; the use of language, not for the 'bare' locutionary act of saying something, but for further illocutionary and perlocutionary acts. I then argue in favour of Ryle's recommendation that use-talk be construed as talk about how language is used rather than as talk about what language is used for. However, I go on to claim, against Ryle, that use-talk, thus construed, becomes 'usage-talk'. Finally, I argue that Ryle, in his important papers on this topic, is led into error just because he writes in terms of the use of language rather than in terms of linguistic usage.

I try to examine, in some detail, the distinctions drawn by Austin, in How to do Things with Words, between (1) the phonetic act, the phatic act and the rhetic act - the speech-acts which together comprise a complete locutionary act; (2) the locutionary act and the illocutionary act; (3) the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act.
Chapter 6

I begin by claiming that J.O. Urmson's argument to the effect that Austin did not, in Other Minds, read 'I know' as performative, is unsuccessful. I go on to argue that Austin, while affecting to draw a parallel between knowing and promising, succeeds only in drawing a parallel between saying 'I know' and saying 'I promise'; and that the latter parallel does not support the former just because 'I promise' is a performative utterance while 'I know' is not. The breakdown of the parallelism suggests the sort of grammatical criterion for performative or practical utterances which has been proposed by W.R.F. Barnes. I proceed to test Barnes' criterion, first against some paradigmatically performative utterances, 'I promise', 'I guarantee' and so on, then against utterances which are less clearly performative, 'I hold', 'I agree' and so on. I find that while the criterion will do very well for the paradigms, verbs like 'I agree' may be read either as conforming or as not conforming to Barnes' rule. I then suggest that 'I agree' conforms or fails to conform to Barnes' rule (is performative or descriptive) according to whether we think of agreement as an action to be performed or a 'state of mind' to be described. I conclude by arguing that 'I know' is never performative just because knowing is not an action we perform.

Chapter 7

Austin's later doctrine of illocutionary forces will not, I argue, accommodate 'I know' and 'I believe' as illocutionary verbs, any more
than the performative thesis before it would accommodate 'I know' as a performative utterance. For the later theory is, like the earlier, a theory of speech-acts. Because knowing and believing are not things that we do they are not things that we do with words. I go on to make a critical examination of Urmson's related thesis that 'I know' and 'I believe' are non-descriptive because force-showing or degree-indicating or parenthetical. Finally, I compare Urmson's attempt to 'reduce' some important 'psychological-descriptives' to the class of parenthetical or force-showing verbs with Austin's attempt to 'reduce' the class of performative utterances to the class of illocutionary or force-showing verbs, in order to bring out what I take to be a weakness common to both enterprises.

Chapter 8

I examine Austin's more successful investigations into the 'grammar' of 'I can', in the light of later criticism by D.J. O'Connor and P.H. Newell-Smith.
CHAPTER 1

THE MEANING OF LANGUAGE

Although, as Professor Hampshire tells us, Austin was 'altogether dissatisfied' with it the paper *How to Talk* is, I believe, of central importance for any understanding of Austin's philosophy of language. The paper exemplifies to a degree two aspects of Austin's philosophy which are often, as they are here, in conflict. First there is his great skill in, and enthusiasm for marking fine distinctions in ordinary language; 'drawing the coverts of the microglot' and 'hounding down the minutiae' as he once put it. (Papers 123) Second, there is the overriding urge to schematize language, to classify all possible uses of language according to grammatical or quasi grammatical rules. Of course, a schematization of language need not be in conflict with the exact description of ordinary usage. For, in the first place, it might very well be the case that our finest nuances could all be sited, without strain, in a rigid linguistic schema. Second, we might decide to schematize just as far as is consonant with the facts of observed usage. Third, we might stipulate that if and when there is conflict between ordinary language and the schema ordinary language be reformed

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in such a way that it is made wholly consonant with the schema, thus resolving the conflict.

Such a stipulation would be quite in keeping with much of what Austin said about philosophy and ordinary language. In an early paper he wrote:

There may be plenty that might happen and does happen which would need new and better language to describe it in... There may be extraordinary facts, even about our everyday experience, which plain men and plain language overlook (Papers 37).

It is interesting to compare what Austin says in A Plea for Excuses with a celebrated passage from Philosophical Investigations. Wittgenstein wrote:

Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it... It leaves everything as it is (I.124).

However, for Austin description is not enough. As he says:

...it is necessary first to be careful with, but also to be brutal with, to torture, to fake and to override, ordinary language (Papers 134).

There is, then, for Austin, a conflict between the 'careful' description of ordinary language and the 'brutal' reformation of ordinary language in the interest of a system. As I have suggested, had Austin been prepared to practise the tough line which he is here advocating, he might have resolved the conflict by fiat; wherever the schematic usage and ordinary usage disagree the schematic usage will be preferred. I suspect, however, that Austin would never have been happy about putting such a bold programme into practice. If we abuse ordinary language we
shall have to pay for it later (§ 15). The dilemma is well enough stated in the early paper, The Meaning of a Word, which I have already quoted.

Although it will not do to force actual language to accord with some preconceived model; it equally will not do, having discovered the facts about 'ordinary usage' to rest content with that, as though there were nothing more to be discussed and discovered (Papers 37, Austin's italics).

That is to say, we discover the facts about ordinary language and proceed to schematize these facts. But it will not really do to force actual language (or override ordinary language) in the interest of the schema. If, then, we are to have a complete schematization of language, conflict between schema and ordinary usage can be avoided only in the first of the three ways which I suggested; that is, by the discovery of a schema which in fact, and without strain, accounts for and explains all the nuances of ordinary language.

Did Austin believe that such a schematization was possible? This is the 'strong thesis' which Hampshire thinks 'can plausibly be attributed to him'.

For every distinction of word and idiom that we find in common speech, there is a reason to be found, if we look far enough, to explain why this distinction exists.\(^1\)

Certainly, in How to Talk, Austin claims to have devised a model or schema which accounts for the ordinary language distinctions which operate in a limited speech area; the distinctions between 'stating',

\(^1\) op.cit. p.III
'describing', 'calling' and so on. However, as I shall argue in the following chapter, the conflict remains because the schematization is quite at odds with ordinary usage.

Austin's *How to Talk* is important for his philosophy of language not only because it exemplifies the conflict in Austin's writings between a descriptivist and a prescriptivist approach to language. It is important too because it is, apart from *How to do Things with Words*, his most ambitious treatment of two central topics in his philosophy of language. These topics are (1) the conventions of sense and reference in virtue of which language relates to the world or has meaning; (2) the classification and description of distinct and distinguishable speech-acts. In the present chapter I shall discuss what Austin has to say about meaning, reserving until the next chapter my discussion of speech acts.

**Austin's models: speech situation $S_0$.**

Austin's attempted schematization of eight speech acts involves the construction of three model speech situations, $S_0$, $S_1$ and $S_{0n}$. I shall at the moment outline only the first of these models as it alone is relevant to Austin's discussion of meaning.

Speech situation $S_0$ comprises the world in $S_0$ and language in $S_0$. The $S_0$ world is to consist of numerous items each of one type and of one type only. That is to say, the type of any given item in the world can be assessed in one dimension only. To take Austin's preferred
exemplification of the $S_0$ world: the world is to consist of a number of geometrical shapes. Then, although there may be several (or many) different items of the same shape (say, square) no square item will be thought of as being coloured, or, as being of such and such a size in addition to being square. In such a world circles and squares will be invariant as to size, and parallelograms and triangles will be invariant as to size and shape. Or if they are variant the $S_0$ language will not be equipped to deal with (i.e. note) such a variation.

In the $S_0$ language there will be only one form of utterance, called by Austin the form $S$ and spelt out by him as:

$$I \text{ is a } T.$$ 

The language will contain, in addition to the words 'is a' a number of I-words and T-words which are to be used in the place of the I and the T respectively in the sentence form $S$. For I-words Austin uses numerals, e.g. 1227. T-words (if the $S_0$ world with which the $S_0$ language is correlated were a world of geometrical shapes) would be 'rhombus', 'trapezium', 'circle', 'square' and so on. Here then we have a typical $S_0$ speech situation; the world thus and language thus. In this situation the only possible utterances would be such utterances as:

- 1227 is a rhombus
- 1229 is a rhombus
- 1334 is a square
- 1445 is a circle

and so on.
Having set up this sort of model Austin goes on to say that 'two sets of (semantic) conventions will be needed'. These are called by Austin 'I-conventions or conventions of reference' and 'T-conventions or conventions of sense'. I-conventions fix which item it is that any given I-word refers to on every occasion when it is correctly used. 'T-conventions...are needed in order to associate the vocables which are to be T-words with the item-types, one to one'. (Papers 183). I shall now comment on Austin's description of I-conventions and T-conventions.

I-conventions

I-words and I-conventions do not figure very largely in Austin's discussion of S₀ language. Understandably so, since philosophers have not been puzzled by our use of proper names in the way and to the degree in which they have been puzzled by our ability to use general words; and I-words (1227 and so on) certainly seem to function as proper names in S₀. What is interesting is that Austin goes out of his way to deny that I-words are proper names, telling us that 'we shall speak of them in use not as "(proper) names", of which they are at most only a primitive variety, but as "references"'. (Papers 183). Further, we are told (Papers 184) that I-words have reference but no sense. What are we to make of this?

First, I cannot see the force of distinction which Austin is drawing between 'proper names' and 'at best primitive proper names'. I should understand by 'primitive proper name' some such name as 'Convict
1227' which has a function not unlike Austin's (figure) 1227. But then, qua proper name I cannot see any distinction between the function of 'Convict 1227' and the function of more usual proper names like 'Mr Smith' or (very proper) 'Winston Churchill'. Second, why should Austin tell us that I-words ('references') have reference but lack sense? We should not normally think of proper names (primitive or advanced) as having a sense.

I imagine that Austin intends by calling I-words 'references' rather than proper names, and by stressing that they have reference but lack sense, to establish that I-words are 'pure' references devoid of any descriptive content; in fact that they are a sort of logically proper name.

As, surely, given Austin's description of the $S_0$ situation, they must be. For the world in $S_0$ is said to consist of an 'orderless plurality' (Papers 182) of items. Imagine then a world of ten thousand assorted triangles, circles, squares and parallelograms, each square and circle of one definite size and each triangle and parallelogram of one size and one shape. Such a world would be quite consistent with Austin's model. In this world then, defined as orderless, we do not

1 There are differences, certainly. Such a designation as 'Convict 1227' is apt to be used to refer to John Smith during only a part of his career. The years when John Smith was Convict 1227.

2 Much debated historically, of course.
need Austin's warranty for saying that 'references' have no sense for no referring term could have sense, no conventions of reference (1-conventions) could be laid down such as would establish that the reference '1223' (for example) in the utterance '1223 is a triangle' (for example) is used to refer to one particular triangle (1223) among three thousand other triangles of the same size and shape. Further, even if the $S_0$ world were an ordered plurality the $S_0$ language is not equipped to deal with its order. If $S_0$ language were 'ordinary language' it would of course be equipped to deal with ordered plurality by means of such devices as 'third from the left' and 'second row from the top'. In ordinary language, proper names have conventional reference only because they also have some descriptive content; where it is not clear what item a proper name refers to we can always clarify by offering a descriptive expression in place of the proper name. 'I mean the philosopher who drank hemlock'. If $S_0$ were ordinary language we might say: 'I mean, the third figure from the left in the second row is a triangle'. In $S_0$ however, we can assess, for example, a thousand triangles in only one dimension, i.e., the dimension of their triangularity. Because this is so it is in principle impossible to discriminate between triangles. And 1-conventions or conventions of reference as envisaged by Austin, because they are conventions which are to fix individual reference for an indefinite number (in principle)
undiscriminable items could not be established within any conceivable speech situation.  

T-conventions

I pass now to the more interesting question of T-conventions or conventions of sense. By what conventions are general words like 'rhombus' used meaningfully in a simple speech situation like $S_0$?

It seems to me that from Austin's initial description of the $S_0$ world and the $S_0$ language we might be led to expect that just as I-words are conventionally attached to items, so T-words will be conventionally attached to types. In this way an $S_0$ speaker, by taking stock of the $S_0$ world and following the linguistic conventions of sense and reference will be able to produce the true utterance:

1226 (such and such an item) is a square (such and such a type).

Yet, although in the matter of I-conventions we were presented with a conventional association of I-words and items, of T-conventions Austin says that they 'associate the vocables which are to be I-words with the item-types' (Papers 183, my italics). The expression 'item-type' which is, as I shall argue, of some importance for Austin's argument is here introduced into the text without explanation. We might well ask what is

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1 See J.R. Searle (Proper Names in Philosophy and Ordinary Language ed. Caton, p.159) 'To use a proper name referringly is to presuppose the truth of certain uniquely referring descriptive statements' (my italics). See, too, Strawson (Individuals p.20) 'A name is worthless without a backing of descriptions which can be produced on demand to explain its application'.
an 'item-type' and why T-words are to be conventionally associated with item-types rather than with types.

Such a question may, at first blush, seem pedantic. Clearly enough, it may be objected, the 'item-types' are to be thought of as being the types of the items, so that Austin is merely saying that T-conventions associate certain vocables (T-words) with types (of items). And such an explanation might indeed be quite acceptable had Austin been consistent in using the expression 'item-type' (where we had expected 'type') for those features of the $S_0$ world which are to be conventionally associated with T-words. However, in the pages following, Austin manipulates the expression 'item-type' in a manner entirely different from this and entirely unexplained. This is, I think, worth following in some detail. The following steps, at least, are important.

1a. 'I-conventions...fix which item it is that the vocable which is to be an I-word is to refer to...' (182).

1b. 'T-conventions...associate the vocables which are to be T-words with the item-types...' (183).

2. 'The item-type...is attached by convention to...a T-word...as the "sense" of that word' (183).

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1 Cousin writes: (How Not to Talk; Analysis, 15:4) 'Sometimes (I suppose when he wants to emphasize the ubiquity and intimacy of these non-linguistic relations) Austin replaces "item" by "item-type" and "type" by "item-type"'. I want to suggest that there is rather more to the matter.
3. '...the item referred to by the I-word...is of a (in $S_0$ the) type which matches the sense which is attached by the conventions of sense to the T-word' (184).

4. '...a conventional link between I-word and item and another between T-word and sense...' (184).

5. On page 185 Austin gives a final version of how an assertion $S$ (I is a T) is conventionally linked (by conventions of reference and sense) with the $S_0$ world. From this version, given in the form of a diagram, we learn that there is a conventional link between I-word and item-type and another conventional link between T-word and sense. (My italics through the five steps of the argument).

In five moves then Austin takes the never defined expression 'item-type' from its position as the conventional associate of a T-word and makes it the conventional associate of an I-word. Why?

Before going into the question of what an item-type is, and into the related question of Austin's purpose in using the expression 'item-type' thus equivocally, it will perhaps be expedient at this point to set down Austin's diagrammatic representation of the way in which an assertion of the form $S$ is justified (Papers 185).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'1227' (I-word)</th>
<th>'is a' (assertive link)</th>
<th>'rhombus' (T-word)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>conventional link (external)</td>
<td></td>
<td>conventional link (sense)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>item/type (sample)</td>
<td>natural link (match)</td>
<td>sense (pattern)</td>
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I read this diagram as justifying my account of the final stage in Austin's equivocal shuffling with the term 'item-type': I-words are conventionally linked with item-types (item/types); T-words with senses. In addition we learn that item-types may be called 'samples' and that senses may be called 'patterns'. Between item-type (sample) and sense (pattern) there is said to be a natural link or 'match'.

'All this' Austin adds, 'is, I hope, simple'.

We may now ask: (a) What is an item-type? (and the related question, What is a sense?) (b) Why does Austin thus fuse the worldly constituents of $S_0$ (item and type) and conventionally link the item-type with an I-word, thus leaving the T-word free to develop a conventional association, not with a type, but with a (its?) sense.

### What is an item-type?

Austin's paper suggests two possible answers to this question. He writes: (Papers 183)

Sense-giving...consists in allotting a certain item-type to a certain vocable as its 'sense'. ...the item-type,
attached by nature to certain items, is attached by convention to a certain vocable, now a T-word...as the 'sense' of that word (my italics).

At this stage of the argument (see step two, above) the expression 'item-type' is conventionally linked with T-words. In consequence, it is still in order to think of an item-type as being simply the type of an item. 'A certain item-type' does not (yet) suggest a certain item (of a type) but rather a certain type of item, or, in short, a certain type. So far then all is in order, that is, all is in accordance with our feeling that while I-words are to be the associates of items, T-words are to be the associates of types. However, as we have seen, on page 185 an item-type is said to be conventionally linked with an I-word. Now clearly the item-type which is conventionally associated with an I-word cannot be thought of as being a certain type (of item) but rather must be thought of as being a certain item (of a type). Is then Austin's use of the expression 'item-type' hopelessly ambiguous?

I believe that Austin's final account of the matter is not ambiguous although there are inconsistencies on the way. The final account of the matter is not ambiguous because in that account the item-type which is to be the 'sense' of a T-word is, equally with the item-type which is to be the referent of an I-word, a particular item (of a type) rather than a particular type (of item). However, the passage quoted above, in which I italicize the plural 'items' is certainly inconsistent with Austin's final version. For, in that passage the item-type which is said to be the sense of a T-word cannot be thought
of as being a particular item, since it is not sense to say that a particular item is attached by nature to certain items. (It is certainly not sense so to say in $S_0$). It is types (of items) which are attached by nature to items.

The evidence for my claim that Austin intended the item-type which is to be the sense of a T-word to be a particular item rather than a type is found in the following passage (Papers 184) in which the terms 'sample' and 'pattern' are first introduced.

Conceive of our items here, as, say a number of samples or specimens of...(geometrical) shapes, each with a reference-numeral allotted to it: conceive of our senses as a number of standards or patterns of...(geometrical) shapes, each with a name allotted to it: think of name-giving as involving the selection of a sample or specimen as a standard pattern. This is not so far from the truth. (Austin's italics).

In the above passage items (item-types) are called samples and senses are called patterns. But as patterns are not categorically distinct from samples so items (or item-types) are not categorically distinct from senses. Patterns are merely samples which have been selected to serve as standards and the sense of a T-word is merely an item (sample) which has been selected to serve as a standard item (pattern). All of which makes it quite clear that the item-type which was formerly said to be the sense of a T-word and the item-type which was latterly said to be the referent of an I-word do not, as might have been expected, belong to different categories. For, as the item-type (sample) referred to by a reference-numeral is a particular item so the item-
type (pattern) which is the sense of a T-word is a particular item selected as standard. If this is not sufficiently clear Austin speaks of 'the patterns in our stock (the sense of... our names)' (Papers 193).

I contend that Austin's explanatory diagram, reproduced above, might, with no loss of sense and a good deal less mystification, have read as follows.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
'1227' & '\text{is a}' & '\text{rhombus}' \\
(\text{I-word}) & (\text{assertive link}) & (\text{T-word}) \\
(\text{conventional link}) & (\text{reference link}) & (\text{convention link}) \\
\text{Sample item} & \text{match} & \text{Standard item}
\end{array}
\]

Austin says of his account that it 'is not so very far from the truth'. Is it not, on the contrary, very far from the truth? Certainly it is at odds, in important respects, with Austin's earlier discussions of meaning.

According to the account of meaning, given in How to Talk, the meaning or sense of a general word like 'rhombus' or 'square' just is a particular rhombus or square which has been selected as a paradigm. Now, if we construe the meaning of general words in this way it is surely because we are thinking of general words as if they were proper names. Suppose that the paradigm or standard or pattern rhombus is the rhombus 1223. Then, in effect, this particular item (rhombus 1223) is to be thought of as having been given two 'names', the name '1223',...
which is a (proper) name and the 'name' 'rhombus', which is not. Austin
is not merely committed to this sort of talk; he does in fact talk just
this way. Sense-giving is name-giving and general words are names
allotted to particular paradigms (Papers 183-4).

In his first published paper Are there 'a priori' Concepts? Austin
phrases one of the arguments for the existence of 'universals' in the
following way (Papers 2-3).

Since we use the same single name in each case, there must
surely be some single identical thing 'there' in each case:
something of which the name is the name (Austin's italics).

Criticising the above argument Austin says that it clearly depends 'on
a suppressed premiss which there is no reason whatever to accept,
namely, that words are essentially "proper names", unum nomen unum
nominatum' (Papers 7). Again, in The Meaning of a
Word, Austin has
some harsh things to say about 'the curious belief that all words are
names, i.e. in effect proper names, and therefore stand for something
or designate it in the way that a proper name does' (Papers 29 Austin's
italics). To be sure Austin is not, in How to Talk, subscribing to
altogether the same point of view as that which he was concerned to
attack in his earlier papers. In his earlier papers he was attacking
both the view that general words, like proper names, denote some
particular 'thing' and the view that the 'thing' which they denote is a
universal or a concept or whatever. This latter view is certainly not
subscribed to in How to Talk where the general word stands not for a
universal but for a particular. Indeed it is of some interest that at
least one of the arguments which Austin advances against 'universals' chimes very well with the later argument of How to Talk. Austin had argued that it cannot be true that we apply general words to particulars in virtue of a resemblance between the particular and the universal which the general word designates; for the particular cannot be compared with the universal.

- It cannot be sense to say that sensible circles are more or less 'like' the universal 'circularity': a particular can be like nothing but another particular. Nor can I agree...that...the 'sensible figure' could be an approximation to the 'geometrical figure': for what is sensed can be like nothing but something else which is sensed (Papers 5).

In How to Talk the general word is applied to the particular in virtue of a resemblance between the 'sample' to which the word is applied and the 'pattern' which the word designates; that is to say, in virtue of a resemblance between particulars; 'a particular can be like nothing but another particular'.

Austin's early insight that particulars must be compared with particulars is not then denied in How to Talk; but 'the curious belief that all words are proper names' is, unfortunately, entertained by Austin in the later paper. All manner of familiar and unhappy results follow. For example, it will not be possible to say of that paradigm square, circle and parallelogram which are, respectively, the 'sense' of 'square', 'circle' and 'parallelogram' that they are a square, a circle and a parallelogram. The point is well made by Wittgenstein (Philosophical Investigations 1:50).
We define: 'sepia' means the colour of the standard sepia which is there kept hermetically sealed. Then it will make no sense to say of this sample either that it is of this colour or that it is not.

'Standard' and 'sample' are Austin's words too.

In The Meaning of a Word Austin asks, apropos the temptation to look for 'something' which is the meaning or designatum of a general word 'Why are we tempted to slip back in this way?' (Papers 29). Perhaps one cause of Austin's later backsliding was his unusual choice of nouns as exemplars of general words. Ordinarily, the philosopher's example would be '1224 is square' rather than '1224 is a square'. There is, possibly, greater 'temptation' to assimilate the meaning of 'rhombus' and the paradigmatic rhombus than there is to assimilate the meaning of 'rhombiform' and the paradigmatic rhombus.

I believe, however, that a better explanation of Austin's backsliding is suggested by what seems to me to be a plausible answer to my second question. My second question was: Why does Austin, in his explanatory diagram, fuse the worldly constituents of $S_0$ (item and type) in a conglomerate item-type to be conventionally linked with I-words thus leaving T-words free to develop a conventional association, not with types, but with senses? Why, in short, did not Austin's diagram read something like this?
The answer to this question lies in the hitherto unexplained but quite vital notion of a match (or a natural link) between an item-type and the sense of a name. Now, an item-type (sample) may be said to match a sense (pattern). However, had Austin, in his schema, replaced 'item-type' with 'item' and 'sense' with 'type', the notion of matching would not, in this area of the schematization, have been available to him. For an item is a particular and the type of the item is not; and 'a particular can be like nothing but another particular'. Further, the matching relation between sense and item-type is of the utmost importance to Austin's schematization since he requires the notions of both 'fitting' and 'matching' in order to generate four distinct speech-acts from the speech situation $S_D$. What these notions are and how they enable Austin to distinguish between speech-acts is the subject of the following chapter.
CHAPTER 2

STATEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED SPEECH ACTS

Austin's main purpose in How to Talk was not to adumbrate the theory of meaning which I have criticized, but to schematize 'statements' together with seven other, related speech acts. His purpose is well stated in the opening lines of the paper.

Canto describe X as Y really be the same as to call X Y? Or again the same as to state that X is Y? Have we, in using such a variety of terms for simple speech-acts, any clear and serious distinctions in mind? The presumption must surely be that we have: and what follows is an attempt to isolate and schematize some of them (Papers 181).

Altogether, then, eight speech acts are generated from the two speech situations $S_0$ and $S_1$, four speech acts from each speech situation. In what follows, my critical discussion of $S_0$ will be rather more detailed than my discussion of $S_1$. For $S_1$ is not importantly different from $S_0$, at least as far as the mechanics of generating four speech acts from a speech situation is concerned. The mechanism in each case depends on fitting (a name/item to an item/name) and matching (an item-type/sense to a sense/item-type). I shall now discuss 'fitting' and 'matching'; first 'fitting', then 'matching'.

Fitting

The four distinct speech acts generated from $S_0$ are:
Austin introduces the distinction between c-identifying and b-identifying by means of a discussion of the notion of 'fitting' - on the face of it a much less troublesome notion than the notion of 'matching'. To c-identify is to find a cap (name) to fit an item; to b-identify is to find an item to fill a bill (name). In other words, when we c-identify we fit a name to a (given) item; when we b-identify we fit an item to a (given) name. To take Austin's example: given an unnamed object we identify it as a daphnia (c-identifying); given the name 'daphnia' we identify a (the) daphnia on a zoologist's slide (b-identifying).

Now Austin tells us that 'stating' is, like c-identifying, a matter of fitting a name to an item, while 'instancing' is, like b-identifying, a matter of fitting an item to a name. It is clear then that we cannot, by the notion of fitting alone, distinguish between, on the one hand, c-identifying and stating, and, on the other hand, b-identifying and instancing. It is in order to mark these further distinctions, thus generating four distinguishable speech acts from \( S_0 \), that Austin introduces the notion of matching.

**Matching**

We fit an item to a name or a name to an item, but we match an item-type to a sense or a sense to an item-type. (Austin sometimes
puts the matter in a different way: in matching sense and item-type the onus of match may be either on the sense or on the item-type. Further, when we fit an item to a name or a name to an item we do so because the sense of the name and the item-type match. The match of sense and item-type is the ground for fitting a name to an item or an item to a name (Papers 188). Moreover, when we fit a name to an item on the ground that the sense of the name and the item-type match the onus of match may be either on the sense or on the item-type. Equally, of course, when we fit an item to a name the ground of the fitting is the match of sense and item-type but the onus of match may be on either sense or item-type. In this way a distinction is generated between stating and c-identifying and a parallel distinction effected between instancing and b-identifying. For, while it is true that in both c-identifying and stating we are fitting a name to an item, the onus of match in c-identifying is different from the onus of match in stating. When we c-identify we fit a name to an item on the ground that the sense of the name matches the item-type. When we state we once again fit a name to an item but this time on the ground that the item-type matches the sense of the name. In a parallel way in the case of both instancing

Austin, in his discussion of matching, speaks repeatedly of matching the type of an item and the sense of a name, or, in short, of matching types to senses. I shall have occasion to follow him in this way of speaking but it must always be remembered that as a façon de parler it is not consistent with Austin's earlier formulation and may be misleading. It is particular items that are matched, a sample with a pattern, an item-type with a sense.
and b-identifying we fit an item to a name, but when we instance we fit the item to the name on the ground that the sense of the name matches the item-type, whereas, when we b-identify, we fit the item to the name on the ground that the item-type matches the sense of the name.

A useful aid to sorting out these complexities is suggested by Austin later in the paper (Papers 199). In the case of both c-identifying and b-identifying the onus of match is parallel to the direction of fit. That is:

In c-identifying we fit the NAME to the ITEM and match the SENSE (of the name) to the ITEM-TYPE.

In b-identifying we fit the ITEM to the NAME and match the ITEM-TYPE to the SENSE (of the name).

Contrariwise, in the case of both stating and instancing the onus of match and the direction of fit run in opposite directions.

In stating we fit the NAME to the ITEM but match the ITEM-TYPE to the SENSE (of the name).

In instancing we fit the ITEM to the NAME but match the SENSE (of the name) to the ITEM-TYPE.

The useful distinction between, on the one hand, the parallelism of direction of fit and onus of match (in the case of the two kinds of identification) and, on the other hand, the opposition of direction of fit and onus of match (in the case of instancing and stating) is a suitable standpoint from which to take a look at J.W. Roxbee Cox's
criticism\(^1\) of Austin's distinction between fitting and matching. For, Roxbee Cox's argument is, in effect, that when matching parallels fitting it is vacuous - 'bill-filling would amount to a single operation twice described'\(^2\) - and when the matching and fitting operations run in opposite directions there is an 'impossible combination'. Roxbee Cox takes as examples instancing and b-identifying, electing to show the impossibility, on Austin's account of the matter, of instancing and the vacuousness of b-identifying.

I believe that Roxbee Cox's argument against Austin depends, for whatever force it has, on his (erroneous) claim that in 'both fitting and matching we are taking one of the two terms as given or held fast, like a nut for which we seek a bolt'.\(^3\) Roxbee Cox concedes that the analogy of the nut and the bolt is 'given by Austin particularly for the case of "fitting"', but holds that it is the appropriate analogy too for the case of matching. If, however, Roxbee Cox goes on to argue, we hold fast or take as given a name and are looking for an item to fit the name how can we at the same time hold fast the type of the item for which we are looking? (Here we have the impossibility of the combination of the notions of fitting and matching in Austin's account of instancing. A parallel difficulty in the case of stating would be:

\(^1\) Fitting and Matching: Analysis Vol.16:1
\(^2\) op.cit.p.9
\(^3\) op.cit.p.8
How can we, holding fast the item and looking for a name to fit it at the same time hold fast the sense of the name for which we are looking? If, on the other hand, still holding fast the name and looking for an item to fit it we claim to be holding fast, in addition to the name, the sense of the name, and looking for an item-type to match it, what is this more than 'a single operation twice described'? (Here we have the alleged vacuousness of the combination of the notions of fitting and matching in Austin's account of b-identifying).

It may be the case, however, that Austin thought of fitting and matching as a two-stage rather than a single operation. Roxbee Cox goes on to examine what would happen if this were so. In instancing we should fit an item to a name and then proceed to find a sense of a name which will match the given or held fast item-type. Thus we end by discovering the sense of a name for which we had earlier sought and found a fitting item. With b-identifying we once again fit an item to a held fast name and then (vacuously) match an item-type to a held fast sense. Thus Roxbee Cox concludes:

...in neither of these cases does the second stage do anything, and it certainly does not do anything that will serve as a basis for distinguishing instancing and bill-filling which must be distinguished by something less vacuous than a difference in respect of meaningless rigmaroles artificially attached to them.

1 op.cit. p.10
I believe that Roxbee Cox is mistaken in assuming that Austin intended that just as in the case of fitting, either an item or a name is taken as given (held fast, nut-like) while a name or an item (bolt-like) is found to fit it, so, in the case of matching, an item-type/sense is taken as given while a sense/item-type is found to match it. What Austin says is not that the item-type or sense may be taken as given but that either may be 'taken for granted' (Papers 190). There is a world of difference between 'taking as given' and 'taking for granted'. We may agree with Roxbee Cox that it is nonsense to speak, for example, of taking as given the sense of a name which we have not yet found and vacuous to speak of taking as given the item-type when we hold fast the item. But it is not nonsense to speak of taking for granted the sense of the name which we find for an item, nor is it vacuous to speak of taking for granted the type of the item the name of which we are looking for.

This distinction (between taking for granted the sense of a name and taking for granted the type of an item) is one which Austin had insisted on in his earlier writing. For example, in *Other Minds* he distinguished 'two rather different ways of being hesitant' (Papers 60-1).

1. ...I'm not quite certain, or only fairly certain, or practically certain that it's the taste of, say, laurel. In all such cases, I am endeavouring to recognize the current item by searching in my past experience for something like it, some likeness in virtue of which it deserves...to be described by the descriptive word...
2. The other case is different...Here what I try to do is to savour the current experience, to peer at it, to sense it vividly. I'm not sure it is the taste of pineapple: isn't there perhaps just something about it, a tang, a bite, a lack of bite...which isn't quite right for pineapple? (Austin's italics).

These are earlier examples of what Austin, in How to Talk, calls matching sense to type and matching type to sense. In the first example I take the item-type (the taste I am now tasting) for granted and the question is whether or not the sense of the name 'laurel-taste' is such as to match it. In the second example I take the sense of the name 'pineapple-taste' for granted and the question is whether or not the item-type (the taste I am now tasting) is such as to match it. The onus of match is, in the first example, on the sense of 'laurel-taste' whereas, in the second example, it is on the type of my current perception; 'I try to savour the current experience'. Apropos Roxbee Cox's argument the important point to note is that either hesitation might arise in either one of two situations. Either hesitation is possible in situation a, where the question is 'What is that taste?' (fitting a name to an item). Either hesitation is possible in situation b, where the question is 'What is the taste of laurel (or pineapple)?' or 'Can you imagine the taste of laurel (or pineapple)生产设备' (fitting an item to a name).

Roxbee Cox's mistake may be seen quite clearly if we compare his account of why instancing is, on Austin's model, impossible with one of
the ways in which Austin describes the fitting and matching operations which together make up an act of instancing. Roxbee Cox writes:1

Taking the name as given we wish to try various items for fit; but we must somehow at the same time seek among senses for a match.

Now, Austin describes instancing in the following way (Papers 190):

To instance, we have to find a sample to match this pattern to.

What is interesting here is that Austin, at least as far as the distinction between what is given and what is sought is concerned, assimilates the matching operation to the fitting operation. What we must find is, as it must be, at once an item and an item-type (sample=item-type). What we are given is, as it must be, at once the name and the sense of the name (pattern = sense of name). It is clear that when we have the name we have the sense ('this pattern') too. There is no question of seeking among senses (patterns) for a match at the same time that we are seeking among items for a fit. It is merely that the onus of match is on the pattern (we match this pattern to the sample) so that if, in instancing, we go wrong then it will be, according to Austin, because we have misconceived the (given) sense of the (given) name and not because we have misperceived the type of the found item.

The distinctions which Austin wants to mark between the four speech acts generated by $S_0$ are best brought out by Austin's description of

1 op.cit. p.9
their faulty execution (Papers 191). That we can, when fitting a name to an item, be mistaken for either one of two reasons seems clear enough. You hand me a geometrical shape, saying, 'What is 1228?'. If I reply '1228 is a rhombus' when 1228 is (merely) a parallelogram I may have made the mistake either because I misperceived the item-type (misstatement, according to Austin) or because I misconceived the sense of the name 'rhombus' (misidentification, according to Austin). Since then, Austin succeeds in drawing a perfectly valid distinction between what he calls misstatement and what he calls misidentification there will be an equally valid distinction between what he calls c-identification and what he calls a statement. As I have said before, the distinction between instancing and b-identifying parallels the distinction between c-identifying and stating. Roxbee-Cox is certainly wrong then when he concludes that the distinction between instancing and b-identifying is nothing more than a vacuous difference 'in respect of meaningless rigmaroles artificially attached to them'.

I have argued that language can be defended against the charge that it generates incoherence and 'distinctions' which are no distinctions at all. I propose now to discuss in what ways, if at all, Austin's model speech-situations can be said to 'explain' the distinction between such words as 'stating', 'calling', 'describing',
'identifying' and so on as they find their ordinary employment. 1 First, however, since I have so far expounded the genesis of only four speech-acts, I must describe Austin's second and third speech situations, called by him \( s_1 \) and \( s_0 \). The essential machinery of these situations need not be discussed since it depends, like that of \( s_0 \), on the notions, already explored in some detail, of fitting an item/name to a name/item the onus of match being on either the item-type or the sense of the name.

**Speech-situations \( s_1 \)**

In \( s_1 \), as in \( s_0 \), the world is to be thought of as consisting of an indefinite number of items, each item to be thought of as being assessable in only one dimension (as being of only one type) be it shape, colour, smell or whatever. The \( s_1 \) world differs, however, from the \( s_0 \) world in the following respect: there are in the \( s_1 \) world item-types which do not match exactly (or, perhaps, do not match at all) the sense of any of the T-words in the \( s_1 \) language. Thus, an \( s_1 \) language might contain as T-words only the vocables 'square' and 'parallelogram' but the \( s_1 \) world might comprise items which we should, in ordinary language call trapezia and items which we should call rhombuses and items which we should call circles. We might think of the \( s_1 \) 'trapezium' as being rather 'like' the pattern item \( s_1 \) speakers call a parallelogram (the

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1 '...the purpose of considering the model is to elucidate some of our ordinary thought and language about the uses of Speech...' (Papers 181).
31

sense of 'parallelogram').

We might think of the

s1

'rhombus' as

being rather like both square and parallelogram and of the

s1

'circle'

as being quite unlike the sense of either of the T-words in our
example of an s

language. s language will, of course, contain none
1
1
of the 'adjuster' words of ordinary language, 'like', 'real' and so
on, but will, like

s0 , contain only 'references' (numerals), T-words

and the assertive link 'is a'.

We have then, in

is inadequate to deal with the world.

s1 , a language which

In such a situation we may,

when we come across a deviant item, do one of three things.

We may

keep silent or we may introduce new legislation or we may do the best
we can with the existing language.

In the case of the 'circles' in

the situation I have described we shall probably either say nothing or
introduce new legislation, since 'circles' are clearly very unlike
both squares and parallelograms.

But when we introduce new

legislation (i.e. pick a sample 'circle' as a 'standard pattern'
marry it off to a vocable as the sense of that vocable)
becomes

s0 •

The special feature of

s1

1

s1 merely

which interested Austin was the

trying to make do with the existing language stock.

Thus, faced with

an item (e.g. 1999) which we should, in ordinary language term a
trapezium, we shall, in

and

s1 , say '1999 is a parallelogram'.

In a

similar way we might say of an item (e.g. 1998), which we should

1

Austin's curiously redundant expression, as Cousin pointed out.
op.cit.


normally term a rhombus, either '1998 is a square' or '1998 is a parallelogram'. When we speak thus we are not, as in $S_0$, 'stating', 'instancing' or 'identifying'. In the place of the $S_0$ quartet of speech acts

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{c-identifying} & \text{stating} \\
\text{instancing} & \text{b-identifying}
\end{array}
\]

and, generated like them by the same complex considerations of fitting and matching, we have the further four speech acts

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{calling} & \text{describing} \\
\text{exemplifying} & \text{classing}
\end{array}
\]

Thus, to take only one example, $S_1$ 'describing' is the opposite number of $S_0$ 'stating'. When we state that '1445 is a parallelogram' we fit the name 'parallelogram' to the item 1445 on the ground that the item-type (exactly) matches the sense of 'parallelogram'. When, in $S_1$, we say '1446 is a parallelogram', describing 1446 (a 'trapezium'), as a parallelogram, we again fit the name to the item but this time on the ground that the item-type resembles the sense of 'parallelogram' although it does not exactly match it.

**Speech situation $S_0n$**

$S_0n$ is $S_0$ with the addition of negation. We have, in $S_0n$, in addition to the sentence form $S$ (I is a $T$), the sentence form $SN$ (I is not a $T$). Austin argues that this third speech situation helps us to distinguish stating and instancing on the one hand, from, on the other hand, the two types of identifying (cap-fitting and bill-filling). We
cannot tell from the $S_0$ utterance '1227 is a rhombus' which of the four $S_0$ speech acts is being performed. However, Austin claims, when we say '1227 is not a rhombus' while we may be either stating or instancing we cannot be either c-identifying or b-identifying. Austin further claims that we cannot be c-identifying or b-identifying because when the onus of match and the direction of fit are parallel (as is the case with both types of identifying) an utterance of the form 'I is not a T' is not significant. When, however, direction of fit and onus of match are opposite (stating, instancing) an utterance of the form 'I is not a T' is significant.

Criticism of Austin's models

I want now to offer some criticism of Austin's schematism; first, criticism of the schematism itself; second, criticism of the schematization as a schematization of ordinary language.

It seems clear that the distinctions engendered by the schemata cannot be engendered by the schemata alone, but only by the schemata together with some ordinary language presuppositions. This is especially clear in the case of distinctions engendered by a difference in direction of fit. For example, the distinction between '1227 is a rhombus' (a statement) and '1227 is a rhombus' (a b-identification) depends on whether the $S_0$ speaker has been asked 'What is 1227?' or has been asked 'What is a rhombus?'. However, locutions of the form 'What is a T?' are not permissible in $S_0$, which is by definition
restricted to utterances of the form $S(I \leftrightarrow T)$. Such an objection is not ultimately serious since the schemata could always be expanded to allow language to include the questions which invite the responses which mark the distinctions. The more interesting question, which I shall put later, is the question whether or not the ordinary language distinction between, for example, an identification and a statement depends on questions prior to the identification and the statement.

A more important objection might be advanced against the schematism itself. The objection is that, even granted the sort of extra-schematic presupposition I have suggested, the schematization cannot always distinguish between speech acts which Austin thinks of as being distinct. Consider the following example. In $S_1$, as in $S_0$, it is always possible that I may misstate (or misidentify and so on). When I misstate I say, for example, '1662 is a square' when the item-type does not match the sense of 'square'. Now, how could such a misstatement (in $S_1$) be distinguished from what Austin calls describing? For, when I describe I say, for example, '1662 is a square' when the item-type referred to does not exactly match the sense of 'square'. It might, perhaps, be argued that '1662 is a square' is, in $S_1$, a description when 1662 is what we should ordinarily term a rhombus, a shape for which there exists no $T$-word in $S_1$; but '1662 is a square' is a misstatement when 1662 is a parallelogram, a shape for which there is a $T$-word in $S_1$. However, all this would appear to be highly artificial. For, clearly, just as I may, because I misperceive the shape of a
nameable parallelogram say that it is a square, so I may, because I 
misperceive the shape of an unnameable 'rhombus' say that it is a 
square.

Could we perhaps say that 'description' is simply deliberate 
misstatement - misstatement for a purpose? That when we describe we 

misstate although we see that item-type and sense don't match, whereas, 
when we misstate, we misstate because we don't see that item-type and 
sense don't match. Hardly, because as I have just argued we might 
say of an unnameable 'rhombus' that it is a square, and we might so 
say because we misperceive its shape. Since we cannot make a 
statement about an S₁ sample which does not match any S₁ pattern we 
cannot make a misstatement about it either. Therefore our utterance 
must be a description and, in consequence, descriptions cannot be 
distinguished from misstatements on the ground that while descriptions 
are deliberate misstatements, misstatements themselves are not 

deliberate.

As a further example of the difficulty of marking a distinction 

between all the speech acts named by Austin, consider the case of 
'misidentifying' and 'misnaming'. Austin himself betrays some 
confusion in identifying these acts and distinguishing between them. 
Thus, on page 187 he distinguishes between misnaming and misidentifying 
on the ground that misnaming is getting the T-word wrong but 

misidentifying is getting the complete utterance (I is a T) wrong.

'You are guilty...of misnaming in using the word "rhombus": ...you are
guilty of making a misidentification...in using the sentence "1227 is a rhombus". The distinction marked here seems to be fairly straightforward. We might infer from it that it would be possible to misidentify as a result of misnaming, that misnaming is at least one ground of misidentifying. However, on page 191 Austin writes:

Misidentifying must be carefully distinguished from what we have called 'misnaming'. There, the name is 'wrong' even though, and whether or not, the sense, wrongly allotted to it does match the type of the item: whereas here the name is 'wrong' because the sense, rightly allotted to it, does not match the type of the item. If I have misnamed I should not have said it was a 'rhombus': if I have misidentified I should not have said it was a rhombus (Austin's italics).

Once again the distinction is clear enough, but it is a different distinction. 'Misnaming' is now, equally with 'misidentifying', an utterance, and one to be 'carefully distinguished' from 'misidentifying'. If I say of 1227 (a parallelogram) '1227 is a rhombus' then, if I have misidentified, I shall, on being shown my mistake, say something like - 'So a rhombus is an equilateral parallelogram'. But if I have misnamed I shall merely say 'I meant to say "parallelogram"'. We misidentify when we get the sense of the name wrong but we misname when we get the name wrong. In Austin's earlier account misnaming simply was getting the name wrong and was not something which happened as a result of getting the name wrong. On the earlier account we should not have had to 'carefully distinguish' misidentifying from misnaming, but rather to distinguish two kinds of misidentifying - misidentifying as a result of misnaming and misidentifying as a result of misconceiving.
the sense of the name. The earlier account is, I think, to be preferred, because it reduces the ambiguity in this area. The utterance '1227 is a rhombus' (spoken when 1227 is not a rhombus) could, on Austin's second account of the distinction between misidentifying and misnaming, be 'misnaming', 'misidentifying' or 'calling'. On the earlier account it could only be 'misidentifying' or 'calling'.

Austin's schematization and 'ordinary language'.

I turn now to the criticism of Austin's schematization as a schematization of ordinary language. When the eight speech acts 1 are 'isolated and schematized' by Austin have finally been distinguished (by whatever means) does Austin's description of these speech acts and of the various distinctions between them really chime with our ordinary language employment of 'stating', 'describing' and so on, and our sense of the distinction between them?

Take first, as an example, the speech act called by Austin

1 Of course we limit the number of possible speech acts to three by considering only the top left hand quadrant of the S schema, the part where we fit the name to the item and the onus of match is on the sense. Unrestricted, '1227 is a rhombus' (spoken in S, when 1227 is not a rhombus) might be any one of twelve speech acts, on Austin's second account of the distinction between misidentifying and misnaming.

2 i.e. 'placing' (c-identifying), 'stating', 'instancing', 'casting' (b-identifying), 'calling', 'describing', 'exemplifying' and 'classing'.
'describing'. Are we to think of (do we think of) a description as being a (sort of) misstatement? If we are to think of descriptions in this way, what, then, are we to term misdescriptions? Now, Austin does, in $S_1$, distinguish between description and misdescription, just as he does, in $S_0$, distinguish between statement and misstatement. I read the distinction Austin is making (Papers 194-5) in the following way.

Imagine that in the $S_1$ language we have the T-words 'square' and 'circle' conventionally linked with the senses of 'square' and 'circle', but no T-word conventionally linked with a pattern which would, in ordinary language, be the sense of 'rhombus', although there are, in the $S_1$ world, item-types which match that unnamed pattern. Then, I take it, to say of a particular item-type 1559 which we should, in ordinary language, term a rhombus, '1559 is a square', would be, in $S_1$, to give a description of 1559. But to say '1559 is a circle' would be to give a misdescription. It would be, as Austin says, 'to do violence to the facts'. Such usage is, I believe, fairly remote from ordinary language. Certainly, we should say of anyone who said of a rhombus that it was a square that he had misdescribed (the rhombus). However, it may be the case that we should so speak in

1 It is always tempting to replace the colourless but (I hope) neutral 'said' with one of the words which Austin has appropriated for his speech acts. For example, we should be inclined to say that anyone who called a rhombus a square had misdescribed it. But on Austin's account to 'call' is not to 'describe', still less to misdescribe.
ordinary language because in ordinary language, and unlike the envisaged situation in $S_1$, we have words for both rhombus-shapes and square-shapes. What then would be the use of 'misdescription' in ordinary language if we were to apply Austin's model rigourously? It would appear that in order for there to occur what should properly be termed a misdescription there should (1) be lacking in the language a general word whose sense exactly matches the item-type referred to and (2) be chosen by the speaker to supply the lack a word whose sense is not even remotely apt. Thus, to say of a shade for which there is no name in ordinary language 'That is scarlet', would be, if the shade occupied obviously enough some (uncharted) position in the range of bright reds, to give a description. However, to say of the same shade 'That is yellow' would be to give a misdescription (to do violence to the facts). To limit the use of the word 'misdescription' in this way (and Austin's schematism surely suggests that the use must be so limited if we are to distinguish 'description' - a sort of

1 But, according to Austin, we should, perhaps, not so speak. If, in ordinary language (which resembles $S_0$ in having the word 'rhombus' for the rhombus-shape) we fit the name 'square' to a rhombus-shape, then, following Austin, we give a 'misidentification' and not a misdescription.

2 I use the useful word 'termed' rather than 'called' because to call $X$ $Y$ is, after Austin, to fit the name $Y$ to the item $X$ because the sense of $Y$ resembles but does not exactly match the item-type. What it would be to call $X$ a misdescription hardly bears thinking of.
misstatement—from ‘misdescription’) seems to me to do violence to ordinary language.

In Austin’s schemata the eight speech acts identified by him cannot be made explicit since they all share the common form ‘I...’. In ordinary language, however, these speech acts can be made explicit by the sort of expansion suggested by Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* (p.62) as a means of making explicit that an utterance is performative, and which act it is that is being performed. Austin pointed out that an inexplicit locution, for example, ‘Get out’, can be made explicit by the addition of ‘I warn you to...’, ‘I order you to...’, and so on. In a similar way the inexplicit locution ‘127 is a rhombus’ may, in ordinary language, be made explicit by being ‘expanded’ to ‘I state that 127 is a rhombus’, ‘I identify 127 as a rhombus’, ‘I call 127 a rhombus’, ‘I describe 127 as a rhombus’, and so on. Since Austin’s purpose is to give some account of ‘our ordinary uses of... (speech acts discussed)’ (Papers 181) we may think be allowed to make some sort of sense explicit the various acts and distinctions which Austin pointed out in his discussion of ordinary language. 

Austin claimed that both in the case of what he called c-identifying and in the case of stating we fit a name to a given item but that identifying is distinguished from stating by a difference in the onus of match: when we identify, the onus of match...
is on the sense of the name; when we state, the onus of match is on the item-type. Does such a distinction really mark (in ordinary language) a difference between statement and identification (between 'I state that X is Y' and 'I identify X as Y')? Let us take a further look at Austin's example of the daphnia (Papers 189). Suppose that A hands it (the daphnia) to B and asks what it is. B replies 'It is a daphnia'. As Austin spells out the distinction between stating and identifying either of the following conversations might ensue. But are they at all plausible?

1. A: Yesterday you identified it as a daphnia.
   B: No. I stated that it was a daphnia. I was taking the meaning of 'daphnia' for granted. After all, you will agree that I should know what a daphnia is. The one you showed me was in sorry shape so I had to take a fairly close look at it in order to be sure that it was one.

2. A: Yesterday you stated that it was a daphnia.
   B: No. I identified it as a daphnia. If you remember I didn't so much as take a second glance at it. I could see quite clearly what it was (in one sense) but I fairly had to rack my brains to think of the name and to be sure that I had the right name.

Now I have already maintained against Roxbee Cox that the distinction based on difference of onus of match is available to Austin as a means of distinguishing two different speech acts within the one direction of name-item fit. However, because what B says above strikes me as being very odd indeed I cannot believe that the words 'identification' and 'statement' are available to Austin as a
means of marking in ordinary language an ordinary language distinction between two speech acts differing in the way that Austin describes. That is to say, I do not believe that in ordinary language we mean by 'statement' what B appears to mean by 'statement' when he denies that he was making a statement on the ground that he was taking the meaning of the word 'daphnia' for granted. Nor is the rather different distinction between stating and Austin's second type of identification (b-identifying) available to Austin in ordinary language. In this case A's friend B while not marking a distinction between taking and not taking for granted the meaning of 'daphnia' (since in both b-identifying and stating we take the sense of the name for granted) seems to be marking an equally if not more implausible distinction.

A: What is a daphnia? (Or: Which is the daphnia?)
B: That (1330) is a daphnia.
A: You state that 1330 is a daphnia?
B: No. I identify 1330 as a daphnia. True I was taking the sense of the word 'daphnia' for granted and having a good look at the actual specimen. But then you did ask me what a daphnia was and not what 1330 was. Ergo, I was not stating but identifying.

B denies that in uttering '1330 is a daphnia' he was making a statement on the highly eccentric grounds that he had been asked, not what 1330 was, but what a daphnia was. Now surely ordinary usage lends no support to Austin's claim that in stating we always fit a name to an item. When I state that 'I is a T' I may be concerned either with fitting the name 'T' to the item I, or, with fitting the
item I to the name 'T'. More commonly I shall be concerned with neither operation. My statement will be neither 'I is a T' nor 'I is a T', but simply 'I is a T'. I can surely state that the cat is on the mat without having been asked either where the cat is or what is on the mat.

The difference between fitting a name to an item and fitting an item to a name does not seem to me to support any distinction between stating and identifying. The difference had been noted by earlier philosophers and grammarians, for example, John Cook Wilson¹ and A.H. Gardiner,² but not for the purpose of distinguishing between speech acts. Cook Wilson and Gardiner were concerned rather to distinguish between, on the one hand, the grammatical subject and predicate of an utterance, and, on the other hand, the logical subject and predicate. Employing Austin's useful terminology we might put what Cook Wilson and Gardiner were saying in the following way. If, in an utterance S (I is a T) we are fitting the name to the item, I is both the grammatical and the logical subject of S, and T is both the grammatical and the logical predicate of S. If, on the other hand, we are fitting the item to the name then I is the grammatical subject but the logical

¹ Statement and Inference Vol.1 Part 2 Chap.4.
² The Theory of Speech and Language pp.271-7.
predicate of S, and T is the grammatical predicate but the logical subject of S. As Gardiner says: ¹

Thus 'Henry has arrived' answers the question 'What has Henry done?' and therefore 'has arrived' must be the logical predicate. The question answered by 'Henry has arrived' is 'Who has arrived' and consequently 'Henry' is here the logical predicate.

Cook Wilson argues in much the same way apropos the utterance 'Glass is elastic' (I is T).

...suppose instruction was being given in the properties of glass, and the instructor said 'glass is elastic' it would be natural to say that what was being talked about and thought about was glass, and that what was said about it was that it was elastic. Thus glass would be the subject and that it is elastic would be the predicate...if the matter of inquiry was elasticity and the question was what substances possessed the property of elasticity, glass...would no longer be subject, and the kind of stress which fell upon 'elastic' when glass was the subject would now be transferred to 'glass'.²

However, neither Gardiner nor Cook Wilson goes so far as to suggest that we might use the distinction between an utterance of which the grammatical subject is the logical subject, and an utterance of which the grammatical subject is the logical predicate as a basis for a further distinction between speech acts, for example between a statement and an identification. Indeed, it is interesting that Cook Wilson, when attempting to define the true subject (i.e. the logical subject) of an utterance writes as follows:³

¹ op.cit. p.273
² op.cit. pp.117-9
³ op.cit. p.118
The subject of a statement may be defined as what we were thinking about as we thought it, or conceived it, before we arrived at the statement, or before we had the statement communicated to us, while the predicate is the new fact which we state about it or have communicated to us (my italics).

In the above passage Cook Wilson clearly allows that an utterance of which the grammatical predicate is the logical subject may be a statement. This is precisely what Austin, in his schematization, denies.

I have mentioned some of the ways in which Austin's treatment of 'stating' and 'identifying', as he uses these terms in S₀, fails to chime with our ordinary usage. Similar difficulties crop up when we examine the parallel pair of terms in S₁, 'calling' and 'describing'. Do we want to say that, in our ordinary use of 'call' and 'describe', to call X Y or to describe X as Y is always to fit the name Y to the item X? And is the difference between calling X Y and describing X as Y really just this: that we call X Y when Y is not exactly the name for X, whereas we describe X as Y when X is not quite Y? Would we, in ordinary language, claim that we had not described X as Y, but (merely) called X Y, on the grounds that, in fitting the ill-fitting name Y to the item X, we had done so because the sense of 'Y' (roughly) matched the type of X rather than because the type of X (roughly) matched the sense of 'Y'? Austin concedes that the ordinary use of such terms as 'calling' and 'describing' is 'fairly loose...we do not always distinguish carefully between them'. But the suggestion is
that we should distinguish between them and Austin claims that when examples such as the following are studied carefully 'the watershed between calling and describing begins to take shape' (Papers 196).

He calls me a dictator in spite of the fact that I have notoriously always acted only on the advice of Parliament.

He describes me as a dictator, whereas in fact, as he must have known, I have always acted only on the advice of Parliament.

Might we prune a little the two statements in Austin's example. The 'notoriously' of the first example and the parenthetical 'as he must have known' of the second seem to be merely stylistic and to contribute nothing of importance to whatever distinction can be drawn between 'calling' and 'describing'. Surely the parenthesis might have occurred in the first statement and the 'notoriously' in the second. If I was 'notoriously' constitutional it seems likely that 'he must have known'. Further, the 'in fact' of 'whereas in fact' is redundant. 'Whereas in fact I... = 'Whereas I...'. And the 'fact' of the first statement is only a (stylistic) device for avoiding a gerundive expression. 'In spite of the fact that I have...' = 'In spite of my having...'. If the above revisions and elisions are made Austin's example 'reduces' (without - or so it appears to me - loss of meaning) to:

He calls me a dictator in spite of my having always acted only on the advice of Parliament.

He describes me as a dictator whereas I have always acted only on the advice of Parliament.
Do we really want to claim that it would be loose talking to use 'describe' for 'call' in the first statement and 'call' for 'describe' in the second?

Now I cannot see that the clauses 'whereas I have' and 'in spite of my having' mark any meaningful distinction between 'call' and 'describe'. I believe, however, that the distinction which Austin wants to mark could have been expressed by him less deviously. It is, of course, the now familiar distinction, based on a difference in onus of match, between 'abusing language' and 'doing violence to the facts'. In the first example the aggrieved politician accuses his critic of abusing language; in the second, of doing violence to the facts. Austin might, therefore, have used as an example something like the following.

He calls me a dictator which only shows that he is ignorant of, or deliberately distorting, the meaning of the word 'dictator'.

He describes me as a dictator which shows me he is ignorant of, or deliberately distorting, my Parliamentary record.

I have argued above that such a distinction is available to Austin (a distinction between being in error because we misconceive the sense (of a word) and being in error because we misperceive the type (of an item or situation) but that the difference is not marked in ordinary language by a difference between the ordinary use of 'state' and the ordinary use of 'identify'. Nor do I believe that any such
distinction is marked by a difference between the use of 'call' and the use of 'describe'.

Towards the end of How to Talk Austin, in expounding speech situation $S_0$, seems to make a successful call on ordinary language. It will be remembered that the purpose of $S_0$ is to mark off stating and instancing, on the one hand, from, on the other hand, c-identifying and b-identifying. While the utterance 'I is a T' (1227 is a rhombus) may, in $S_0$, be used in the performance of any one of the four $S_0$ speech acts, when we say, in $S_0n$, 'I is not a T' (1227 is not a rhombus) then the speech act which we perform must be one of either stating or instancing and cannot be the speech act of identifying (either c- or b-). Austin offers, in support of this claim, the following argument from ordinary usage (Papers 200).

We cannot, in either sense of 'identify', identify I as not a T; to identify as not is nonsense for not to identify.

Now, if Austin has merely come at the last to the conclusion that 'I identify 1227 as not a rhombus' is nonsense, it will appear that he has taken the long way home. However Austin of course purports to do rather more than this. For he purports to explain by means of his model speech situations why an indicative utterance of the form 'I is not a T' may be a statement but cannot be an identification, and, moreover, to explain why this should be so without reference to the ordinary meaning of 'identification'. The explanation goes as follows (Papers 199).
...the sentence form SN is in order when we are matching the (given) sense/type to a (produced) type/sense, but not in order when we are matching a (produced) sense/type to the (given) type/sense (Austin’s italics).

Take as examples c-identifying and stating; when we c-identify we match a produced sense to the given item-type. In S₀n we produce a sense which does not match the given item-type. We are out of order.

When we state we match the given item-type to a produced sense. In S₀n we produce a sense which the given item-type does not match. What we say is in order.

Let us spell this out still further. I am given an item, say 1228. I take the item-type for granted (don't give it a second glance) and search around among senses for a match. I fasten on the pattern named 'rhombus', examine it closely and say, reluctantly, '1228 is not a rhombus'. What I say is out of order. I am once again given 1228. I peer hard at the shape (type) of 1228 and say 'well it's certainly not a rhombus' - '1228 is not a rhombus' - (not giving a second thought to the sense of 'rhombus' - what I say is in order.

All this seems to me to be nonsense, nonsense which is not in any way supported by Austin's having fastened, arbitrarily enough, on 'identifying' as the name of the speech act in which we match a produced sense to the given item-type rather than the given item-type to a produced sense.

Austin does not develop a fourth speech situation S₁n (S₁ with a negative sentence form added) analogous to his S₀n. Had he done so he
would have found that ordinary language arguments gave no support to
his claim that it is not in order, when we are matching a produced
sense to the given item-type, to say 'I is not a T'. $S_1$ 'calling'
parallels $S_0$ 'c-identifying'. When we call $XY$ we match a produced
sense to the given item-type, the match in $S_1$ being approximate rather
than exact. Yet, it is certainly not obviously the case that to call
$X$ not $Y$ is nonsense for not to call $XY$. 'I call that not playing the
game' is not nonsense for 'I don't call that playing the game'.

I have discussed Austin's How to Talk in the light of his own
terms of reference. Austin tells us that it is 'an attempt to
isolate and schematize' some 'terms for simple speech-acts' in order
to bring out any 'clear and serious distinctions' which we may have
in mind in our 'ordinary uses' of the terms discussed. However, at
the outset of his paper Austin introduces two caveats. They are:

1) ... it is not contended that [what follows] contains
an exact or full or final account of our ordinary
uses of the terms for speech acts discussed.

2) ... essential though it is as a preliminary to
track down the detail of our ordinary uses of words,
it seems that we shall in the end always be
compelled to straighten them out to some extent
(Papers 181).

In reply to the first caveat I should contend that Austin's account
is so hopelessly inexact (as a description of our ordinary uses of the
terms discussed) that it would be nugatory to develop it further in the
hope of making it more 'full' and/or 'final'.

50
As to the second caveat, I have already discussed (Chap. 1 pp. 1-3) the opposition, in Austin's philosophizing, between the descriptive and the prescriptive element. As I have argued, Austin, on occasion, at least professed himself willing to 'override', 'torture' and 'straighten out' ('fake'?) ordinary usage in the interest of a schematism. However, Austin's instinct was, for the most part, against such a practice, and he was more inclined to depurate the distinctions and connexions 'that you and I are likely to think up in our arm-chairs of an afternoon'. Moreover, the second caveat in no way implies that How to Talk is itself intended as prescriptive, a 'straightening out' of ordinary usage. Indeed, the clear implication is surely that it is wholly descriptive, part of the essential preliminary of tracking down the detail of our ordinary uses of words, rather than arm-chair legislation designed to straighten out these uses.

Finally, we might 'go behind' the attempted schematization (and the question - whether the schematization is legislative or descriptive) and ask: 'why schematize?'. What is the philosophical purport of Austin's paper? Austin's answer goes as follows (Papers 197).

Names for speech-acts are more numerous, more specialized, more ambiguous and more significant than is ordinarily allowed for: none of them can be safely used in philosophy in a general way (for example, 'statement' or
I think, yet received. 1

Now, apart from one brief reference to 'truth' (Papers 198) which I shall come to later, Austin does not, unfortunately, tell us what philosophical dangers may be avoided once we have made a schematic investigation of the different speech-acts discussed by him — why none of the names discussed can be safely used in philosophy without more investigation. In order to try to understand what these dangers might be I shall now suggest that Austin's schematization makes possible any one or more of three different distinctions between any two of the eight speech-acts named by him. Any two speech acts may differ:

1. in the respect of either fitting a name to an item or fitting an item to a name;

2. in the respect of either matching a sense to an item-type or matching an item-type to a sense;

3. in the respect of either belonging to speech situation $S_0$ or belonging to speech situation $S_1$.

Any two of Austin's eight speech acts must differ in one of these respects and may differ in all three. 'Calling' and 'exemplifying' (for example) differ in only one respect, but 'stating' and

1 Compare Cook Wilson's strictures against philosophers' use of the word 'judgement'. 'Judgement is a word taken from ordinary usage and ought to retain what is essential to its meaning there'. Statement and Inference Part II chap.ii. p.92.
'exemplifying' (for example) differ in all three. I suggest that if any dangerous philosophical confusion is likely to occur it will most probably be confusion between two terms which differ from each other in only one respect since terms which differ in only one respect will be more easily confused than terms which differ in two or more respects. I shall therefore draw up the only three possible lists of terms which differ from each other in only one of the named respects. Here, if anywhere, we might expect to find confusion and possible error.

(1) Terms which differ from each other only in the respect of fitting an item/name to a name/item.

| c-identifying | instancing |
| stating       | b-identifying |
| calling       | exemplifying |
| describing    | classing     |

Since each term (of any one of the above pairs of terms) is distinguished from the other term (of the pair) only in the respect of whether we are fitting a name to an item or an item to a name, we may take it that the terms in any pair might, with philosophical impunity, be used as synonyms, were it not for this distinction. Thus I shall (should) say 'I describe X as Y' when I am asked what X is, and I shall (should) say 'I class X as Y' when I am asked for (a) Y. Apart from the above distinction 'describing' and 'classing' might be used indifferently, even by philosophers. For, as far as Austin's battery of distinctions is concerned a philosopher could go wrong
over 'describing'/'classing' only through failure to take notice of
the distinction between the name-item, and the item-name, fit. I
have argued above that similar distinctions are not marked by
ordinary language. My contention now is that no philosophical
pitfalls are avoided by taking note of Austin's (surely artificial)
distinction. To say 'I class X as Y' when fitting the name Y to the
item X is hardly to make a philosophical mistake of the first
importance.

(2) Terms which differ from each other only in the respect of
matching an item-type/sense to a sense/item-type.

| c-identifying | stating          |
| instancing    | b-identifying   |
| calling       | describing      |
| exemplifying  | classing        |

The distinction based on difference in onus of match seems to me more
interesting than the distinction based on difference of fit. However,
once again, the distinction is not marked in ordinary language and we
may well ask what philosophically significant errors have ever been
generated by a failure to observe it. What philosophers have fallen
into error through saying 'I call X Y' where, because they were taking
the sense of 'Y' for granted, they should have said 'I describe X as
Y'? Austin's initial question, it is interesting to recall, was 'Can
to describe X as Y really be the same as to call X Y?'.

(3) Terms which differ from each other only in the respect of
whether they belong to $S_0$ or $S_1$. 
This distinction is, in many ways, the most interesting of the three, and it is in respect of it that Austin offers his only hint as to what errors may be avoided by taking note of the distinctions schematized by him. Austin writes (Papers 198):

A feature, for example, in which different speech-acts... may differ very much is that commonly discussed in an entirely general way under the name of 'truth': even, say, with speech-acts which are assertions, we often prefer for one a different term of approbation from that which we prefer for another, and usually for good and understandable reasons.

Now, none of the terms for speech acts paired in (3) is distinguished from its 'opposite number' either by direction of fit or by onus of match, but only by whether it is an $S_0$ term or an $S_1$ term. That is to say, by whether the sentence form 'I is a T' which 'expresses' or 'embodies' the 'statement', 'description' or whatever, corresponds exactly with the world (the facts) or merely approximates to the world (the facts). I take it then that Austin is, in the above passage, suggesting that, as philosophers, we pay attention to our choice of term if we have to choose between the $S_0$ and the parallel $S_1$ name (Say, 'statement' or 'description'). For while it may be all right to speak of statements as being either true or false (in $S_0$ statements either correspond exactly with the world or fail to so correspond) we may prefer a 'different term of approbation' for...
descriptions for the good and sufficient reason that descriptions, as isolated and schematized by Austin in $S_1$, are approximations. Now this distinction (between 'true' and 'rough') is one often canvassed by Austin. For example, in his paper, *Truth*, Austin wrote (Papers 98):

Is it true or false that Belfast is north of London? That the galaxy is the shape of a fried egg? That Beethoven was a drunkard? That Wellington won the battle of Waterloo?...What may score full marks in a general knowledge test may in other circumstances get a gamma.

However, it is of interest that Austin did not, in *Truth*, think that such a distinction was (could be?) marked in ordinary language as a distinction between, for example, a statement and a description. For he wrote then (Papers 97):

We say, for example, that a certain statement is exaggerated or vague or bald, a description somewhat rough or misleading or not very good... (my italics).

The distinction between marking a saying - what someone says - as being, on the one hand, true or false, but on the other hand, rough, vague, bald or not very good, is a distinction worth making. It is not, however, a distinction marked in ordinary language by a difference between the use of 'statement' and the use of 'description'. Nor is it easy to see what purpose would be served (what philosophical pitfalls avoided) by legislating that the distinction be so marked.

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1 See too *HTDWW* (144) '...descriptions, which are said to be true or false or, if you like, are "statements"...' (my italics). On page 142 Austin says of 'France is hexagonal' both that it is a rough statement and that it is a rough description.
Austin was not, in *How to Talk*, concerned to contrast the statement, on the one hand, with, on the other hand, the seven further speech acts which he identified. Some such contrast is, however, a major theme of his later work, e.g. *HTDTW*, in which he does attempt to distinguish between the statement, or constative utterance, and other speech acts, for example, and especially, performative utterances. Before turning to this later work I shall examine, in the following chapter, the part which statements play in the celebrated controversy between Austin and Strawson about the nature of truth.
In this chapter I try to disentangle a few threads from that very tangled web which Austin and Strawson wove, when, far from practising to deceive, they were in fact attempting to tell the truth about 'truth', or, in the preferred idiom, to say some true things about the adjective 'true'. The threads with which I shall be concerned issue for the most part from the different uses made by Strawson and Austin of the word 'statement'. I believe that the word 'statement' is, for two reasons, worth concentrating on. (1) Facts have already received more than their share of attention. Austin, for example, replying to Strawson in his paper Unfair to Facts concentrated on facts rather than on statements. (2) I believe that it is Strawson's views on statements that determine his views on facts, and not his views on facts that determine his views on statements. In consequence, to concentrate on statements rather than on facts is, I hope, to take a more direct path to the nub of the argument. However, although I concentrate on statements I shall have something to say about facts too, much as Austin, although concentrating on facts, had a good deal to say about statements. Indeed, part of my purpose will be to claim that what I take to be the two main points on which
Strawson takes issue with Austin about statements are very closely related to Strawson's two main contentions about facts.

What then are the two main issues in the dispute about statements? They are:

A) Strawson claims that Austin does not distinguish between statements and speech-episodes. For Austin, according to Strawson, it is the speech-episode, historic, dateable and in the world, that we declare to be true or false. But the statement we describe as true or false is not, according to Strawson, something in the world, historic and dateable. The statement is not the speech-episode. The speech-episode is merely the making of the statement. As Strawson puts it: ¹

'My statement' may be either what I say or my saying of it. My saying something is certainly an episode. What I say is not. It is the latter, not the former which we declare to be true.

For Strawson, then, a statement (= what is said to be true or false) is what a person states but not his actual, historic stating of something. He claims that it is the latter, the actual speech-episode of stating something, which Austin thinks of as being the statement.

B) The second question at issue is a question about the conventions of reference and description by which statements must be conventionally associated with the world, if communication between speaker and hearer about the world is to be possible.

¹ PASS, XXIV (1950), p.129-30
On the first issue, which I shall call the question of statements and speech-episodes I shall claim the following four things:

(A1) That Strawson is wrong in asserting that Austin believed that the statement which is true or false is the actual speech-episode.

(A2) That Strawson is far from successful in his attempt to isolate a 'statement' distinct from a 'speech episode' - i.e. in his attempt to identify a non-episodic 'statement'.

(A3) That Strawson's argument for a non-episodic statement suggests a parallel argument which would identify facts with true statements. It is, I believe, the possibility of some such parallel argument which has led some commentators to take it that Strawson held that facts were true statements, and, indeed, that the controversy between Austin and Strawson just is a controversy about whether or not facts are true statements. Austin himself lends some credence to such a view by arguing, in the closing pages of his Unfair to Facts, against the identification of 'fact' with 'true statement'. However, Strawson does not identify 'fact' and 'true statement'; in fact, he explicitly denies the identification. 'It would indeed be wrong', he writes\(^1\) 'to identify "fact" and "true statement"'. In consequence, I shall claim that if an argument precisely analogous to Strawson's argument for a non-episodic statement results in the identification of

\(^1\)op.cit. p.136
'fact' and 'true statement', then, to produce such an argument is not to interpret Strawson as having (implicitly) held that facts are true statements, but rather to enter at least one strong objection against Strawson's argument for a non-episodic statement.

(A4) That Strawson's claim that statements are not speech-episodes is closely related to one of his two main contentions about facts, namely, that facts are wedded to that-clauses.

On the second issue, which I shall call the question of the conventions of reference and description which govern statement-making, I shall claim the following:

(B1) That Strawson is substantially correct. However, Strawson's argument against Austin on this question is far from clear. The obscurity of the argument is, I believe, due, at least in part, to the fact that Strawson argues against Austin in two different (and incompatible) ways. On the one hand Strawson often seems to take the view (I believe, incorrectly) that the conventions which Austin describes (called by Austin conventions of description and demonstration) are the same as his (Strawson's) conventions of description and reference, and that Austin merely argues from the same conventions to a different (and mistaken) conclusion. On the other hand, but rather less often, Strawson seems to realize that Austin's statement governing conventions are different from his own, and that Austin's mistake lies in laying down unworkable conventions of description and demonstration (conventions of description and
reference, to use Strawson's terms).

(B2) That Strawson's argument is further obscured, although in a way not unconnected with his equivocal assessment of Austin's position, by the vagueness of the word 'about' in his claim that statements are 'about' what they refer to by the conventions of reference. Strawson's claim that statements are 'about' what they refer to, is, of course, closely related to the second of his two main contentions about facts, namely, that facts are what true statements state and not, as Austin thought, what true statements are 'about'.

Statements and speech-episodes

(AI) That Strawson is wrong in asserting that Austin held that the statement which is true or false is the actual speech-episode.

Strawson's argument against Austin that he thought of a statement as being a speech-episode is easily defeated. Austin wrote (Papers 88):

...the same sentence...may...be used on two occasions or by two persons in making the same statement.

I shall later be concerned to argue that the distinction between 'statement' and 'speech-episode' is not an easy one to make. However, my concern at the moment is not with the question: is such a distinction possible? it is rather with the question: is Strawson justified in his claim that Austin thought of a statement as being a speech-episode? The above quotation makes it quite clear that Austin did not. For a speech-episode, as conceived by Strawson, is an
episode, dateable and as incapable of recurrence as is the third of March 1964. Austin clearly thought that the same statement could occur on two occasions. Therefore Austin cannot have thought that a statement was a speech-episode, at least in Strawson's sense of 'speech-episode'.

(A2) That Strawson's argument to show that statements are non-episodic is not successful.

How can a statement be distinguished from a speech-episode, i.e. from the making of a statement? Or, as Strawson puts it in one passage, how can 'what I say' be distinguished from my saying it?

Strawson's distinction between a statement and a speech-episode does not parallel the distinction more commonly made (e.g. by Austin in his contribution to the symposium) between a statement and a sentence. Nor is it nearly so easy to make. For, although we may, if we wish, think of a speech-episode as being a spoken sentence, and, as being like a sentence, neither true nor false, we cannot go on to argue that the speech-episode 'I like it here' is, like the sentence 'I like it here', neither true nor false for the want of a context. For, speech-episodes usually do have a context. Such and such an one says 'I like it here' at such and such a time and in such and such a place. Speech-episodes are, as Strawson says, dateable. Sentences are not. Nor can we claim that speech-episodes are used in the making of statements in the way that sentences have commonly been said to find their employment. For a speech-episode is not used in
the making of a statement but simply is the making of the statement.

Strawson concedes that 'it is not easy to explain the non-episodic and non-committal sense of "statement"', and the difficulties are brought out, perhaps better than Strawson realizes, when, trying to separate a statement from the making of a statement, he writes:

1 ibid. p.131

The statement that p is not an event though it had to be made...

Strawson's sentence resembles superficially, but is really very different from the sentence:

The desk I am writing on is not an event though it had to be made.

Very different, because desks are distinct from the making of desks in a way that statements are not distinct from the making of statements. The 'it' in my desk example clearly refers to my desk. But what, we might well ask, does the 'it' in the quotation from Strawson refer to? Clearly not that p which, to anticipate a little, is Strawson's front-running candidate for what a statement is. If I state that the king is dead, I make the statement that the king is dead, and, if Strawson likes, that the king is dead is not an event. But then I certainly do not make that the king is dead. What I do make is the statement that the king is dead and because a statement is not something distinct

2 ibid. p.133
from the making of a statement (as a desk is something distinct from the making of a desk) the statement is both made and an event; the that-clause (which I state) is neither made nor an event.

The point might perhaps be made clearer in the following way. Whenever I state I make a statement. Compare 'I draw' or 'I carve' with 'I state'. It is not true that whenever I draw or carve I make a drawing or carving. Statements are 'statings' in a way that drawings and carvings are not 'drawings' and 'carvings'. Or, to anticipate a point which I shall be developing later, we draw drawings and carve carvings but we do not state statements, 'statement' is not a possible accusative of 'state'.

Strawson offers the following argument in support of the distinction between a 'statement' and the different speech-episodes in which 'it' may be made.

...you say of Jones 'He is ill', I say to Jones 'You are ill' and Jones says 'I am ill'. Using, not only different sentences, but sentences with different meanings we all make 'the same statement'; and this is the sense of 'statement' we need to discuss, since it is, prima facie, of statements in this sense that we say that they are true or false (e.g. 'What they all said, namely that Jones was ill, was quite true').

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1 We might say 'I saw him drawing but I didn't see his drawing'. We should not say 'I heard him stating that p but I didn't hear his statement that p'.

2 ibid. pp.131-2
Here then, are three different sentences which, when spoken, become three different speech-episodes. Strawson wants to claim that although there are three speech-episodes there is only one statement - 'We all make the same statement'. The objection might be made, and Strawson would perhaps concede the point, since what he says implies only that we have here one sense of 'statement', that the situation might, with equal propriety be described as one in which we make three different statements but all state the same fact. 'Three statements - one fact' seems at least as plausible a description as 'Three speech-episodes - one statement'. However, what is of rather more interest to us is that Strawson here clearly identifies the sense of 'statement' with which he is concerned as 'What they (all) said'. Moreover, it is of even greater interest that Strawson goes on to identify the 'what', the something they all said, as 'that Jones was ill'. In short, their statement is, according to Strawson 'What they said' and 'what they said' is 'that Jones was ill'.

We may put it in the following way. A statement is, according to Strawson, 'what a person says' or, for simplicity, let us say 'what a person states'. If we go on to ask just what the person does state we shall get an answer of the form that p. Thus, in two steps, we identify a statement with a that-clause. That is to say, we identify the statement that a person makes with the that-clause that the person, in making the statement, states.
I shall now try to show that and why Strawson's argument will not do. Strawson has, I believe, mistakenly taken the 'what they said' in 'their statement is what they said' to be equivalent to the 'what they said' in 'what they said is that Jones is ill'. But the expression functions very differently in the two steps of the argument. Before criticizing Strawson's argument I shall, for the sake of generality and symmetry, restate it in the following way:

(1) A statement is (always) what we state.
   (= Their statement is what they said)
(2) What we state is (always) a that-clause.
   (= What they said is that Jones was ill)
Conclusion: A statement is a that-clause.

In (2) - 'What we state is a that-clause' - we are licensed to supply a 'that-clause' as the direct object of 'state'. Asked what we did state we reply simply 'that p' or 'that q' or 'that r'. (2) means that there is something that we state and that something is of the form 'that p'. 'What we state is that Jones is ill' is equivalent to 'we state that Jones is ill'. (1) is precisely different. 'A statement is what we state' does not mean that there is something which we state, and that, furthermore, that something is a statement. We are not licensed to supply 'statement' as the direct object of 'state'; 'A statement is what we state' is not equivalent to 'we state a statement', for 'we state a statement' is not English. As facts are stated and not made, so, statements are made and not stated.

All this may seem, perhaps, fairly controversial. For example, Austin, in Unfair to Facts uses for his own purpose the example 'what
we signal is a signal' thought of as analogous to 'what we state is a statement'. In developing the analogy Austin suggests that just as 'target' and 'signal' may be the direct objects of the verb 'signal', so, 'fact' and 'statement' may be the direct objects of 'state'. In fact, the utterances in the analogy are 'highly paedogogic, though harmless. It would be very paedogogic to say "we signal signals" or "we state statements" - though parallel to saying, for example, "we plan plans". (Papers 120). But Austin is surely wrong here. 'What we plan is a plan' is different from 'what we state is a statement'.

In the former case there is something which we plan and that something is a plan. In the latter case there is, indeed, something which we state but that something is not a statement. Because the 'something' that we plan is a plan it is in order, though somewhat paedogogic and uninformative, to speak of planning plans. Compare

What we dream is a dream
What we paint is a painting

from which we may severally derive 'we dream dreams' and 'we paint paintings'.

'What we state is a statement' is different from these. It might perhaps be read as a sort of definition styled in the following way.

'What we state' is (called) a statement.

Read in this way 'what we state is a statement' does not encourage us to believe that 'statement' can be the direct object of 'state'; to think that just as when we plan, we plan plans, so, when we state, we
state statements.

We might compare 'what we state is a statement' with such highly pedagogic (though perhaps harmless) definitions as:

- What we believe is a belief
- What we doubt is a doubt
- What we promise is a promise

Asked what we planned we might reply 'a plan'. Our reply would perhaps be ill-mannered and would certainly be uninformative. However, syntactically, it seems to me to be all right. But to offer in response to the question 'what do you believe?', the reply, 'a belief', seems to me to be syntactically odd. For we do not believe beliefs nor doubt doubts nor promise promises. 'What we believe is a belief' resembles 'what we state is a statement' in suggesting that 'what we believe' and 'our belief' are, like 'what we state' and 'our statement' synonymous through a wide range of speech situations. Thus we may say, for example, 'what we believe is our own business' and 'our belief is our own business' and so on. But 'what we believe is a belief' does not tempt us to take the strange view that 'belief' is here a curiously internal accusative of 'believe' licensing the transition from 'what we believe is a belief' to 'we believe beliefs'.

To sum up this part of the argument. It is by no means easy to distinguish between a statement and speech-episode, that is, to identify a non-episodic, non-historic, dateless 'statement'. Strawson takes the that-clause which is undoubtedly 'what we state' to be the non-episodic statement he needs. Strawson's argument for this
conclusion is, in effect, that that p is our 'statement' because our 'statement' is 'what we state' and 'what we state' is that p. I have tried to show that 'what we state (say)', the middle term in the argument, is ambiguous. Its use in the first premise 'our statement is what we state' is different from its use in the second premise 'what we state is that p'. The second premise licenses 'we state that p'; the first premise does not license 'we state our statement'.

I turn now to the connection between the above argument for a non-episodic statement and the view which some critics have attributed to Strawson, namely the view that facts are true statements.

(A3) That an argument parallel to Strawson's argument that statements are that-clauses would identify 'fact' and 'true statement'.

Since Strawson is quite explicit in his denial of the identity of facts and true statements it is somewhat curious to find that the common critical interpretation of Strawson's view is that he held that facts were true statements. Thus, Mats Furberg, in his critical study of Austin's philosophy writes:

Strawson tries to establish that a fact is nothing but a true statement.

Furberg goes on, rather bewilderingly, to claim that there are, in Strawson's paper, 'two connected arguments to that effect: Facts are

\[1\] Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts p.143
what statements, when true, state; and facts and statements are made for each other'. Now, it is hard to see how either of these two arguments could be an argument to the effect that a fact is nothing but a true statement. For, since facts and true statements are clearly distinguished in Strawson's arguments, it is difficult to read these arguments as arguments to the effect that facts and true statements are not distinct. For example, if true statements state facts then facts must be different from true statements since Strawson would not want to claim that true statements state true statements. Again, if facts and true statements are made for each other, facts cannot be 'nothing but true statements'. For it is not sense to say that true statements are made for true statements, or that facts are made for facts.

J.M. Shorter is another critic who takes the issue between Austin and Strawson to be whether or not facts are true statements. In his paper Facts, Logical Atomism and Reducibility Shorter writes:  

The controversy [between Austin and Strawson] is aptly described by a remark of John Wisdom which, with a change of example reads: 'To take an example we have ourselves come upon: Some have said "Facts are true statements", others have said "They are not", and, in supporting these "views" they have between them done all that is asked for by one who asks "Are facts true statements or are they not?"'.

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It is worth remarking that neither Furberg nor Shorter claims that Strawson did explicitly identify 'fact' and 'true statement'. It would have been difficult to substantiate such a claim in the face of Strawson's clear rejection of the identification. Furberg, as we have seen, merely claims that Strawson's arguments which in fact distinguish between facts and true statements are arguments to the effect that facts are nothing but true statements. Shorter suggests that 'a brief way of summing up the Strawsonian point of view is

\[ \text{A fact is a true statement}. \]

Shorter argues that such a summary is just, in the following way:

This is fairly easily derivable from the assertion by Strawson:

1. 'A fact is what a statement, when true, states'
   - Strawson intends (1) to be taken as analogous to 'a signal is what a signal (when correct) signals'
   - So taken it means
   - (2) 'A fact is what a person says (states) when he says something true'.

   If we define 'statement' as meaning 'what a person says', and 'true statement' as 'what a person says when he says something true', then, (2) becomes
   - (3) 'a fact is a true statement'.

1

Now, I cannot see that Strawson ever intended his 'a fact is what a statement, when true, states' to be taken as analogous to 'a signal is what a signal (when correct) signals'. Indeed, the analogy between statements and signals is nowhere even mentioned by Strawson.

Various analogies involving statements and signals are introduced by

\[^{1}\]

\[^{1}\text{op.cit. p.295}\]
Austin in his reply to Strawson, *Unfair to Facts*. Among them are the rather more plausible analogies

- What we signal is a correct signal
- What we state is a true statement

and

- What we signal is a target
- What we state is a fact.

These analogies, which are, as I say, quite plausible, serve Austin's purpose which is, of course, not to show that facts are true statements, but that facts are, like targets, 'in the world'; that facts are no more true statements than targets are correct signals. Even if it were Strawson's purpose to argue that facts were true statements (which it is not) he would surely be well advised to avoid all statement-signal analogies, since the plausible analogies all suggest, as Austin shows, that facts are not true statements. In other words, had Strawson wanted to argue that facts were true statements, he could hardly have done worse than to argue for this conclusion from the wildly implausible analogy wished on him by Shorter, viz.,

- What a true statement states is a fact
- What a correct signal signals is a signal.

I want now to argue that it seems, nevertheless, quite plausible to derive the claim that facts are true statements from Strawson's rubric 'facts are what statements, when true, state'. Such a derivation, though plausible, is mistaken. Moreover, the mistake in the argument which seems to lead from 'facts are what true statements state' to 'facts are true statements' is parallel to the mistake in
the argument by means of which Strawson tried to show that statements were non-episodic that-clauses. Therefore, in showing how the identification of 'fact' and 'true statement' seems to follow from what Strawson said about facts and true statements, I am not, like Shorter, offering an interpretation or epitome of the Strawsonian point of view. I am rather trying to underline the weakness of Strawson's argument that statements are that-clauses by showing that a precisely parallel argument assimilates 'fact' to 'true statement', a conclusion that Strawson would certainly have rejected. For, as Strawson himself said, 'fact' and 'true statement' have 'different roles in our language'. 1 For example, we make statements and our statements are sometimes true statements but we do not make facts. 2 Again, true statements, or, at least true accounts, which are collections of true statements, may be described as factual, but facts are never described as factual.

The argument deriving 'true statements are facts' from 'true statements states facts' runs as follows. Strawson's slogan - 'What a true statement states is a fact' - is odd. There is surely ellipsis in the idea of stating statements, that is, in the idea of statements that state. It is, after all, we who state, and not our statements that state. It therefore seems plausible (and indeed proper) to substitute for 'what a true statement states is a fact'

1 \textit{op.cit.} p.136.

2 At least, we do not make facts in any relevant sense. We could (just) possibly be said to make facts in the way that some politicians are said to make history. A journalist who committed arson in order to report it might, I suppose, be said to make his (own) facts.
states' the less elliptic 'what we state when we state truly'. If Strawson will accept that these two phrases are equivalent (and I don't see how he could refuse to) we may then rewrite his rubric as:

\[
\text{what we state, when we state truly, is a fact.}
\]

or

\[
\text{A fact is what we state, when we state truly.}
\]

Now what licenses the reformulation of Strawson's elliptic rubric is surely the definition

\[
\text{A true statement is what we state, when we state truly,}
\]

or

\[
\text{What we state, when we state truly, is a true statement.}
\]

When we run together the revised rubric and the definition which licenses the revision we have the following premises for what might appear to be a likely argument.

(1) A fact is what we state, when we state truly.
(2) What we state, when we state truly, is a true statement.
Conclusion: A fact is (nothing but) a true statement.

Now, the above argument is surely exactly analogous to the argument, already criticized, by means of which Strawson tries to show that a statement is a non-episodic that-clause. Strawson's argument was, in effect,

(1) A statement is what we state.
(2) What we state is a that-clause (e.g. that p).
Conclusion: A statement is a that-clause.

The argument identifying 'fact' and 'true statement' differs from the earlier argument only by the addition of the parenthetic 'when we state truly' common to both premises, and by the substitution of the terms
'true statement' and 'fact' for the terms 'statement' and 'that-clause'.
Like the earlier argument it depends for its plausibility on the
ambiguity of 'what we state' as this expression occurs in each
premise. What we stated, when we stated truly, was a fact; that is to
say, we stated a fact. What we stated, when we stated truly, was a
ture statement; that is not in the least to say that we stated a true
statement.

Thus we see that Strawson's slogan 'facts are what true statements
state' together with an argument exactly analogous to his argument in
support of the conclusion that statements are non-episodic that-
clauses, leads to the conclusion that facts are true statements. Since
Strawson denies the conclusion he must reject either the slogan or the
argument. The slogan seems to me to be acceptable, especially when
given some such non-elliptic formulation as:

What we state, when we state truly, is a fact.
I have tried to show why the argument (for the identification of
'statement' and 'that-clause') should be rejected.

Austin's Unfair to Facts provides an interesting example of the
difficulty of maintaining the distinction between facts and true
statements once one has followed Strawson in assimilating statements
to that-clauses. Austin, who wants to maintain the distinction,
supports his argument that facts are not true statements by means of
various analogies between 'stating' and 'signalling'. The following
three analogies seem to me to be the most important. As I quote them
they are somewhat truncated versions of the originals (Papers 120-22) but the abbreviations I have made in no way effect the argument.

(1) What we signal is a correct signal
    What we state is a true statement

(2) What we signal is a target
    What we state is a fact

(3) What we signal is red (or green or purple)
    What we state is that S (or that T or that U)

Austin concentrates on analogies (1) and (2) in order to make the point that, just as targets are not correct signals, so, facts are not true statements. We need only realize that the verb 'state', like the verb 'signal', can take two varieties of accusative, both, interestingly enough, completely "internal". (Papers 128). Thus we see that Austin follows Strawson in making the mistake of thinking that 'statement' is a possible accusative of 'state', that is, of thinking that a (true) statement is what we state just in the way that 'that S' (or 'that T') is 'what we state'. However, as I have argued above, because 'signal' (the noun) can be thought of as being an 'internal' accusative of 'signal' (the verb), 'what we signal' (i.e. the 'thing' we signal) could be said to be the correct signal. But because 'statement' is not an 'internal' accusative of 'state' 'what we state' (i.e. the clause we state) can not be thought of as being the true statement we make in stating that very clause.

Because Austin follows Strawson in construing statements as that-clauses he is in difficulty over the third analogy, to which, perhaps
for this very reason, he pays little attention. Reading analogy (3) in conjunction with analogy (1) and following Strawson in the matter of statements and that-clauses, Austin would perhaps be happy enough to infer

The correct signal is red (or green or purple)
The true statement is that S (or that T or that U).

However, because he construes that S as a (true) statement Austin must deny that it is also a fact, since, to assert that that S is both a true statement and a fact is to incur the risk of identifying a fact with a true statement. In this way Austin is driven to the rather desperate expedient of arguing that from

What he stated was a fact
What he stated was that S

that is, roughly, the stating parts of analogies (2) and (3) we cannot infer

A fact was that S.

Presumably we cannot infer 'a fact was that S' only because 'a fact was that S' is not English. But if we reverse the premises we find that we can infer

that S was a fact

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1 From 'what we state is a fact' and 'what we state is that S' we infer 'that S is a fact'. From 'what we state is a statement' and 'what we state is that S' we do not infer 'that S is a statement'. For both 'a fact' and 'that S' are proper accusatives of 'state' but 'statement' is not a proper accusative of 'state'. 
between which inference and Austin's 'a fact was that $S$' the only difference seems to be that 'that $S$ was a fact' is idiomatically proper whereas 'a fact was that $S$' is not.

In fact, the analogy between stating and signalling breaks down if the third analogy is read in conjunction with either the first one or the second analogy. When we read the third analogy together with the first we may infer that the correct signal is red but we ought not to infer that the true statement is that $S$. When we read the third analogy together with the second we may infer that that $S$ is a fact but we certainly ought not to infer that a target is red. The important point to remark, however, is that that $S$ (or that $T$ or that $U$), the that-clause which we state in making a statement is not itself the statement that we make. Had Austin recognized that in analogy (1) 'true statement' is not an internal accusative of 'state' (as 'correct signal' is an internal accusative of 'signal') he would have realized that, although a correct signal is red (or green or purple), a true statement is not that $S$ (or that $T$ or that $U$). In consequence, he would not have been forced to the expedient of arguing that from 'what we state is a fact' and 'what we state is that $S$' we cannot infer 'a fact is that $S$', thus inviting the obvious retort that we can infer what amounts to the same thing in proper idiomatic dress, namely, 'that $S$ is a fact'.

1 And what about 'the fact is that $S$'?
(A4) That Strawson's claim that statements are not speech episodes is closely related to his contention that facts are wedded to that-clauses.

I have argued that Strawson's claim that statements are not speech-episodes amounts to the claim that statements are that-clauses. As such, Strawsonian statements may be compared with Meinongian objectives. For Meinong, an objective is timeless, something not existing in the world. As Findlay, interpreting Meinong, says:¹ 'since objectives are incapable of any being other than subsistence, it follows that all objectives are timeless'. For Strawson a statement is dateless, non-episodic, not in the world. Strawson writes: 'what they said' has no date, though their several sayings of it are dateable'. For Meinong, there were no entities between minds and the facts.² Strawson's more linguistic version of this goes: 'there is no relation of correspondence between statements and facts'. Statements are that-clauses and facts are wedded to that-clauses. 'Of course' says Strawson in another passage,³ 'statements and facts fit. They were made for each other'.

But who is to marry whom? It will perhaps be obvious from what I have already written that I should like to put it the other way around.

¹ Findlay: Meinong's Theory of Objects p.77
² ibid. p.86
³ op.cit. p.137
To say, not that statements are *that*-clauses and that facts are wedded to *that*-clauses, but rather that facts are *that*-clauses and that statements are wedded (i.e. closely related to) *that*-clauses. 1

For, as I have argued *ad nauseam*, although it may be true that whenever I make a statement I always state that $S$ (or that $T$ or that $U$) that $S$ is not the statement I make. However, when I state a fact it seems also to be true that I always state that $S$ (or that $T$ or that $U$) but now that $S$ (or that $T$ or that $U$) is the fact that I state. True, Austin has pointed out that there are facts which could not be said to be wedded to *that*-clauses, and which, therefore, and *a fortiori*, could not be said to be *that*-clauses. For example, 'the German navy is a fact' and 'the condition of the cat is a fact'. However, even Austin might have to agree that the *facts that we state* are *that*-clauses. Neither the German Navy nor the condition of the cat is a *stateable* fact. 'That the German Navy is strong' and 'that the condition of the cat causes concern' are *stateable* facts.

For Austin, both facts and statements are 'things in the world'. (The statements can be prised off the world (Papers 92). For Strawson, neither a statement nor a fact is something in the world.

I am happy enough to follow Strawson in the matter of unworldly facts.

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1 My preference for putting it in this way perhaps chimes with Austin's feeling in *Unfair to Facts*, that if facts and true statements are to be defined in terms of each other then true statements ought to be defined in terms of facts rather than facts in terms of true statements.
But I should like to hold that, although the Strawsonian marriage between statements and facts may be made in heaven, statements themselves are made in the world.¹

Conventions of Reference and Description

(B1) Strawson's argument against Austin on the question of the conventions of description and reference (demonstration) which govern statement-making.

Since much of Strawson's argument against Austin seems to me to be obscured by an apparent misapprehension on Strawson's part as to what Austin actually said about descriptive and demonstrative conventions, it will be as well to set down at the outset of the discussion what Austin did in fact say. Austin claimed that if there was to be successful communication between speaker and audience there must be two sets of statement-governing conventions, which he called conventions of description and demonstration, and which he described as follows (Papers 89-90).

Descriptive conventions correlating the words (= sentences) with the types of situation, thing, event, etc., to be found in the world.

¹ Not quite fair to Strawson since Strawson would agree that statements are made in the world, insisting only that the statement itself is not something in the world. However, not so unfair in that I have claimed that Strawson has not been successful in identifying the 'statement' which is not in the world although 'it' had to be made there. Op. Philosophical Investigations I:108. 'We are talking about the spatial and temporal phenomenon of language, not about some non-spatial, non-temporal phantasm.'
Demonstrative conventions correlating the words (="statements") with the historic situation, etc., to be found in the world. (Austin's italics).

Austin then went on to say

A statement is said to be true when the historic state of affairs to which it is correlated by the demonstrative conventions (the one to which it 'refers') is of a type with which the sentence used in making it is correlated by the descriptive conventions.

Now, Strawson's commentary on the above passage runs as follows. 1

Mr. Austin says, or suggests, that all stating involves both referring ('demonstration') and characterizing ('description')... In using sentences to make statements, we refer to a thing or person (object) in order to go on to characterize it: (we demonstrate in order to describe). A reference can be correct or incorrect. A description can fit, or fail to fit, the thing or person to which it is applied.

And Strawson adds, in a footnote,

The thesis that all statements involve both demonstration and description is, roughly, the thesis that all statements are, or involve, subject-predicate statements...

What Strawson says would be true enough if it were merely intended as an explanation of what would normally be understood by conventions of reference and description. However, it is very far from being what it purports to be - namely an exegesis of what Austin says. For Austin's thesis that 'all statements involve both demonstration and description' is certainly not the thesis that 'all statements are

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1 op.cit. p.133-4.
subject-predicate statements. It is of some interest to compare the utterance-governing conventions described by Austin in How to Talk with the conventions of demonstration and description described by him in Truth. For, the conventions of reference and sense mentioned by Austin in How to Talk are, substantially, Strawson's conventions of reference and description. They are, however, not at all like the conventions of demonstration and description laid down by Austin in the paper on Truth.

It will be remembered that in How to Talk Austin laid down conventions of reference linking I-words (subject words) with items, and conventions of sense linking T-words (predicate words) with senses, senses being construed as paradigmatic items. Having laid down these conventions Austin described a 'satisfactory utterance' in the following way (Papers 184).

...a satisfactory utterance (assertive) on any particular occasion will be one where the item referred to by the I-word in accordance with the conventions of reference is of a type...which matches the sense which is attached by the conventions of sense to the T-word.

Now such a thesis is, if you like, the thesis that all statements (utterances) are subject-predicate statements. But it is not at all like Austin's thesis of demonstrative and descriptive conventions which Strawson misdescribes as a conventional reference-description or subject-predicate thesis. We might demonstrate how different the two theses are by rewriting Austin's How to Talk formula for a satisfactory utterance as a formula for making a true statement in
accordance with the earlier conventions of demonstration and
description. The revised formula would read as follows:

A true statement will be one where the state of affairs
(not the item) referred to by the statement (not the I-
word) in accordance with the conventions of
demonstration is of a type which matches the sense
attached by the conventions of description to the
sentence (not the T-word) used in making the statement.

Such a formulation of Austin's account of the conventions of
demonstration and description makes it quite clear how different his
account is from Strawson's supposed exegesis of his account. For it
is not, according to Austin's account of the matter, the subject of
the statement that refers to the thing (or person or event) that the
predicate of the statement describes or characterizes. It is rather
the statement itself that refers to an historic state of affairs
which may be of a type which the sentence used in making the statement
describes. For Strawson, the describing part of the statement fits or
fails to fit what the referring part of the statement refers to. For
Austin, the describing sentence used in making the statement fits or
fails to fit the historic state of affairs that the statement refers to.

Strawson comes nearest to a right assessment of what Austin says
when he writes that Austin

encourages the assimilation of facts to things, or (what
is approximately the same thing) of stating to referring.  

\[\text{op. cit., p.133}\]
The charge is just but it is understated. It seems that Strawson, in making such a charge, still believes that Austin's conventions of reference and description are, although similar to his own, misapplied, in such a way as to 'encourage the assimilation of stating to referring'. But Austin's view does not merely encourage the assimilation of stating to referring. For Austin, a true statement simply is a successful reference to an historic state of affairs (or fact) using a sentence conventionally appointed to describe a state of affairs of the same type as the historic state of affairs referred to by the statement.

Robert Brown, in his critical notice of Austin's Philosophical Papers says that Austin's 'account of truth-correlations substitutes describing for stating'. However, I believe that Austin's position is better described as one which substitutes referring for stating. For, as in How to Talk item-types are described (e.g. 'rhombus', 'circle') and particular items are referred to (e.g. 1227, 1228), so in Truth situation-types are described and historic situations are referred to. Situation-types are described by sentences (according to the conventions of description) and historic situations are

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1 AJP, 40 (1962), p.354
It is, therefore, apt to argue not that Austin substituted describing for stating, but that he substituted referring for stating. Nevertheless, Brown's way of putting it may, for two reasons, seem quite plausible. (1) Austin himself speaks of the facts described by statements, e.g. 'the "fact" which is described by the statement that it is true that the cat is on the mat' (Papers 96). (2) On Strawson's account of reference and description it seems proper to say that when we state that the cat is on the mat, we both refer to the cat and describe the cat; we refer to it in order to describe it. Therefore, it may be asked, why should we not say that on Austin's account of the matter we both refer to and describe the fact that the cat is on the mat?

In reply to the first objection I should say that when Austin speaks of the fact described by a statement what he says is not consistent with his earlier claims about demonstrative and descriptive

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The demonstrative conventions are never very clearly described by Austin. e.g. are such ostensive and egocentric words as 'this', 'here', 'now', etc., to be thought of as being part of the demonstrative conventions? Or are they to be thought of, as they occur in the sentence (statement) 'this cat here has mange now' as being part of the sentence used in making the statement and therefore as governed by the descriptive conventions? If so, what is to count as demonstrative conventions? There seems to be nothing left but the occurrence of the statement. Time, place, context. As Austin says of traffic sign language 'the sign on the post and the site of the post'.

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conventions. My reply to the second object will, I hope, make it clear that and why Austin is inconsistent. Because Strawson distinguishes, within the act of stating, between a referring part of the statement and a describing part of the statement it is open to Strawson to claim that the statement itself describes what it refers to: for example, the statement that the cat is on the mat refers to the cat in order to describe it as being on the mat. Because Austin does not distinguish between the referring and the describing parts of a statement, but merely between a descriptive sentence and a referring use of the descriptive sentence (a statement), he cannot claim that the statement itself describes the situation it refers to. A sentence, for Austin, describes a type of situation. When we make a true statement we use a sentence descriptive of a type of situation in order to refer to a particular situation which is, in fact, of the type described by the sentence. But we do not describe the particular situation, the type of which is described by the sentence we use. The Austinian statement 'the cat is on the mat' no more describes the situation it refers to (this cat's being on that mat) than the Strawsonian reference, 'the cat', describes the animal it refers to.

For Austin, then, a sentence is correlated by the descriptive conventions with a type of situation, and a statement is a sentence used to refer to a particular situation. If the historic situation referred to by the statement is of the type which the sentence describes then the statement is true. But Austin's account of the
statement-making use of language is surely quite unfeasible. As
Strawson notes, it may seem well enough for the cat-is-on-the-mat
type of sentence or statement, where 'one chunk of reality' may be
thought of as sitting on another chunk, and we may regard 'the two
together as forming a single chunk'. But what of hypothetical, or
negative or universal statements about the cat? What type of
situation does the sentence 'the cat persecutes mice' describe, and
what particular situation would the statement 'the cat persecutes
mice', if true, refer to? Again, what particular historic situation
would the statement, if not true, fail to refer to?

Statement-governing conventions, as described by Austin, make
language inflexible in just the phrase-book way which Austin, writing
in a rather different connection derides (Papers 93).

When we go abroad equipped only with a phrase-book, we
may spend long hours learning by heart

\[ \text{Mā'hwil-is-wau'}\text{pt (bent)} \]

and so on and so on, yet faced with the situation where
we have the pen of our aunt, find ourselves quite unable
to say so.

Did Austin really imagine that statement-making by native speakers
involves the selection of sentences for situations? The following
extraordinary, but quite central, passage makes it appear quite
likely that he did.

When a statement is true, there is, of course, a state
of affairs which makes it true and which is toto mundo
distinct from the true statement about it: but equally of course, we can only describe that state of affairs in words (either the same or, with luck, others). I can only describe the situation in which it is true to say that I am feeling sick by saying that it is one in which I am feeling sick (or experiencing sensations of nausea) (Papers 91 Austin's italics).

What I would like to comment on particularly in the above passage is the curious parenthesis - the same or, with luck, others. Austin says that we can only describe a state of affairs in words (the same or, with luck, others). Now the question immediately suggests itself - the same (words) as what? If, when I am feeling sick I say 'I am feeling sick' thus describing that state of affairs in words, what are the words 'I am feeling sick' the same as? The answer intended by Austin surely is that in making the statement 'I am feeling sick' I am using the very sentence (words) appointed by the conventions of description to describe the type of situation (me-feeling-sick) in which I now find myself, namely, the sentence 'I am feeling sick'. We are immediately reminded of the phrase-book situation. Out of luck with both my bicycle and my vocabulary I must refer to my situation in the same words, i.e. I must use the luckless sentence appointed by the phrase-maker to describe situations of this type. My wheel is warped. The situation of the native speaker is, as conceived by Austin, not so very different. Once again, there are the 'same words' i.e. a sentence conventionally correlated with a situation-type which I may use as a statement referring to my actual situation. However, when feeling sick in my native language I may, if...
I want to tell you how I feel, avoid using the 'same words', i.e.
avoid using the sentence 'I am feeling sick'. For I may, with luck
(bad luck surely this time) say 'I am experiencing sensations of
nausea'.

(82) How the dispute about statement-governing conventions is
related to Strawson's second slogan - Facts are what statements state,
not what statements are about.

When we make the statement, 'the cat has mange', then, according
to Strawson, a referring convention correlates the words 'the cat'
with the animal referred to, namely, the cat. From this position
Strawson argues, roughly, as follows:

1. What the statement refers to is the cat.
2. What the statement is about is the cat.
3. The cat is not a fact.
4. What makes the statement true is the condition of the cat, or,
the fact that the cat has mange.
5. The statement is not about the condition of the cat.
6. What the statement is correlated with by the conventions of
reference (what the statement is about) is not what makes the
statement true.
7. What makes the statement true (the fact) is not what the
statement is about.

Now Strawson's argument against Austin depends for its
plausibility on the following two features. First, the word 'about',

substituted by Strawson for 'refers to', is, as Austin pointed out, vague. Second, it is assumed by Strawson that the convention of reference which he accepts, correlating the words 'the cat' with the animal, is accepted by Austin, and is, in fact, Austin's convention of demonstration.

The vagueness of 'about'

Strawson wants to maintain that the statement that the cat has mange is about the cat and that the cat is not a fact. However, it is open to Austin to reply (and he did in fact so reply) that the statement is about the condition of the cat and that the condition of the cat is a fact. True, the subject of the sentence 'the cat has mange' is 'the cat' but must we say that a statement is about the material correlate of the subject of the sentence in which the statement is formulated? Suppose (just suppose) you were to say to me 'The cat has mange'. Asked what you were talking about I should be entitled to say in reply either, 'His cat' or, 'The mangy condition of his cat'. Strawson may at this point want to argue that if a statement is about the mangy condition of a cat then it cannot be the mangy condition of the cat that makes the statement true, just as, if the statement is about the cat it cannot be the cat that makes it true. A statement about the condition of the cat might be 'the condition of the cat is grave'; but now it is no longer the condition of the cat which makes the statement true (which is a fact) but rather
the gravity of the cat's condition. And the statement is not about the gravity of the cat's condition but merely about the cat's condition. Strawson, in claiming that statements are not about facts is, doubtless, not claiming that no statement could be about facts, but merely that a statement is not about the fact that makes the statement true. Thus, the statement 'the facts are far from clear' is about facts, but is not about the fact that makes it true (if true). The statement is about certain facts but what makes it true is the unclarity of those facts; the statement is not about the unclarity of the facts in question.

Conventions of demonstration and conventions of reference

However, even if Austin were to accept some such argument he need only claim that he is in no way committed to the use of the word 'about'. Because, for Strawson, conventions of reference correlate the words 'the cat' with the animal it is natural for him to say that the statement is about the animal. But Austin's demonstrative conventions are, as we have seen, very different from Strawson's conventions of reference. For Austin, the demonstrative conventions do not correlate the referring words with the animal referred to; they correlate the entire statement with an historic state of affairs which might well be called the mangy condition of this cat, or the fact that this cat has mange. Because his conventions are different from Strawson's Austin may claim that some expression other than
'about', say, 'corresponds to' or 'corresponds with' expresses better the conventional correlation which he holds to obtain between statements and historic states of affairs. He may then argue that the true statement 'the cat has mange' corresponds to the condition of the cat or corresponds with the fact that the cat has mange. And, moreover, that what makes the statement true just is the condition of the cat or the fact that it has mange.

Conclusion

In conclusion, and very briefly, let me say the following. Some critics of Strawson (including Austin himself) have taken it that Strawson held the view that facts are true statements. Strawson in fact denies this although it seems to follow (as I have argued) from what Strawson does say about statements. However this may be, those critics who have attacked what they take to be the Strawsonian doctrine about true statements have not seen the importance of attacking what certainly is the Strawsonian doctrine about statements. Austin, in fact, seems to endorse the actual doctrine about statements while trying to demolish the assumed doctrine about true statements; a difficult enterprise if, as I have claimed, the thesis that true statements are facts follows from the thesis that statements are that-clauses.

In a similar way, Strawson, in attacking what Austin says about the correspondence between facts and true statements pays nowhere near
enough attention to what Austin says about the conventional correspondence between situations and statements. If we agree with Austin that a sentence is conventionally correlated with a situation-type; and that when we state we make use of a sentence in order to refer to an actual or historic situation; and that our statement will be true if the actual situation to which we refer is of the type with which the sentence used in making the statement is correlated by the conventions of description; then we may have some difficulty in resisting what Austin has to say about the correspondence between facts and true statements.

'The right policy' as Austin says in another connection 'is to go back to a much earlier stage and dismantle the whole doctrine before it gets off the ground' (SS 142).
SPEECH ACTS AND THE USES OF LANGUAGE

PART II
CHAPTER 4

THE USE OF LANGUAGE

Use-talk

Professor Ryle has suggested\(^1\) that there is no hard school to which philosophers may be put in order to learn the correct deployment of such 'philosophical' verbs as 'cognize' and 'sense'. As a result, such words 'go through what motions we care to require of them, which means that they have acquired no discipline of their own at all'. Whether or not this be true\(^2\) it seems clear enough that philosophers have not learnt the fashionable 'use-talk' at even the most permissive of experimental academies. By 'use-talk' I mean the employment by philosophers of a range of expressions, the most common of which is 'the use of language', but which includes also, such related expressions as 'the use of speech', 'the use of words', 'the use of a sentence', 'the use of an utterance' and so on. It is not hard to show that and how use-talk, lacking self-discipline, is put through different hoops by different philosophers, performing whatever motions are required of it.

\(^2\) It has been disputed by Professor Passmore who argues that a 'thorough knowledge of the history of philosophy' provides the required hard schooling. *Pr*, 63 (1954) p.64.
For example, Ryle himself has told us that

...we can ask whether a person knows how to use and how not
to misuse a certain word. But we cannot ask whether he
knows how to use a certain sentence. ...Sentences are things
that we say. Words and phrases are what we say things with
(Ryle's italics).

That is to say, as use-talk Ryle will allow 'the use of a word' but
not 'the use of a sentence'. The passage which I have quoted is not
an isolated one; rather it is representative of an important part of
Ryle's theory about use and usage as that theory is contained in his
articles Ordinary Language and Use, Usage and Meaning. For in these
articles Ryle's theorizing has been, as he avows, influenced by a
dictum from Gardiner's The Theory of Speech and Language, viz., 'The
sentence is the unit of speech, and the word is the unit of language'.

As actors have a role in a play but the play itself does not have a
role, so words (or language) are used for speech, but neither speech
nor the units of speech are themselves used.

However, against this view, other philosophers, for example
Strawson, in his essay On Referring, speak of the use of a sentence to
make a statement. Austin too, it will be recalled, wrote in Truth:

\[\text{PASS, xxxv (1961).}\]
\[\text{p.88.}\]
\[\text{Ordinary Language}\]
\[\text{BCA p.28.}\]
'Statements are made, words and sentences are used... The same sentence is used in making different statements'. ¹

According to Ryle, then, we use words to say sentences with but we do not use sentences. According to Strawson, and, in at least one passage from his earlier writing, according to Austin we do use sentences; we use them in order to make statements. Austin, in his later philosophy of language, develops a use-talk different again. However, before turning to Austin's later writing, we might ask how the expressions 'the use of words' and 'the use of sentences' occur in ordinary language.

Ordinary language would appear, at first, to afford shelter for Ryle rather than for Strawson or Austin. We might ask how such and such a word is used in French but hardly how such and such a sentence is used in French. We do not often, I think, speak of using sentences simpliciter but rather of using a certain kind of sentence for a certain purpose. Nor, let it be noted, do we claim that we used a certain kind

¹ Papers p.88. Strawson's agreement with Austin that sentences are used for making statements may be in part responsible for his (Strawson's) failure to argue coherently against Austin's view that true statements refer to historic situations of the type described by the sentence used in making the statement (see my comments, chap.3). A philosopher like Ryle who does not allow us to talk of the use of a descriptive sentence to make a statement will hardly let pass Austin's extended use-talk (the use of a statement to make a reference).

² This barbarous locution seems to me to be derivable from the passage from Ryle, quoted above, 'Sentences are things we say. Words... are what we say things with'.
of sentence for the purpose of saying what we said. That is to say, we do not, pace Strawson and Austin, speak of using the sentence \( p \) in order to state that \( p \). Thus, although it would be very odd indeed to say that I have used sentences in this essay in order to state my opinion on this and that, I might speak of having used latinate Johnsonian periods for such and such a purpose, say, to effect an eighteenth century pastiche; or, of using sentences beginning with conjunctions and ending with prepositions in order to irritate my readers.

However, while it may be true that we speak more often of using a word or using words, and while it is true that we often ask why a speaker or writer used that word or those particular words, it might be argued, against Ryle, that when we do so enquire we hardly expect the answer that he used the words he used in order to make the sentence he made (or say the sentence he said). If we were to ask John Masefield why, in his description of the dirty British coaster, he used the words 'salt-caked smoke stack', we should not expect him to reply that he used those words in order to describe the dirty British coaster as having a salt-caked smoke stack (Serve us right, of course, if he did so reply). We expect rather to hear that the words 'salt-caked smoke stack' contain seven plosive consonants within the space of four monosyllables and by virtue of their so sounding achieve the butting, jerky effect which their author desired. That is to say, aesthetic considerations, e.g. considerations of euphony, very often
provoke enquiry into, and provide an explanation for, the use of a particular word or set of words. Not only aesthetic considerations, of course; for considerations of meaning may enter too as when we defend the use of such and such a word on the grounds that it is the *mot juste*. However, such (ordinary) talk about the use of words is very different from Ryle's (extraordinary) talk about using words (e.g. the words 'I', 'am' 'going' and 'now') to say a sentence (e.g. the sentence 'I am going now') with.

To anticipate briefly part of what I shall have to say about Austin's later use-talk, we speak, ordinarily, not of using words, but rather of using this word or these words. And when we speak of using this word or these words, we mean this word rather than that word, or, these words rather than those words. What is wrong with both the Strawson-Austin 'use of a sentence to make a statement' and the Rylean 'use of words to say a sentence' is the complete absence of any alternative implement. For, if we speak of using the sentence $p$ in order to make the statement that $p$, we do not mean the sentence $p$ rather than the sentence $q$; whereas, if, ordinarily, we were to speak of using the anglo-saxon sentence $p$ we do mean $p$ rather than some more latinate $q$ which, pithiness aside, would have come to (much) the same thing. Similarly, if, following Ryle, we speak of using the constituent words

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1. We do not defend a sentence on the ground that it is the phrase *juste*. 

of the sentence $p$ in order to say $p$, then we do not mean these words rather than those words on account of their euphony or aptness. For, if we want to say $p$, then we have no choice in the matter; we must 'use' the words which together constitute the sentence $p$.

The portmanteau expression 'the use of language' (approved by all parties to the debate) brings out fairly clearly the vacuousness of use-talk which does not presuppose, as ordinary talk about the use of words does, the possibility of an alternative to the 'thing' used, the use of this rather than that. For, at least prior to Austin's later contribution (which I shall now discuss in some detail) Ryle, Strawson and Austin were concerned not with the use of language to praise God or exercise the muscles of articulation, but with the use of language to make statements or say things (sentences) or, in short, to speak. However, while it is, I believe, sense to talk of using language to praise God or exercise the muscles of articulation, it is not sense to talk of using language in order to speak. For, just as it seemed proper to talk of using these words rather than those words for such and such a purpose, but improper to talk of using the constituent words of a sentence to make (or say) that very sentence, so it seems proper to talk of using language to perform acts which could be performed by non-linguistic means and improper to talk of using language to perform an act which could not be performed by non-linguistic means, viz., the act of speaking or saying something. Because I can praise God by whistling or lying in the sun or putting my ewe lamb or my infant
daughter to the knife, and because I can exercise the muscles of articulation by gargling, it makes sense to talk of using language to praise God or exercise the muscles of articulation. Because there are not available to me non-linguistic means of saying things or speaking, talk about using language for saying things or speaking will not go.

Before turning to the use-talk generated by Austin's later theory of language I should admit that what I have written so far is less than fair to Professor Ryle. I shall go into the question of just how unfair I have been in rather more detail later, but in the meantime, in order to keep the books (fairly) square I should note the following. The use-talk which I have been attacking is 'use-for-what-talk'; the use of words for saying sentences, of sentences for making statements, and, in general, of language for speech. However, Ryle, in Ordinary Language, writes:¹

Questions about the use of an expression are often... questions about the way to operate with it; not questions about what the employer of it needs if for. They are How-questions, not What-for-questions.

In my own defence I shall argue (1) that Ryle's prescription that use-talk should be thought of as 'how-used-talk' further illustrates my contention that use-talk 'rotates idly' in current philosophy. For certainly Strawson and Austin for the most part seem to construe use-talk as 'use-for-what-talk'. (2) That use-talk tempts

¹ p.174
us to think in terms of use-for-what, a temptation which not even Ryle withstands. Thus, the argument that words are used for saying sentences with, but sentences themselves are not used is important in his *Ordinary Language*. A similar argument is canvassed in *Use, Usage and Meaning*. 'As we employ coins to make loans...so we employ words in order to say things'.1 (My italics). (3) With Ryle's construction of use-talk as 'how-used-talk' I shall agree. But it seems to me that to treat use-talk as 'how-used-talk' is to assimilate use-talk and 'usage-talk'. To ask how a word is used is to ask for the usage of the word. This is all right with me but as a corollary of his own interpretation of use-talk it is clearly unacceptable to Ryle; for an important section of *Ordinary Language* is written against the equation of use-talk with usage-talk.

**Austin's later theory of language**

In order to discuss those further questions about the use of language which arise out of Austin's later philosophy of language, I must set down, in fairly bald outline at first, just what Austin had to say about language in this part of his work (*HTDTW* p.92 ff.).

Austin's starting point for his later theory of language is his dissatisfaction with his earlier, and well-known view, that for some utterances, called by him performative utterances, to utter was not

1 p.226.
merely to say something true or false, but was rather to do something, to perform an action. Thus, in the paradigm case, to utter the words 'I promise' was not to say that I promise, to describe, truly or falsely, what I was doing, but was rather to promise, to perform the act of promising. However, is it not the case, Austin now asks, that for all utterances, to utter is not merely to say something but is also to do something. 'When we issue any utterance whatsoever, are we not "doing something"?' (HTDTW 91). If then, it is true that to say something is always to do something, what do we do, what action or actions do we perform, in or by saying something. Austin's answer is that whenever we say something we may perform any or all of the following 'speech-acts'.

(A) a locutionary act (or locution)
(B) an illocutionary act (or illocution)
(C) a perlocutionary act (or perlocution)

Austin exemplifies these three speech acts as follows (HTDTW 101-2).

Act (A) or Locution
He said to me 'Shoot her' meaning by 'shoot' shoot and referring by 'her' to her.

Act (B) or Illocution
He urged (or advised or ordered, etc.) me to shoot her.

Act (C.a) or Perlocution
He persuaded me to shoot her.

Act (C.b)
He got me to (or made me, etc.) shoot her.
We can similarly distinguish the locutionary act 'he said that...' from the illocutionary act 'he argued that...' and the perlocutionary act 'he convinced me that...'

Without at the moment going any further into the distinction between the three speech-acts, we may say that to perform a locutionary act is merely to utter a meaningful utterance, that is, an utterance 'with a certain sense and a certain reference' (HTDTWW 94). To perform an illocutionary act is to use a locution with a certain force, e.g. to use the 'bare' locution 'I shall be there' with the force of a prediction or a promise or a statement of intention. To perform a perlocutionary act is to achieve some sort of effect which will normally be the response of an auditor, although I may, for example, convince myself by an argument or surprise myself with my own witticism. Thus, by promising that I shall be there I may either set your mind at rest or place you in an embarrassing position, and by stating my intention to be there I may deter you from coming. One important difference between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts is, as Austin puts it (HTDTWW 120) that the former are 'conventional' acts and the latter are not. Thus, I may say 'I urge, advise, promise, warn, threaten that p' but not 'I persuade or convince you that p'. Conversely, although it is in order for you to ask 'Are you protesting, advising, warning, promising or threatening?' since I am the best authority on the (conventional) illocutionary acts which I perform, it is not in order for you to ask whether or not I
am persuading you or intimidating you or alarming you or setting your mind at rest since you are the best authority on the (non-conventional) perlocutionary acts that I perform; at least on those perlocutionary acts of mine of which you are the object. Some verbs are, however, in this respect ambiguous, e.g. 'tempt', 'flatter', for I may tempt you and flatter you (illocution) and yet you may be neither tempted nor flattered (perlocution) (HTDTWW 124-5).

A further feature of Austin's theory of speech-acts is his subdivision of the locutionary act (A) into three further acts Aa, Ab and Ac. These three acts Austin describes as follows (HTDTWW 92-3).

(A.a)...the act of uttering certain noises (a 'phonetic' act), and the utterance is a 'phone'.

(A.b)...the act of uttering certain vocables or words, i.e. noises of certain types belonging to and as belonging to a certain construction...This act we may call a 'phatic' act, and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'pheme'...

(A.c)...the act of using that pheme or its constituents with a certain more or less definite 'sense' and a more or less definite 'reference' (which together are equivalent to 'meaning'). This act we may call a 'rhetic' act, and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'rheme' (Austin's italics).

I shall not at the moment enlarge on this fairly brief outline of Austin's schema. The detail will, I hope, be filled in as my criticism of the theory proceeds in the present, and in succeeding chapters. I have, however, set down enough of the theory to enable me to discuss the rather different use-talk which the theory generates.
Use-talk in Austin's later theory of language

The use questions which Austin's theory of speech-acts is meant to elucidate are what-for-questions rather than how-questions. As I have said, Austin's theory originates as an answer to the question: if, for all utterances, to utter is to do something, to perform an action, what actions do we perform in or by uttering an utterance?

Transformed into use-talk this question becomes: if, to use language is always to perform some action, what sorts of action do we perform in or by using language? And Austin's answer is that we use language to perform locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

Austin's hierarchy of speech-acts engenders a hierarchy of uses of language which I shall now try to sort out.

To begin at the beginning. To say anything is always to perform the act of uttering certain noises; this utterance is called a phone. So far as I can make out Austin nowhere speaks of using, or, in any way implies that we use the phone in performing any speech act. To say anything is, further, always to perform the phatic act of uttering certain words from a certain vocabulary in a certain construction. The utterance is called a pheme and Austin does tell us that we use the pheme. The pheme, apparently, has neither sense nor reference.¹ When we use the pheme with a certain sense and a

¹ How can the pheme lack a sense? A question I shall deal with later.
certain reference we have uttered a rheme, or, in the 'full normal sense' of saying something we have said something. This is clearly Austin's later version of the use-talk which I have been criticising. That is to say, it is a version of that use-talk according to which we use words to 'say' sentences (Ryle) or use sentences to make statements¹ (Strawson-Austin) or, more generally, use language to say something.

Before proceeding further 'up' the scale of speech-acts and corresponding uses of language I want to stress the point that to utter a rheme (or to perform a rhetic act) is to perform a locutionary act. Austin's use-talk is, here, confused, in a way which I shall try to demonstrate later. However, confusion is (unnecessarily) worse confounded by, for example, Robert Brown in his interpretation of Austin. By taking the rhetic act and the locutionary act to be separate speech-acts he introduces an additional stratum into the hierarchy of speech-acts together with a corresponding additional 'use of language'. Thus, Brown writes² that Austin's speech-acts include:

the phatic act of uttering noises belonging to a certain vocabulary and having a certain grammar;
the rhetic act of using these expressions with a certain sense and reference;

¹ But using a pheme to utter a rheme is very different from using a sentence to make a statement. See below.
² AJP, 41 (1963) p.419.
the locutionary act of using expressions with sense and reference to say something (my italics).

That is, according to Brown's interpretation, we use the pheme (noises from a vocabulary and in a construction) in order to utter a rheme. That is true. But further, we use the rheme (an expression with sense and reference) in order to perform a locutionary act, that is, in order to say something. And that is not true. We do not, according to Austin, use the rheme in order to say something, and the locutionary act is not a further act at a different level from the rhetic act, as illocutionary and perlocutionary acts are further acts at a different level from the locutionary act. To utter a rheme just is to say something in the full normal sense of saying something; to perform a rhetic act is to perform a complete locutionary act.

Here then, we have Austin's first sense of the expression 'the use of language'. What is 'used' is a pheme, an utterance composed of grammatically articulated dictionary words. When the pheme is used we have a rheme, or a locutionary act or a locution; a 'saying something' in the full normal sense of saying something.

The locution may in its turn be 'used' in the performance of an illocutionary act or illocution. The illocution is not the mere 'saying of something with a certain sense and reference' (locution) but is the locution used with a certain force. That is, it is a
meaningful locution used as a promise or a warning or a bet or a challenge or a statement or a conclusion or a valuation or a... Here we have Austin's second sense of 'the use of language'.

Finally, the illocution may in its turn be 'used' in the performance of a perlocutionary act or perlocution. When we perform a perlocutionary act we, in general, bring about some effect in an auditor. This we do, according to Austin, by using an illocution, that is by using a locution which is itself used with, or as having, a certain force. Austin's preferred exemplifications of perlocutionary acts are those acts which may be thought of as being the 'perlocutionary objects' of illocutionary acts. Examples of such perlocutionary acts are 'convincing', 'persuading' and 'detering'.

Thus, in general, we argue (illocution) in order to convince (perlocution) - or we use argument with the object of convincing. Similarly we urge (or use urging) with the object of persuading, and, we warn (or use warning) with the object of deterring. And this is Austin's third sense of expression 'the use of language'.

We see then that Austin proposes three 'different senses or dimensions of...'the use of language' (HOTW 108). The first sense or dimension corresponds roughly to, although it also differs markedly in detail from, the sort of use-talk I have already criticized. That

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1 'Meaningful locution' would be, for Austin, pleonastic, since all 'locutions' (by definition) have sense and reference, and 'has sense and reference' (by definition) is equivalent to 'has meaning'.
is to say it is the use of language for speech. In the second sense, language is used with a certain (conventional) force in the performance of that range of speech acts (advice, warning, assertion and so on) whose force is best made explicit by performatory-type prefixes ('I advise', 'I warn', 'I assert' and so on). In the third sense, language is used in order to achieve real effects in the speaker's audience. By advice we hope to influence people (but we cannot say 'I influence you'); by warning we hope to deter (but we cannot say 'I deter you'); by assertion we hope to make others believe us (but we cannot say 'I make you believe me'). Influencing others and making them believe us are perlocutionary acts.

I shall be concerned in this chapter, for the most part with what Austin, somewhat ambiguously, called 'problems of "locutionary usage"' (HTDTW 100). 'Locutionary usage' is ambiguous, not because Austin is here introducing, in the manner of Ryle, a distinction between use and usage. Austin nowhere considers such a distinction. It is rather that we might mean by 'locutionary usage' (or, locutionary use) either the use of language (here, phemes) to perform locutionary acts, or, the use of language (here, locutions) to perform illocutionary acts. By 'locutionary usage' Austin, in the passage referred to, clearly meant the use of language in the former sense (i.e., the use of phemes) and in saying that I shall, in the present chapter, be concerned with locutionary usage I follow Austin in
construing 'locutionary usage' as the use of language for saying something (or the use of phemes for performing locutionary acts).

However, before turning to 'locutionary usage' let us take a brief look at Austin's second and third senses of the expression 'the use of language' viz.- (2) the use of language (now locutions) to perform illocutionary acts and (3) the use of language (now illocutions) to perform perlocutionary acts. For it seems to me that it is only in the case of (some) illocutionary acts and (all) perlocutionary acts that talk about the use of language (in the use-for-what sense which Strawson and Austin adopt and which Ryle continually relapses into) is viable. Talk about the use of language to perform perlocutionary acts is viable (always) because, as Austin pointed out, all perlocutionary acts could be performed by non-linguistic means. Talk about the use of language to perform illocutionary acts is viable (sometimes) because some illocutionary acts may be performed by non-linguistic means.

The use of language for perlocutionary acts

I say that we can always speak of using language to perform perlocutionary acts because perlocutionary acts can always be performed in some other, non-linguistic, way. Typical perlocutionary acts are 'persuading', 'intimidating', 'teasing', 'impressing' and 'distracting'. Now while I can persuade or intimidate or tease or impress or distract you by saying something (by using language) I need not say anything in order to perform successfully any one of these perlocutionary acts.
For, I can perhaps persuade you by saying nothing, or intimidate you by waving a stick, or tease you by pulling faces, or impress you by playing the piano, or distract you by turning somersaults. It is because such alternatives to language exist that it makes sense to speak of using language to persuade or intimidate or impress, or, in general, to perform any perlocutionary act.

However, before we agree that the perlocutionary act provides us with at least one example of a speech-act in whose performance it makes sense to talk of using language, let us ask in just what sense a perlocutionary act is a speech act. The very richness of the means to perlocutionary action may make us somewhat suspicious of the notion. Suppose I intimidate you by waving a stick. Are we then to say that the action which I have performed is a speech-act? Are we to say so merely on the grounds that I could have intimidated you by using language, e.g., by saying 'I threaten you'? But perhaps I could not have intimidated you in this way. Perhaps I tried and you were not in the least intimidated. And so I resorted to the stick. We then have the surely odd situation where I perform a perlocutionary act (a speech-act, an act-by-speaking) by non-linguistic means because I cannot perform it by the use of language. Why call such an action a perlocutionary act?

It might perhaps be argued that Austin did not intend to construe intimidation, persuasion and so on, when brought off non-linguistically, as perlocutionary. As he says (HTDTWW 108) perlocutionary acts are
'what we bring about or achieve by saying something'. However, elsewhere Austin makes it quite clear that perlocutionary acts are achieved not only by saying something; that they may, in fact, be brought off non-linguistically. For example (HTDTW 117): 'It is characteristic of perlocutionary acts that the response achieved...can be achieved additionally or entirely by non-locutionary means' (my italics).

Brown asks, somewhat plaintively, 'Is it supposed that we need lists of locutionary and perlocutionary acts?'. Anticipating my next chapter in which I consider Austin's attempt to distinguish between locution, illocution and perlocution, let me suggest that any attempt to construct a list of perlocutionary acts would merely bring out the vacuousness of this classification. Austin perhaps disguises this by concentrating on those perlocutionary acts which have close alignments with illocutionary acts. Thus, it would, in general, seem to be true that we persuade by urging, deter by warning, and convince by arguing. Since urging, warning and arguing are certainly speech acts it seems not unreasonable to think of persuading, deterring and convincing as being further speech acts performed (if you like) by rather than in using language. It seems then that Austin (implicitly) applies some such doctrine as 'Once a perlocutionary act always a perlocutionary act' so that, thereafter, any act of deterrence, even

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\[\text{op. cit. p.423}\]
if it be performed by waving a stick, is a perlocutionary act (i.e. a speech-act of one sort). It is a by-speech act which has been performed by other means.

Well, that may be all right (I don’t think it is) but what about those other acts which could be, but are by no means commonly, effected by the use of language? For example, I could make you jump by saying something and I could make you jump by sticking a pin into you. Is then making people jump a speech-act? Even when you make them jump by sticking pins into them? Or, suppose you had a very weak heart. I might then (even deliberately) kill you by informing you of something sufficiently untoward. Shall we, then, have to list 'killing' as a speech-act, subsection, perlocutions? I can see no reason, on any account of the matter given by Austin, to exclude it. (See especially HTDTW 101: 'Saying something will...produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience'). If, by giving you the information I intended to kill you, killing would be the perlocutionary object of an illocutionary act of informing, and not (merely) an unanticipated perlocutionary sequel. Worse still, since killing is now, like persuading, a perlocutionary act, must we regard all (conventional) assassinations as being perlocutionary acts performed non-linguistically?
The use of language for illocutionary acts

I say that we can sometimes speak of using language to perform illocutionary acts because some illocutionary acts can be performed in other, non-linguistic ways. That is to say, to perform an illocutionary act it is not necessary to perform a locutionary act.

It would appear that, in at least one passage of HTDFW, Austin explicitly denies this. Unfortunately, however, what Austin has to say on the matter is hopelessly inconsistent. Austin appears to deny that illocutionary acts can be performed by non-linguistic means when he writes (HTDFW 113):

> It has, of course, been admitted that to perform an illocutionary act is necessarily to perform a locutionary act.

However, search where you will, and Austin's 'of course' notwithstanding, no such previous admission can be found in HTDFW. What we do find (98) is:

> To perform a locutionary act is in general, we may say, also and eo ipso to perform an illocutionary act.

This passage seems to me to amount to the rather different admission that to perform a locutionary act is usually to perform an illocutionary act. And indeed, further on (HTDFW 118) Austin notes that we cannot distinguish perlocutionary acts from illocutionary acts on the grounds that perlocutions may be performed by non-linguistic means; for, 'we can for example warn or order or appoint or give or protest or apologize by non-verbal means and these are illocutionary acts'.
Typical illocutionary acts are: 'warning', 'ordering', 'asserting' and 'stating'. Some of these actions could be performed by non-linguistic means and some could not. Thus, I might order you to leave the room by pointing to the door and I might warn you that there were concealed guns by walking into the line of fire. But it is not so easy to see how I could state or assert by non-linguistic means.

Locutionary acts, it seems, are necessary for some illocutionary acts. Austin goes further, saying that 'many illocutionary acts cannot be performed except by saying something' (HTDTW 118-9). Talk of using language to perform those illocutionary acts for which locutionary acts are not necessary is viable; but talk of using language to perform those illocutionary acts for which locutionary acts are necessary is not viable. Thus we might speak of using language to warn or order but not of using language to state or assert.

The use of language for locutionary acts

In Austin's earlier account of this matter, i.e. of the use of language to say things simpliciter, sentences were said to be 'used' in or for the making of statements (Papers 88). In his later account

1 It does, of course, sound highly artificial to talk of using language to warn, order, etc. For, no doubt, these illocutionary acts are, for the most part, performed linguistically. Still, we can, I believe, give a sense to so talking in a way that we cannot give a sense to talk about using language to state our opinions. On the other hand, in the case of some perlocutionary acts (e.g. killing) it seems quite reasonable to talk of using language. For language is, like the coward's kiss, a rather eccentric instrument of murder.
'phemes' are said to be 'used' in or for the performance of 'rhetic acts', that is, in or for the uttering of 'rhemes'. Does the later account amount to no more than the former in neologistic dress? On the contrary, I believe that the later account differs markedly from the former, in such a way that the confusions of the earlier account are worse confounded (For all that Austin himself often seems to be little aware of the differences).

I shall now try to demonstrate what are the differences between the Truth account and the HTDTWW account of 'using language to say things'.

The first difference between the two accounts is that the pheme is not a sentence, and, more importantly, the rheme is not a statement. The second difference is that the pheme, unlike a sentence, lacks sense. In Austin's Truth account the sentence was correlated by the descriptive conventions with a situation-type. That is to say, the sentence described a type of situation and in virtue of so doing had a meaning or sense (The descriptive conventions of Truth become, in How to Talk, the conventions of sense). A meaningful sentence, then, lacked a reference, but, when used to make a statement, acquired, if

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1 See my discussion of the Strawson-Austin controversy, chapter 3.
the statement was true, as referent, an historic situation. Thus, the 'thing' used, i.e. a sentence, had a sense but lacked a reference, acquiring a reference only when used as a statement. But it is clear from the HTDTW account that the pheme lacks both reference and sense. In the locutionary act reference and sense are imported into the locution only at the rhetoric level. Because of these differences, philosophical use-talk (in the basic sense of use of language for saying things) reaches an altogether new pitch of confusion in Austin's later account.

A pheme is not a sentence

Austin states quite clearly (HTDTW 92) that the pheme which the phatic act is the act of uttering is an utterance. There is, admittedly, some inconsistency in Austin's later discussion. Thus, at page 100 and again at page 108 Austin speaks of the use of a sentence for the performance of a locutionary act. However, we should, I think, be allowed to take as a text Austin's original formulation of his theory, treating his later, and not his original formulation as aberrant.

There is, as Ryle himself acknowledges, some verbal artificiality in any account of the use of language for speech. For such accounts

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For Strawson too (cf. On Referring) a meaningful sentence is used to make a statement. But the statement does not refer to the historic situation. Perhaps the difference between Strawson and Austin could be brought out in the following way. For Strawson, a statement which lacks reference is void ('The king of France is bald' said when there is no king of France). But for Austin, in his Truth account, it would appear that a statement which is false lacks reference ('The king of France is bald' said when the king of France is hirsute is a statement which lacks a referent).
treat the language-pieces as something in a bin or fund which may be
drawn on (used) for saying things. However, even though all accounts
be artificial, some accounts are surely more artificial than others.
Thus, there is certainly a marked regress from comparative
plausibility as we move from Ryle's model of the use of words (for
saying things) through the Strawson/early-Austin model of the use of
sentences to the late Austin model of the use of the very utterance I
am now uttering. It is the regress from Ryle's

\[ \text{Words, constructions etc., are the atoms of a Language;}
\text{sentences are the units of Speech}^1 \]

\[ \text{to Austin's (HTDTW 98)} \]

\[ \text{The pheme is a unit of language...But the rhyme is a unit}
\text{of speech}^2 \]

What Austin must mean here, if he is to be true to his original
formulation, is that occurrences of grammatically articulated sets of
dictionary words without sense or reference are the units of language,
and that the same occurrences of grammatically articulated words with
sense and reference are the units of speech.

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\[ \text{Use, Usage and Meaning p.224} \]

2
\[ \text{A further example of idly rotating use-talk occurs on the following}
\text{page where Austin writes: 'When we perform a locutionary act, we use}
\text{speech'. But, since a rhyme, the uttering of which is the}
\text{performance of a locutionary act, is (a unit of) speech we cannot be}
\text{using speech to perform locutionary acts. What we use to the}
\text{performance of locutionary acts is, as Austin has already told us,}
\text{the pheme and the pheme is (a unit of) language. Ergo, if Austin is}
\text{to be at all consistent we use language, not speech, in the}
\text{performance of locutionary acts.} \]
A rhyme is not a statement

For the following reasons it is of rather more importance to recognize that rhemes are not statements. (1) If we think of the rhyme as being a statement, we are forced to speak of using statements with the force of apologies, promises, bets and so on, which is clearly absurd. (2) Much more importantly, to construe rhemes as statements is to fail completely to grasp what might be thought of as the central theme of Austin's later philosophy of language. For, to think of rhemes (i.e. full-blown locutions) as being statements is to think of statements as being somehow more 'basic' than warnings, promises, etc. (i.e. illocutions), as occupying a lower stratum in the hierarchy of speech acts, as enjoying a special relationship with the facts. It is to mark in the terminology of Austin's later theory of speech-acts his earlier distinction between 'constative' and 'performative'; and the essential purpose of the later theory is to deny the distinction between constative and performative.

Despite the crucial importance, for Austin's theory, of the distinction between rhyme and statement Purberg, in his essay on Austin, takes the rhyme to be a statement. However, this (quite radical) mistake may, perhaps, be treated more indulgently in the light of the following passage in which, quite inconsistently, Austin

1 op. cit. passim, but e.g. p.142 '...a statement is by its referring conditions tied to a certain fact which every occurrence of the same statement - the same theme - must be tied to'. 
himself writes as if he thought of the rheme as if it were a statement (HTDTW 97-8).

When different phemes are used with the same sense and reference, we might speak of rhetically equivalent acts ('the same statement' in one sense) but not of the same rheme or rhetic acts¹ (which are¹ the same statement in another sense which involves using the same words).²

Now it is clear from the above passage that Austin imagined that different rhemes (different used phemes) with the same sense and reference just were (in one sense) the same statement; and that identical phemes, when used with the same sense and reference, were used to utter the same rheme, or, in another sense of 'the same statement' to make the same statement. That is to say, a rheme is taken to be a statement, and Austin is concerned in this passage only with pointing out two different senses of 'the same statement', one sense requiring for the occurrence of the same statement the occurrence of the same rheme, and the other sense requiring (merely) the occurrence of rhetically equivalent acts. However, Austin's suggestion here that two different rhemes with the same sense and reference, or, two occurrences of the same rheme with the same sense and reference are the same statement (in one of two different senses)

¹ Plurals sic.

² The question of rhemes aside this passage chimes with what I have written above (Chap.3) about the 'same statement'. When Jones says 'I am ill' and we say 'Jones is ill' we do not need to follow Strawson in speaking of two speech episodes and one statement. For, rhetically equivalent acts are the same statement, 'in one sense'.
is quite at odds with his later theory of speech-acts. For, according to that theory, it should be possible to clear up entirely all rhetic questions of sense and reference and leave completely untouched the question whether or not the rheme (whose sense and reference are determined) is used as a statement at all. Thus, far from it being the case that when we have different rhemes (or the same rheme in different occurrences) with the same sense and reference we have the same statement (in one sense), it might well be true that of two different rhemes with the same sense and reference neither is used as a statement, never mind the same statement.

To take a concrete example. (a) Tom says 'I'll be there' and you say 'Tom will be there'. (b) On Friday Tom says 'I'll be there' and again on Sunday Tom says 'I'll be there'. In case (a) we have two different rhemes. Once it has been decided that Tom by saying 'I', and you by saying 'Tom', refer to the same person, and that you both mean by 'there' there, then, according to Austin we have rhetically equivalent acts, or, in one sense of 'same statement', the same statement. In case (b) provided that Tom means by 'there' the same place on each occasion, we have the same rheme uttered at different times with the same sense and reference. That is to say, in another sense of the 'same statement' we have the same statement. Such an interpretation of the rheme is, however, wholly inconsistent with the entire spirit of Austin's later philosophy of language. For, Austin's purpose was to maintain that at the locutionary (rhetic) level only
questions of meaning (sense and reference) are determined. Questions of force are left entirely undetermined whether the force be that of a bet or an apology or a threat or a statement. Thus, although Tom's rheme 'I'll be there' and your rheme 'Tom will be there' might have the same sense and reference, and, accordingly, be rhetically equivalent acts, it does not follow that the same statement has been made in any sense of 'the same statement'. For it may well be the case that no statement has been made. Tom, in saying 'I'll be there' may have been making a threat, not a statement. When you said 'Tom will be there' you were perhaps not making a statement but giving a warning. Neither the equation of same rhetic act with one sense of 'same statement', nor the equation of same rheme with another sense of 'same statement' will do, for the simple reason that a rheme is not a statement.

At least a substantial part of Austin's purpose in *HTDTWW* is to put statements on all fours with other illocutions, warnings, promises and so on. Why then, did he make, at least in the passage quoted, the mistake, which some of his interpreters have found insidious, of appearing to equate statements, not with illocutions, but with locutions (rhemes)? Partly, I believe, for two reasons. (1) What, technical terms and neologisms aside, are we to call such simple 'locutions' as 'Tom is coming'? I have already quoted Brown's question, 'Is it supposed that we need lists of locutionary and perlocutionary acts?', and I have suggested that any list of
perlocutionary acts would certainly suffer from an *embarras de richesses*. In the matter of locutionary acts quite the opposite is the case. Here no list is possible for no locution differs, as a locution, in any way from any other locution. The difficulty is just that of finding a neutral forceless vocabulary (outside the semi-technical 'locution' and the neologistic 'rheme') with which to refer to the locutionary act. In this way we come to 'utterance' or perhaps 'saying' if that word could be divorced from its runic or aphoristic associations. And notice that if the archaic 'I say (unto you)' is permitted, then, since 'I say' is force-showing (like 'I state' or 'I warn') 'saying' will no longer be the apt name for a (bare) utterance which may or may not be used with the force of a 'saying'. In such a situation it will be little wonder if we occasionally relapse into talking as if locutions were statements. (2) The second reason supplements the first. We tend to think of statements as being colourless or forceless to a much greater degree than the more 'typical' illocutions. Thus we may oppose to the query

Are you warning, advising, threatening, urging me?

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1 Austin mentions *(HTDTWW 127) 'locutionary verbs'. I have no idea what these would be.

2 The situation is reminiscent of my earlier discussion of Austin's *How to Talk* (Chap. 2). Compare the difficulty of referring to the bare utterance $S$ without (ab)using the terms 'statement', 'description' etc., which Austin had appropriated for special varieties of $S$, with the difficulty of giving a name to locutions without (ab)using the name of an illocution.
the reply

No; I am (merely) stating (the facts).¹

Austin himself notes that there is some temptation to think of
statements in terms of 'an over-simplified notion of correspondence
to the facts...the ideal of what would be right to say in all
circumstances, for any purpose, to any audience' (HTDTW 145). Such
an ideal is of course the rheme or locution, and Austin, both in the
passage which I have criticized and elsewhere, perhaps succumbs to the
temptation to think of the rheme as being a statement. For example,
at page 144 he writes:

The truth or falsity of a statement depends not merely on
the meanings of words but on what act you were performing
in what circumstances.

Now surely, according to Austin, in making a statement we just are
performing the (illocutionary) act of stating and cannot be performing
any other.² What Austin should have said is that the truth or falsity
of a rheme is not dependent on meanings but on what illocutionary act
(warning, guessing or stating) is being performed in what circumstances.
That he does succumb in this way, however, in no way invalidates what I
have been maintaining, namely, that Austin's Later use-talk (phemes

¹Austin uses similar arguments (HTDTW 133) to show that stating is
'absolutely on a level' with other illocutionary acts. The device
'not warning etc., but simply stating' seems to me rather to mark
some distinction between warning, etc., and stating.
²But see below, pp.182-3.
are used for uttering rhemes) differs markedly from his earlier use-talk (sentences are used for making statements). For, a pheme is not a sentence and a rheme is not a statement.

The pheme, unlike the sentence, lacks a sense

The second difference between Austin's earlier and later accounts of the use of language is that while in the earlier account the 'thing' used (the sentence) had a sense and acquired a reference when used as a statement, in the later account the 'thing' used (the pheme) lacks reference and sense, acquiring both only when uttered as a rheme.

Of the two accounts the earlier seems much the more plausible.

On this account of the matter (if we adopt the Strawsonian rather than the Austinian conventions of reference) a meaningful sentence may be used as a true statement one day, as a false statement on another day, and as a void statement on yet a third day according to whether it refers to this subject or that subject or fails to refer to any subject. However, it is rather more difficult to conceive of the thing used (the unit of language) as lacking a sense (meaning).

Austin's further discussion of this topic is far from helpful, and, like his discussion of the related topics already criticized, not particularly consistent. Thus, although it is clear from HTDTW493 and 94 that meaning (i.e. sense and reference) are imported into the locutionary act at the rhetic level, so that it is not the pheme but only the theme which has meaning, nevertheless, on page 98 Austin
writes that 'the pheme is a unit of language; its typical fault is to be nonsense - meaningless'. Now, if the typically faulty pheme is to be nonsense - meaningless, it would seem natural to infer that the typically unfaulty pheme had sense or meaning. Indeed, when Austin goes on to note that 'the rheme is the unit of speech; its typical fault is to be vague or void or obscure, etc.', we can only suppose that he has reverted to the earlier schema according to which the unit of language (pheme or sentence) has sense or meaning, and the unit of speech (rheme or statement) acquires or (its typical fault) fails to acquire reference.

In another passage, however, Austin does attempt to distinguish between pheme and rheme apparently on the grounds that the pheme, unlike the rheme, does not have a sense. Thus, for example, when we 'read a Latin sentence without knowing the meaning of the words' (HTDTW 97) our utterance is a pheme and not a rheme. This attempt seems to me to be quite unsuccessful, and I shall reserve fuller discussion of it until the following chapter, in which I try to distinguish, not only between locution, illocution and perlocution, but also between the sub-acts within the locutionary act. Suffice it to say now that if, in Austin's example, we substitute for the phrase 'the meaning of the words' the phrase 'the meaning of the utterance' (a substitution quite in keeping with Austin's original formulation) we can only conclude that a pheme is an utterance whose meaning we don't know. That is to say, we conclude, not that the pheme is an
utterance without sense but rather that it is an utterance with sense. For an utterance with an unknown meaning is, tautologically, an utterance with a meaning.

**How-questions and what-for questions**

I have examined at some length the use-talk of several modern philosophers in that basic sense in which they have spoken of the use of language for the performance, not of illocutionary acts such as warning, nor of perlocutionary acts such as deterring, but of the simple locutionary act of saying something; in short, of the use of Language for Speech. I have found little or no agreement among philosophers either as to what is used or as to what the 'thing' used is used for. Thus, according to Ryle, words are used for saying sentences with; according to Strawson, sentences are used for making statements; and according to Austin, phemes (grammatically articulated sets of dictionary words without sense or reference) are used for uttering rhemes (grammatically articulated sets of dictionary words with sense and reference). On only one point do the three schemata show any agreement; all are agreed that something is used for something. And this point brings me back to my earlier apology to Professor Ryle, who, as I have already noted, recognized a distinction between How-questions and What-for-questions and prescribed, in his *Ordinary Language*, that use-talk be construed as talk about how words are used rather than about what words are used for.
I offered three excuses for my treatment of Ryle in consort with Strawson and Austin. First, I claimed that the Rylean variant (how-used talk rather than used-for-what-talk) was a further example of the very confusion in use-talk which I was trying to expose. Secondly, Ryle's two papers on this topic are, I believe, and his disclaimer notwithstanding, riddled with what-for-questions and what-for-answers, and, in general, the what-for-outlook. In Ordinary Language words are used for saying sentences with, and in Use, Usage and Meaning words are employed for saying things. (I shall argue later that talk of the use of language does tend to lead to what-for-questions rather than to how-questions). Thirdly, and most importantly, I believe that Ryle's advocacy of talk about how words are used rather than talk about what words are used for is greatly vitiated by his forceful attack on what he deems to be a confusion between 'use' and 'usage'. For, as it seems to me, if we construe use-questions as how-questions then we are committed to the assimilation of use-talk to usage-talk. For to ask how a word is used is just to ask how speakers of the language use that word: that is to say, it is to ask for the (correct) usage of the word. Such an understanding of 'usage' seems more plausible than that of Ryle, who, in contrasting 'usage' with 'use', seems, on occasion, to understand by 'usage' such things as history or sociology or even mass

1 For a sound attack on Ryle's use of 'usage' see Passmore's Professor Ryle's Use of 'Use' and 'Usage' PR, 63 (1954).
observation. Thus, for example, he contrasts being 'taught in the nursery to handle a lot of words' (use) with 'not being taught any historical or sociological generalities about the employers of these words' (usage). Well, perhaps not. But may we not say that we learnt a usage from the usage of our elders? That is, that we learnt how to use words ourselves from hearing how others used them?

For the most part it is difficult to take issue with Ryle on the question of 'usage' because his usage of that word, though perhaps voguish, does not seem to me to be customary. However, on at least one point what he says is clear and clearly wrong. Commenting on philosophical appeals to 'what we say' Ryle writes:

The reader considers the mode of employment that he has long since learned and feels strengthened, when told that the big battalions are on his side. In fact, of course, this appeal to prevalence is philosophically pointless, besides being philologically risky.

Philologically risky such appeals may be (Passmore has pointed out just how risky Ryle's own philologizing was in the matter of 'usage' and 'misusage') even philosophically risky, but surely not philosophically pointless. (The point of philosophy might be a sounder approximation). Notice that if having the big battalions of common usage on one's side is philosophically pointless, having the same big battalions ranged

1 'A usage is a custom, practice, fashion or vogue'. op. cit. p.174
2 op. cit. p.177
against one will equally be beside the philosophical point. However, can Ryle really shrug off with a casual tant pis the news that his description of how a word is used does not accord with common (prevalent) usage; shrug off, for example, the evidence which Passmore assembled from common usage against Ryle's account of how 'use' and 'usage' were used? If he can, I quite fail to grasp the point of much of the philosophy which has been written by Ryle and his colleagues.

Let us take a closer look at Ryle's dogma about the appeal to usage (prevalence) in the light of some actual philosophical practice, including some of Ryle's own practice. In some recent articles in the journals a debate has been conducted on, among other things the use of the word 'voluntary' (how the word 'voluntary' is used). The debate was initiated by Mates who points out a discrepancy between the account given by Ryle and the account given by Austin of the use of the word 'voluntary'.

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2 I cannot approve of the use which Mates makes of the example. Mates writes: "If agreement about usage cannot be reached within so restricted a sample as the class of Oxford Professors of Philosophy what are the prospects when the sample is enlarged?" (p.165). 'Cannot be reached' seems a little premature. For why should agreement not be reached? Someone (Ryle) is wrong about how 'voluntary' is used; that is all. It is surely one of the merits of modern philosophy that it affords, as Austin says (Papers 123), 'what philosophy is so often thought, and made, barren of...the satisfaction of reaching agreement'. However, what is distressing about Ryle's strictures on usage is that they surely suggest that agreement about what is the prevailing usage would be, like prevalence itself, philosophically pointless.
In *The Concept of Mind* Ryle wrote:

It should be noticed that while ordinary folk, magistrates, parents and teachers, generally apply the words 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' to actions in one way, philosophers often apply them in quite another way.

In their most ordinary employment 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' are used, with a few minor elasticities, as adjectives applying to what ought not to be done. We discuss whether someone's action was voluntary or not only when the action seems to have been his fault.

Against this Mates quotes what Austin has to say in *A Plea for Excuses* (Papers 139)

*For example, take 'voluntarily' and 'involuntarily': we may join the army or make a gift voluntarily, we may hiccup or make a small gesture involuntarily...*

Now clearly, in his discussion of how the word 'voluntarily' is used, Ryle makes an appeal to the common usage of big battalions of ordinary folk. He takes the philological risk of flatly asserting that ordinary folk 'discuss whether someone's action was voluntary or not only when the action seems to have been his fault'. And the philological risk does not come off, for, if we listen carefully we can hear magistrates discussing whether or not Jack joined the army voluntarily, and parents and teachers discussing whether or not Jill's gift was made voluntarily, without in the least implying that either Jack or Jill was at fault. Is it now open to Ryle to retort that these objections are, philosophically, beside the point; that he

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1 p.69.
invoked the big battalions of magistrates and teachers because it is always 'strengthening' to have them on one's side, but that if they will not be invoked then so much the worse for the big battalions; that he is concerned with the philosophical question how the word 'voluntary' is used and that on this question the common (prevailing) usage of teachers and magistrates has no bearing? I do not believe that it is.

However, the debate continues. Cavel argues\(^1\) that Ryle's generalization is on the right lines, although perhaps rather over hasty. Ryle had taken it that the question 'Voluntary or not?' was raised only in the discussion of morally suspect actions. In fact, suggests Cavell, the question may be raised about actions which are in any way suspect. Thus, seizing on Austin's gift example (and neglecting, inexplicably, Austin's army example) Cavel points out that we do not ask of any or every gift - 'Voluntary or not voluntary?'. It is only when we give the neighbourhood policeman 'a cheque for a thousand dollars instead of his usual Christmas bottle' that it becomes apt to ask whether or not the gift was made voluntarily. Because the action was in some way fishy we ask if it was done voluntarily. Similarly with actions other than giving. If I ask whether you dress the way you do voluntarily I imply that there is

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\(^1\) op. cit.
something eccentric about the way you dress. In consequence, Cavell amends Ryle's generalization that we discuss whether someone's action was voluntary or not only when the action seems to have been his fault.

In Cavell's revised version we have we discuss whether someone's action was voluntary or not only when the action seems to have been in some way fishy.

Finally, Fodor and Katz\textsuperscript{1} bring against Cavell's generalization Austin's example of joining the army voluntarily. Clearly we can discuss whether or not someone joined the army voluntarily without implying that there was anything in the least fishy about his joining the army.

What might we say if we were to try to draw together the threads of this debate? First, the quotation from Austin contributes only incidentally to a discussion of 'how "voluntarily" is used'. The real point of Austin's remarks is to show that 'voluntarily' and 'involuntarily'...are not opposed in the obvious sort of way that they are made to be in philosophy or jurisprudence. The 'opposite', or rather 'opposites' of 'voluntarily' might be 'under constraint' of some sort, duress or obligation or influence: the opposite of 'involuntarily' might be 'deliberately' or 'on purpose' or the like. Such divergences in opposites indicate that 'voluntarily' and 'involuntarily', in spite of their apparent connexion, are fish from very different kettles (Papers 139).

Austin's remarks should then serve, primarily, as a corrective to the

\textsuperscript{1} op. cit.
clear assumption in the passage quoted from The Concept of Mind, nowhere commented on by any of the participants to the debate, that 'voluntarily' and 'involuntarily' are fish from the same kettle.

Secondly, Austin's remarks do, of course, show that both Ryle's and Cavell's generalization about the use of 'voluntary' are mistaken.

Can we then suggest a further generalization which will accommodate both of Austin's examples of how 'voluntarily' is used?

I think the answer would be along the lines hinted at in A Plea for Excuses. Austin has, in different places, described how the word 'real' is used. Much of what he says about the use of 'real' applies to the use of 'voluntary'. For example, in Other Minds Austin writes (Papers 55-6):

> The doubt or question 'But is it a real one?' has always (must have) a special basis, there must be some reason for suggesting that it isn't real, in the sense of some specific way...in which it is suggested that the experience or item may be phoney...we should insist always on specifying with what 'real' is being contrasted.

For 'real' read 'voluntary' and we have the following:

> The question 'Is it a voluntary action?' has always (must have) a special basis, there must be some reason for suggesting that it isn't voluntary, in the sense of some specific way in which it is suggested that the action may not be voluntary...we should insist always on specifying with what 'voluntary' is being contrasted.

Such a description of how 'voluntary' is used covers, it seems to me,

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1 N.B. not (pace Ryle) some specific way in which it is suggested that the action may be involuntary.
both Cavell's 'fishy' case of the outsize donation to the police - 
'Did he give it voluntarily?' (implied contrast - Was he being 
blackmailed or coerced?) and the quite unfishy case of joining the 
army - 'Did he join voluntarily?' (implied contrast - Was he 
conscripted?).

The debate may, of course, continue. I have outlined, adding 
what strikes me as being a satisfactory conclusion, the above 
philosophical debate not in order to argue for the value, as a 
philosophical method, of appeals to prevalence (common usage). That 
is to say, I am not arguing that 'The concept of Freedom', for example, 
is best illumined by and through an examination of the ordinary usage 
of words like 'voluntary'. I am merely arguing that such a method 
does exist and is exemplified in the (typical) philosophical debate 
outlined above, and that Ryle, whatever he may preach, is himself a 
practitioner. I conclude, therefore, that appeals to prevalence or 
common usage, though doubtless both philosophically and philologically 
risky, have, for most contemporary philosophers a philosophical point 
and that Ryle's claim that he is concerned with how words are used but 
not with the common usage of words simply will not wash.

Two reasons for preferring 'usage-talk' to 'use-talk'

Up to this point I have tried to argue (negatively) that Ryle 
cannot claim both that the use-talk with which philosophers engage 
themselves is aimed at answering how-questions (how a word is used) 
and that questions of (common) usage are philosophically irrelevant.
I have agreed that use-talk is best construed as an attempt to answer how-questions and not as an attempt to answer what-for-questions. However, having agreed with Ryle about this, I have been unable to follow him in his refusal to construe use-talk as talk about linguistic usage. For, I have argued that to ask how a word is used is to ask for the usage of the word.

I shall now, rather more positively, suggest two reasons why we should not merely construe use-talk (talk about the use of language) as usage-talk (talk about linguistic usage) but rather prefer, as a philosophical façon de parler, talk about usage to talk about use.

The first reason need not delay us long since it concerns matters with which I have already dealt in some detail. It is that talk about usage, unlike talk about use does not tempt us to ask what-for-questions. When we address ourselves to questions of word usage or linguistic usage rather than to questions about the use of words or the use of language, we are not, I believe, in any way tempted to ask the non-question - What are words and language used for? And, in consequence, we are not tempted to return the non-answers, 'sentences', 'statements', 'speech', 'uttering rhemes' and so on. That there is, with use-talk, such a temptation is, I think, clear. Even Ryle, who distinguishes between how-questions and what-for questions, and rules in favour of how-questions, again and again suggests answers suitable to what-for-questions. Words are used for sentences and Language is used for Speech. Austin, who nowhere clearly distinguishes between how-questions and what-for-
questions, for the most part seems to think of use-talk as an attempt to answer what-for-questions. I have tried to detail, from Austin's final theory of speech-acts, some of the confusions and internal inconsistencies which this attempt incurs (Still thinking, of course, of the use of language - phemes - for locutionary acts - rhemes - Austin's description of the use of language for illocutionary and perlocutionary acts seems, as well as being a new departure, to be relatively cogent). First, then, talk about usage is to be preferred to talk about use because talk about use inclines philosophers to ask (and answer) what-for-questions while talk about usage does not.

My second reason will take us longer. Briefly, however, it is as follows. Talk about the use of language may encourage us to make, and treat as if it were important, a (quite unhelpful) distinction between 'language', on the one hand, and 'the use of language' on the other. Talk about linguistic usage encourages the making of no such distinction between 'language', on the one hand, and linguistic usage on the other. For language simply is linguistic usage. I shall now argue that because Ryle, in his two papers on the use of language,\(^1\) writes in terms of use (of language) rather than in terms of (linguistic) usage he is led (1) to accept the bogus dichotomy between language and use, and, (2) to base on this dichotomy arguments for a further distinction between philosophy, on the one hand, and linguistic or grammatical

\(^1\) Ordinary Language and Use, Usage and Meaning.
questions on the other. Because the dichotomy on which the arguments are based is bogus the arguments won't go. Had Ryle been thinking in terms of usage rather than in terms of use, such a dichotomy (between language and usage) could not have suggested itself, and, in consequence, not a few unsatisfactory philosophical arguments would have remained on the ground.

In Ordinary Language Ryle's version of the Language/Use distinction is the distinction between, on the one hand, words, and on the other hand, the use of words.

Hume's question was not about the word 'cause'; it was about the use of 'cause'. It was just as much about the use of 'Ursache'. For the use of 'cause' is the same as the use of 'Ursache', though 'cause' is not the same word as 'Ursache' (Ryle's italics).

Ryle draws from the distinction between words and the use of words the conclusion that since philosophical questions are word-use-questions (questions of how a word is used) and linguistic questions are word-questions, it is 'misleading to classify philosophical questions as linguistic questions'. I shall claim that Ryle's sense of 'word' in which he distinguishes a word from a word-use is necessarily a trivial (phonetic or orthographic) sense of 'word', and, that in consequence, the linguistic (word) questions with which Ryle wants to contrast philosophical questions are likewise of such a trivial (phonetic or orthographic) nature that philosophers never have classified, and are

1 op. cit. p.171.
2 ibid. p.172.
never likely to classify philosophical questions as linguistic questions, in that sense of 'linguistic question' which Ryle's argument demands.

We are offered in support of the distinction between 'cause' and the use of 'cause' the allegedly analogous distinction between a sixpence and the use we might make of a sixpence. Ryle writes:

The transactions I perform with a sixpenny-bit have neither milled nor unmilled edges; they have no edges at all.

Now, this analogy, together with Ryle's having stated that 'cause' and 'Ursache' have the same use while differing as words, suggests that the only distinction which Ryle can be drawing between words, on the one hand, and word-uses on the other, is a distinction based on the fact that words have orthographic and phonetic characteristics which word-uses do not have. The following sentence about the use of 'cause' seems to me to parallel Ryle's sentence about the use of a sixpenny-bit.

The use I make of the word 'cause' neither begins with an unvoiced plosive nor ends with a voiced sibilant; the use of 'cause' does not contain three vowels; it does not contain any vowels at all.

If we find it hard to believe that Ryle, in distinguishing between words and their uses, was making a distinction whose only support is the trivial fact that words have a spelling and a pronunciation which word-uses do not share, then we must ask what Ryle could have understood by 'word' if it was not word-sound or word-shape. What could distinguish 'cause' from 'Ursache' if it is not the sound and shape of 'cause',

1 ibid. p.171.
and what is there about 'Ursache' to correspond with the milled edges of a sixpenny-bit if the corresponding features are not its sound and shape?

Could it be meaning? Gardiner states in _The Theory of Speech and Language_ that 'words are two-sided in their nature, one side being that of meaning and the other that of sound'. However, Ryle could not have meant by 'word' word-meaning, for if he had meant word-meaning he could not have distinguished between a word and its use in the way that he does. He could not, for example, have said that the word (= word-meaning) 'cause' is not the same as the word (= word-meaning) 'Ursache' although the uses are the same. For the meaning of 'cause' is the same as the meaning of 'Ursache'. Word-meaning and word-use are no more easily to be distinguished than are 'purchasing power of sixpence' and 'what one can do with sixpence'. By sixpence Ryle did not mean the purchasing power of sixpence. What he meant was the small shiny disc with the milled edges, something which could very clearly be distinguished from what one can do with sixpence. By the word 'cause' he seems to have meant something equally clearly distinguishable from the use of 'cause'. Only the spelt or pronounced

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1 p.69.
2 I mean in the sense in which Ryle talks of the transactions one might perform with a sixpence. Of course one could use a sixpence to open a tin or to decide who was going in to bat first. Analogous 'uses' of 'cause' might be to rhyme with 'saws' and 'laws'.
'cause', it seems to me, can be clearly distinguished from the use of 'cause'.

On the basis, then, of a distinction between words and the use of words Ryle tries to argue for a distinction between linguistic (word) questions and philosophical (word-use) questions. If, however, words can be distinguished from word uses only on the grounds that words have a spelling and a pronunciation,¹ the relevant distinction between linguistic questions and philosophical questions must be that linguistic questions are questions of phonetics and orthography while philosophical questions are not. But if linguistic questions are construed as phonetic or orthographic questions then philosophers never have construed philosophical questions as linguistic questions, and, in consequence, could not have misled us, as Ryle suggests, by so construing them.

In his *Use, Usage and Meaning* Ryle uses the vacuous language/use distinction as the clay support for an unsuccessful attempt to argue for a distinction between philosophy and grammar. The starting point is now the distinction, drawn by Sir Alan Gardiner, between 'Language'

¹ This is perhaps a bit brusque. Etymological questions, too, may be word questions rather than word-use questions. However, philosophers who have taken philosophy to be 'linguistic analysis' have no more confused philosophy with etymology than they have confused philosophy with orthography or phonetics. True, Austin thought etymology was important - '...a word never - well, hardly ever - shakes off its etymology...' ([Papers](#) p. 149). But only a very uninformed critic would claim that he confused philosophy and etymology.
and 'Speech'. A 'Language' is defined by Ryle as 'a stock, fund or deposit of words, constructions, intonations, cliché phrases and so on', while the term 'Speech' is 'conscripted to denote the activity... of saying things'. In other words, 'Language' is language and 'Speech' is the use of language.

Ryle then goes beyond Gardiner in drawing from the distinction between Language and Speech the further distinction between what he calls 'language-faults' and what he calls 'speech-faults', and concluding that as Speech is not to be equated with Language, so, 'speech-faults are not to be equated with language-faults'. This further distinction is of importance to Ryle because he wants to argue (a) that philosophers interest themselves in speech-faults, (b) that grammatical mistakes are language-faults and that therefore (c) the mistakes with which philosophers concern themselves are not (or need not be) grammatical mistakes. 'Some speech-faults including some of those which matter to logicians and philosophers, are not and do not carry with them any language-faults'. I shall claim that as Ryle has defined 'Language' there could not be any such thing as a language-fault; that, since language-faults cannot be identified they cannot be contrasted with speech-faults; that, in consequence, Ryle cannot use a

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1 op.cit. p.223
2 ibid. p.227
3 ibid. p.228
distinction between language-faults and speech-faults as a way of
distinguishing grammatical business from philosophical business.

On Ryle’s account of the matter a Language is a 'stock, fund or
deposit of words, constructions...and so on'. Speech is an operation
with parts of the stock or fund of words etc., which makes up
Language. Now, while speech-faults will be use-faults, failures to
operate correctly with the language stock, it is difficult to see
what, on Ryle’s account, would constitute a language-fault, what would
be a fault in the dormant language stock itself. Ryle wants to call
language-faults such errors as 'solecisms, mispronunciations,
malapropisms and unidiomatic and ungrammatical constructions'. However,
all these faults are faults of the language in action or use; that is
to say, they are speech-faults. It is easy to sympathize with an
attempt to distinguish solecism and malapropism on the one hand, from,
on the other hand, ignoratio elenchi and non sequitur. But the two
types of error cannot be distinguished simply by calling the former a
fault in language (language-fault) and the latter a fault of language-
in-use (speech-fault). For all linguistic faults are misuses of
language. They are faults of the language-in-use; that is to say, they
are, in Ryle’s terminology, speech-faults.

Ryle lists some of the 'enormous variety of disparate kinds of
faults that we can find or claim to find with things that people say'

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1 ibid. p.226.
That is, in the following passage he lists some of the speech-faults which he wishes to contrast with language-faults. I begin at the fifteenth speech-fault.

I can claim...that what you said was...prejudiced, pedantic, obscure, prudish, provocative, self-contradictory, tautologous, circular or nonsensical and so on indefinitely. Some of these epithets can be appropriate also to behaviour which is not speech-behaviour; some of them cannot. Not one of them could be asserted or denied of any item in an English or French dictionary or Grammar.¹

The epithets conspicuously absent from Ryle's list of speech-faults are 'solecistic', 'ungrammatical', 'mispronounced' and so on, the adjectives which, according to Ryle, mark language-faults. However, these adjectives too could be used to describe what people say, that is, to identify speech-faults. I can claim that what you said was unidiomatic, ungrammatical and so on. Ryle might, perhaps, reply that although this may be so the important point to note is that none of his speech-fault marking epithets could be applied to an item in a dictionary or an entry in a Grammar. However, even if what Ryle says were true (and as we shall see it is not) it would not serve to distinguish what he calls speech-faults from what he calls language-faults. For we should not want to assert or deny of an item in a dictionary or a Grammar that it was solecistic or mispronounced or ungrammatical.

¹ Ibid. p.227.
If you wanted to show that the adjective 'ungrammatical' could be applied to an item in a Grammar you might offer the following argument. You pick up an English Grammar and read in it that the aorist of the verb 'to see' is 'seen'. You will then be entitled to assert that the Grammar is ungrammatical. However, it should be noted (1) the sentence "'Seen' is the aorist of 'to see'" is, strictly speaking, grammatical and false rather than ungrammatical. (2) If, speaking loosely, we were to characterize the Grammar as being ungrammatical, or if, in the rather different case where a Grammar actually did contain ungrammatical sentences rather than misdescriptions, we were to say that the Grammar was ungrammatical, we should not be saying that English grammar or the English language was ungrammatical, or even that part of the English language was ungrammatical. We criticize, not Grammar but a grammarian, not Language but a grammarian's use of language. Therefore, to say, even of an item in a grammar or dictionary that it is ungrammatical is to identify, not a language-fault, but a speech-fault. When we find fault with a dictionary or Grammar we find speech-faults; we find fault, as Ryle puts it, with what someone says.

Further, although it would be strange indeed to criticise what the grammarian says on the grounds that it is ungrammatical we might criticize it and him in all sorts of other ways. For this reason Ryle is surely wrong again when he asserts that none of the epithets in his list of speech-faults could be applied to an item in a
dictionary or Grammar. For we might describe some of the entries in the dictionary of a highly idiosyncratic lexicographer like Johnson as being 'provocative' or 'prejudiced'; and we might describe a Grammar which (grammarian who) insisted on the nominative case after the verb 'to be' as 'pedantic'.

In his *Ifs and Cans* Austin wrote (*Papers* 179-80):

> There are constant references in contemporary philosophy, which notoriously is much concerned with language, to a 'logical grammar' and a 'logical syntax' as though these were things distinct from ordinary grammarians' grammar and syntax: and certainly they do seem, whatever exactly they may be, different from traditional grammar. But grammar today is itself in a state of flux; for fifty years or more it has been questioned on all hands and counts whether what Dionysius Thrax once thought was the truth about Greek is the whole truth about all language and all languages. Do we know, then, that there will prove to be any ultimate boundary between 'logical grammar' and a revised and enlarged Grammar.

**Use, Usage and Meaning** is an (unsuccessful) attempt to draw the boundary between 'ordinary grammarians' grammar' and 'logical grammar'. The argument fails because solecisms cannot be distinguished from non-sequiturs on the basis of a (vacuous) language-stock/use-of-language-stock distinction. For solecisms and mispronunciations are not faults in the language-stock or fund of words and constructions. They are faults of the language in use; that is, they are speech-faults not language-faults. Since, then, Ryle has not identified a language-fault, he has, *a fortiori*, not distinguished language-faults from speech-faults. Therefore he cannot, simply by calling mistakes in 'logical grammar' speech-faults, and mistakes in 'ordinary grammar' language-faults, show
that philosophers, being concerned with mistakes in 'logical grammar'
are concerned with mistakes different in kind from the mistakes of
'ordinary grammar'. For, mistakes in 'ordinary grammar' are, equally
with mistakes in 'logical grammar', speech-faults.

I conclude, then, that Ryle's arguments in both Ordinary Language
and Use, Usage and Meaning for a distinction between philosophical
business on the one hand, and linguistic or grammatical business on
the other, are unsuccessful just because they lean on a (quite vacuous)
distinction between language and the use of language. And this is my
second reason for prescribing that 'how-questions' be posed (and
answered) in the jargon of usage-talk rather than in the jargon of
use-talk. For, while there may be some temptation to drive a wedge
between language and the use of language there is no temptation
whatever to drive a wedge between language and linguistic usage. Thus,
while we might distinguish between the Polish language as (for me)
immobile in the repository of the Polish dictionaries and Grammars,
and the use which I could make, but in all likelihood never shall
make, of Polish (to speak Polish) we should never, I imagine, be in
any way tempted to distinguish between the Polish language and Polish
linguistic usage. For the Polish language simply is the linguistic
usage of Poles. What is important is to realize that the just possible
distinction between language and use is, for philosophical purposes,
quite vacuous and unhelpful. The distinction certainly will not support
a further distinction between language-faults and use-faults, and, thus,
a distinction between grammatical interests and philosophical interests. For both grammatical mistakes and logical mistakes are use-faults and it is difficult to conceive what a fault in language (the dormant language-stock) would be. However, no such difficulties arise when how-questions are construed as questions about linguistic usage rather than as questions about the use of language.

Conclusion

To sum up a chapter, already too long. I have argued that Professor Ryle's indictment of the traditional philosophical jargon as lacking in self-discipline is at least apt in the case of more modern jargon about the 'use of language'. I have tried to bring out (a) some of the disagreement between different philosophers and (b) some of the confusion within the work of individual philosophers (especially that of Austin in its later reaches) in their treatment of three questions; first, the question of 'what' is used; second, the question of what the 'linguistic unit' is used for; third, the question of how use-talk should be construed, as talk about what language is used for or as talk about how language is used. On the third question I have agreed with Ryle that use-questions should be construed as how-questions rather than as what-for-questions. For, as it seemed to me, talk about the use of language for the bare locutionary act of saying something is not viable. Talk about the use of language for performing actions is possible only where the action performed could be performed by non-linguistic means.
Here, the distinction is important between, on the one hand, acts of (mere) locution, and, on the other hand, the further, more peripheral, speech-acts (of illocution and perlocution) mentioned by Austin. For talk about the use of language for illocutionary and perlocutionary acts is possible just because some illocutions and all perlocutions could be performed by non-linguistic means.

However, although I agreed with Ryle in his construction of use-questions as how-questions rather than what-for-questions, I disagreed with him on the matter of his distinction between how-questions (questions of how language is used) and questions of (linguistic) usage. For, to ask how a word is used is surely to ask for the (common) usage of that word. I then argued that Ryle's dogma of the distinction between how-questions and questions of usage was in fact at odds with common philosophical practice, including the practice of Ryle himself. Ryle (e.g. in the matter of the use of 'voluntary' - how 'voluntary' is used), offers as the sole support of a philosophical contention a generalization about the common usage of magistrates, teachers and parents, that is to say, the sort of appeal to prevalence, which, in his Ordinary Language, he calls 'philosophically pointless'. Yet, surely the exception which rebuts the generalization must damage the philosophy which the generalization (alone) supports. So, somewhat negatively, I came to the conclusion that Ryle, having (correctly) construed use-questions as how-questions, had no reason to refuse to think of use-questions as questions of usage.
Rather more positively, I went on to argue that we have every reason (or at least two very good reasons) not only to construe use-questions as how-questions, and therefore as usage-questions, but rather to prefer the jargon of 'usage' to the jargon of 'use'. For, by talking about usage rather than about use we avoid falling into either of two errors which philosophers have, apparently, found insidious. First, we avoid falling into the error (into which Ryle himself continually relapses) of construing use-questions as what-for-questions. Exploring the use of language we may find ourselves inclined to ask what language is used for, and in consequence, producing some of the disastrous answers outlined above. If, on the other hand, we are examining linguistic usage we shall, I believe, be less inclined to ask what the usage of language is for. Secondly, we do not fall into the error, which Ryle's work on this topic exemplifies, of basing on the (philosophically empty) distinction between language and the use of language quite unsound arguments for a further distinction between, on the one hand, philosophical business, and, on the other hand, linguistic or grammatical business. There is the temptation to think that while language is one thing the use of language is something else again. There is little or no temptation to distinguish between language and linguistic usage.
CHAPTE R 5

LOCUTIONARY, ILLOCUTIONARY AND PERLOCUTIONARY ACTS

It will be as well to begin with the distinctions which Austin
draws between the three speech acts which together make up the full
locutionary act of 'saying something', that is, with the distinctions
between the phonetic act and the phatic act and the rhetic act.

Austin distinguishes between the phonetic act and the phatic act
in the following way (HTDTW 95-6):

...to perform a phatic act I must perform a phonetic act...
but the converse is not true, for if a monkey makes a
noise indistinguishable from 'go' it is still not a phatic
act.

Similar to the distinction between the 'higher' phatic act and the
'lower' phonetic act is the distinction between the 'higher' rhetic
act and the (now) 'lower' phatic act. To perform the higher act is
necessarily to perform the lower; but to perform the lower act is not
necessarily to perform the higher.

...it is clear that we can perform a phatic act which is
not a rhetic act, though not conversely. Thus we may
repeat someone's remark or mumble over some sentence, or
we may read a Latin sentence without knowing the meaning
of the words (HTDTW 97).

These distinctions follow from Austin's definitions of the acts,
and, at least in the case of the distinction between the phonetic act
and the phatic act, the distinction presents no great difficulty. The phonetic act is defined as the act of uttering noises and the phatic act is defined as the act of uttering noises which are words in a construction. Clearly, to utter noises which are words in a construction is to utter noises; but to utter noises is not necessarily to utter noises which are words in a construction. Austin's example of the distinction between a phonetic act and a phatic act is, perhaps, rather perverse, since the clause 'for if a monkey makes a noise indistinguishable from "go" it is still not a phatic act' suggests that it is only on this somewhat exotic count that phonetic acts can be isolated from phatic acts. And this is not true, for the phonetic act is defined as the act of uttering noises. Thus, if, when playing bears with my children I utter the noise 'Grrr', or, if, when in pain, I groan, I shall perform phonetic acts which are not phatic acts.

Austin's monkey example is not, then, really to the point, but it does suggest a rather more interesting question, which I shall raise later, -whether a man could utter noises which were words in a construction and still be performing a (merely) phonetic act.

The distinction between phatic acts and rhetic acts, like the distinction between phonetic acts and phatic acts, follows from Austin's definition of the acts. To perform a phatic act is to utter dictionary words in a grammatical construction; to perform a rhetic act is to utter dictionary words in a grammatical construction with a certain sense and a certain reference. Now, at least 'formally' it
might be thought to follow that, although to utter dictionary words with a sense and a reference is to utter dictionary words, to utter dictionary words is not necessarily to utter dictionary words with a sense and a reference. Which is to say that although rhetic acts are necessarily also phatic, phatic acts are not necessarily also rhetic. The distinction between phatic act and rhetic act, however, presents rather more difficulties than the distinction between phatic act and phonetic act. The distinction is difficult because Austin's description of the pheme, the uttering of which is the performance of a phatic act, is unsatisfactory. If the pheme is defined as dictionary words in grammatical sequence with sense and reference, then, obviously, it would seem possible to have phatic acts which are not rhetic acts. However, it is then difficult to understand how phatic acts (grammatical utterances of dictionary words without sense) are possible at all. Perhaps Austin's further discussion of the distinction between phatic and rhetic acts will help to clarify the notion of the phatic act.

As I have observed in the previous chapter, Austin's later discussion of the phatic act, is, in some ways, inconsistent with his original formulation. Thus, while in the original formulation the rheme is distinguished from the pheme by having both sense and reference (where the pheme has neither), in his further discussion Austin notes that the 'typical fault' of the pheme is to be 'nonsense-meaningless', which seems to me to suggest that the typical faultless pheme (i.e. the typical pheme) has sense or meaning. The example of the Latin sentence
seems to support some such revised reading. If a speaker performs a phatic act (utters a pheme) by making an utterance in Latin 'without knowing the meaning of the words' he utters, surely the implication is that the pheme has a sense or meaning and that the speaker's act is phatic rather than rhetic not because the pheme he utters has no sense (is not used as a rheme) but rather because he does not understand the sense of the pheme he utters.

An earlier account by Austin of the distinction between phatic and rhetic acts (HTDTW 95) suggests that the acts can be distinguished by the different ways in which they are reported. Thus, while the phatic act is reported in direct speech the rhetic act is reported in indirect speech.

...'He said "The cat is on the mat"', reports a phatic act, whereas 'He said that the cat was on the mat' reports a rhetic act. A similar contrast is illustrated by the pairs: 'He said "I shall be there"', 'He said he would be there'; 'He said "Get out"', 'He told me to get out'; 'He said "Is it in Oxford or Cambridge?"', 'He asked whether it was in Oxford or Cambridge'.

Now surely the distinction between a report in indirect speech and a report in direct speech would not normally be taken to indicate any distinction between the speech acts reported, still less a distinction between a speech act performed with both sense and reference and a speech act performed with neither. For the most part, I think, we should use 'He said "I'll be there"' and 'He said he'd be there' indifferently as reports of what he said. There are, of course, special occasions when we should prefer reports in direct speech to
reports in indirect speech. Thus, for example, in courts of law where it is important that the evidence should be both completely accurate and in no way 'interpreted' by the witness we shall prefer direct speech reports to indirect speech reports. That is to say we shall prefer

He said 'Are you going out now?' and I said 'Not just yet'

He asked whether I was going out or not and I replied that I wasn't at the moment.

However, even in such special circumstances there is no suggestion that we are, by preferring direct speech, reporting speech acts different in kind from those which we might have reported by using indirect speech; still less, that because we used direct speech we were reporting speech acts devoid of sense and reference.

Austin, in making this distinction, may have been thinking of a situation rather different both from ordinary conversation where we often use direct speech reports and indirect speech reports indifferently, and from law court evidence where we may prefer direct speech reports for their greater accuracy. Suppose that special agent 007, mistaking me for 008, comes up to me in the street and says 'The cat is on the mat'. When reporting the incident I shall not say 'On the way home to-day a man told me that the cat was on the mat' much as I should say 'On the way home to-day a man told me that the president had been assassinated'. I shall certainly report 'A man said to me
"The cat is on the mat". If Austin is using the direct speech/indirect speech distinction with some such (special) situation in mind the example, in its function of separating pheme from rheme, is interestingly different from the later example of the Latin sentence. In neither example need we think of the pheme ('The cat is on the mat' or 'Veni; vidi; vici') as being itself without sense. It is merely that the pheme is not understood. However, whereas in the example of the Latin sentence the speaker performs a phatic act because he himself does not understand the meaning (sense) of the pheme he utters, in the cat-is-on-the-mat-example a phatic act is reported because the hearer does not understand the meaning of the pheme he hears. 007, presumably, understands perfectly well the meaning (sense and reference) of his utterance. In consequence, according to Austin, he utters a rheme (performs a rhetic act). Because his audience does not understand the rheme (i.e., because it hears the rheme as a pheme) the speaker's rhetic act is reported as a phatic act. The 'double-dimension' of language, often referred to by Gardiner in The Theory of Speech and Language, is nowhere recognized by Austin in any of his accounts of the distinction between phatic acts and rhetic acts. However, the recognition that an utterance may have meaning either for the speaker or for the hearer (or for both) further complicates any attempt to distinguish between the sub-acts within the locutionary act. It complicates not only the distinction between the phatic act and the
rhetorical act, but also, as we shall see, the distinction between the phonetic act and the phatic act.

How so? Let us return to the question which I said was suggested by the example of the monkey which said 'Go'. It is agreed that when a man growls or belches he performs a (merely) phonetic act. Could a man utter noises which were words in a grammatical sequence and still be performing a phonetic, rather than a phatic, act? It seems to me that on Austin's account of the matter he could.

Imagine an accomplished phonetician who knows not a word of Russian but is to deliver a paper (in Russian) to his colleagues in Moscow. Now, our phonetician would undoubtedly write his essay in English, have it translated by one translator into Russian and then have the Russian translation translated by a Russian speaking phonetician into the international phonetic script. It seems to me that a good phonetician will then be able to read fluently from this script, marking the subtlest inflections, yet without being able to mark at all the distinct and distinguishable morphemes of which his utterances, when considered as phatic acts, are composed. That is to say, he will not (even) be in the same case as the reader of Austin's Latin sentence, who, twenty years out of grammar school, reads 'Balbus murum edificavit' at least as a succession of Latin words (though without understanding their meaning) and, in consequence, performs a
phatic act. Shall we say, then, that the phonetician performs a phonetic, rather than a phatic act?¹

Suppose further that the phonetician is overheard at his rehearsals by someone capable of hearing the phonetician's utterances as being utterances composed of Russian words in sequence but not sufficiently competent to grasp the meaning of the utterances. Must we say, then, that although the act which the phonetician performs is a phonetic act, the act which his auditor hears being performed is a phatic act? And when the man who knows Russian words when he hears them is joined by a Russian speaker shall we say (1) that the phonetician is performing a phonetic act (2) that one section of his audience hears a phatic act being performed and (3) that a second section of his audience hears a rhetic act being performed? When, finally, our phonetician rises in Moscow to communicate to his peers his theory of phonetics shall we say (on the grounds that the noises of which his utterances are composed are - for him - quite unrelated to the morphemic units of any language, and, a fortiori, unrelated to words with meanings) that he is performing a series of (mere) phonetic acts? Or, shall we say (on the grounds that he is communicating a theory of phonetics) that he is performing a series of rhetic acts?

I have tried to show that not only the speaker's pheme but also the speaker's phone might be heard as a rheme by the appropriate

¹ In another sense, of course, a remarkable phonetic 'act'.
audience. Contrariwise, Chinese rhemes, for example, would be heard as phones, not as phemes, by most European audiences. None of this, however, goes against what I have claimed, namely, that the pheme ought not to be thought of as being without meaning merely on the grounds that it has not been understood by either its speaker or its hearer.

I shall now leave the distinctions which Austin attempts to draw between the sub-acts within the locutionary act, and turn to the more important distinctions between the locutionary act itself and the illocutionary act, and, between the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act. It should be remembered that, as I have stressed in the previous chapter, no distinction need be drawn or should be

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1 It may be of some interest to compare what Austin says about phemes and rhemes with what Wittgenstein says about propositional signs and propositions. Wittgenstein writes (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus 3.11 and 3.12): "We use the sensibly perceptible sign (sound or written sign, etc.) of the proposition as a projection of the possible state of affairs. The method of projection is the thinking of the sense of the proposition. The sign through which we express the thought I call the propositional sign". George Pitcher (The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p.94) interprets 'the thinking of the sense of the proposition' as 'the act of meaning the propositional sign to represent a determinate situation'. On this interpretation, then, a proposition is a meant propositional sign, a propositional sign used with meaning. And Austin tells us that phemes are used with 'meaning' in the performance of rhetoric acts (HTDTWW 92-3). If we construe Austin's 'meaning' as referring to an act of meaning, the meaning of the utterer rather than the meaning of the utterance, we may understand how the pheme, or, better, the phatic act could be said to be without meaning. When I utter a Latin sentence without knowing the meaning of the words my utterance nevertheless means something. Asked what my utterance meant I should reply 'I don't know' rather than 'Nothing'. However, asked what I mean I should reply 'Nothing' rather than 'I don't know what I mean'. For I don't mean anything by words whose meaning I don't understand.
drawn between the rhetic act and the locutionary act; to perform a rhetic act is simply to perform a (complete) locutionary act.

Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts

Professor Max Black thinks Austin's attempt to isolate the locutionary act and distinguish it from the illocutionary act is both unsatisfactory and unplausible. He writes:

I find it difficult to conceive what a locutionary act (supposedly identified by giving sense and reference alone) would be like. In order to report what a speaker said 'in the full sense of "say"' (p. 92) it seems necessary to report how the speaker meant his words 'to be taken' (whether as a statement, an order, a question, etc.), i.e. to include in the report an indication of the 'illocutionary force'...of the original utterance. Reference to the examples of such reports of allegedly locutionary acts given by Austin (e.g. at pp. 101-2) will show that indication of the illocutionary force is indeed included in each case...Austin says that 'To perform a locutionary act is in general, we may say, also and ipso, to perform an illocutionary act'. I am urging that in order to perform a locutionary act one must perform an illocutionary one (and Austin seems to agree at p. 133) - Black's italics.

I find it hard to understand Black's difficulty about the locutionary act. The distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts seems to me to be fairly clear (very clear when contrasted with the distinction between the different sub-acts within the locutionary act itself). I shall try to deal with Black's objections as they come.

(1) When Austin speaks of reporting what a speaker said 'in the full sense of "say"' he means in the full sense of 'say'. The

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difficulty here is not, I think, the difficulty of imagining or conceiving a forceless 'saying', but the difficulty (which I mentioned in the previous chapter), of reporting such 'sayings' without relapsing into a vocabulary which prejudges the illocutionary force of the 'sayings' (locutions). Austin himself occasionally relapses into an illocutionary vocabulary when reporting locutionary acts (He does not, however, relapse where Black says he does at pp.101-2). Thus, (HTDTWW 96-7) when describing how we report a rhetic (locutionary) act, Austin writes:

We cannot, however, always use 'said that' easily: we would say 'told to', 'advise to', etc., if he used the imperative mood...

So, no doubt, we would if we were not trying, with some admitted schematic artificiality, to isolate the locutionary act from the illocutionary act. Once we report the locution as 'advice' rather than as simple unassessed 'saying' we report what is said as an illocutionary rather than a locutionary act. A similar inconsistency may be found in Austin's manner of speaking when we compare page 98 of HTDTWW with page 95. On page 98 Austin offers as examples of illocutionary force 'asking or answering a question'. However, on page 95 Austin gives us as a report of a rhetic (locutionary) act 'He asked whether it was in Oxford or Cambridge'. Here Austin slips into the alleged report of a locutionary act a quite illegitimate assessment of illocutionary force. However, even if Austin always lapsed in this way (and he does not always lapse) the lapses would be lapses into an inconsistent formulation,
but the conceptual distinction between locution and illocution would remain valid. This distinction is the distinction between the meaning (sense and reference) of an utterance and the force of the utterance. Thus, as Austin says (HTDTW 100):

1. We may entirely clear up the 'use of a sentence' on a particular occasion, in the sense of the locutionary act, without yet touching upon its use in the sense of an illocutionary act. (Austin's italics)

This is to say, I could be quite clear about what your utterance 'The bull is going to charge' means (i.e. what the sense of the words is and what bull you are referring to) and still be unclear as to whether you were stating a fact or making a guess, advising me, assuring me, warning me, jesting or protesting that the bull was going to charge.

2. Austin's examples (HTDTW 101-2) make this distinction quite clear. Black is certainly wrong in asserting that the isolated locutions as reported by Austin carry with them indications of illocutionary force. In the first example the reported locution 'He said "Shoot her"' is contrasted with the reported illocution 'He urged (or advised, ordered, etc.,) me to shoot her'. In the second example the reported locution 'He said "You can't do that"' is contrasted with the reported illocution 'He protested against my doing it'. These

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1. i.e. the use of a sentence for saying something.
2. Austin inconsistently reports full locutions as if they were part-locutions, in fact, phatic acts. If reported as full locutions (rhetic acts) the reports would read: 'He said to shoot her' and 'He said that I couldn't do that'.
examples, I believe, make quite clear the distinction which Austin had in mind. We can clear up the meaning of the utterance 'Shoot her' without touching on its force. To be sure, the utterance 'Shoot her' could not be used with just any illocutionary force. It could not, for example, be used with the force of a statement or with the force of a promise. Indeed many locutions wear their illocutionary force very plainly on their face and this may be what Black intends to object. As Gardiner puts it: 1

For example, in 'Please, pass the jam' the thing-meant loses its very core and heart if the notion of a request on the part of the speaker be amputated from it.

However, in order to make the distinction between locution and illocution Austin is required only to show that for some utterances we may be clear about the meaning of the words without knowing what illocutionary act, albeit within a limited range of illocutions, is being performed. Thus, we might know what 'Shoot her' means without being clear whether the speaker is advising or urging or threatening or sentencing or ordering or proposing or even warning (Shoot her, sc., if you don't you'll be sorry). 2

(3) Black says: 'I am urging that in order to perform a locutionary act one must perform an illocutionary one'. I agree; but

1 op. cit., p.192
2 Op. Strawson: Intention and Convention in Speech Acts PR, LXXIII (1964), p.440. '...the meaning of an utterance may exhaust its force... but very often the meaning, though it limits, does not exhaust the force.'
I don't see that or how Black's contention in any way invalidates Austin's distinction. Austin recognized well enough that 'the locutionary act as much as the illocutionary is an abstraction only: every genuine speech-act is both' \((HTDTWW 146)\). If we prefer we may talk about the locutionary and illocutionary aspects of speech acts rather than about locutionary and illocutionary speech acts. But the distinction remains between being clear about what locutionary act has been performed (i.e., clear about the locutionary aspect of the speech act) while not touching on the illocutionary act which has been performed (i.e., not touching on the illocutionary aspect of the speech act). Whenever we perform a locutionary act we perform an illocutionary one. But we may still distinguish between the locutionary act (aspect) and the illocutionary act (aspect) by recognizing that for many speech acts knowing what locutionary act has been performed does not mean knowing which illocutionary act has been performed.

(4) Black says: 'Austin seems to agree at p.133'. Now, as I have pointed out, Austin would, of course, agree with Black that to perform a locutionary act one must also perform an illocutionary one. However, it is of some interest that Black should read page 133 of \(HTDTWW\) as being evidence of Austin's agreement. The passage which Black seems to have in mind reads as follows:

\[\ldots\text{to state is every bit as much to perform an illocutionary act as, say, to warn or to pronounce.}\]

Black, in construing the above passage as support for his contention that all locutionary acts are illocutionary acts (i.e., has fallen into
the common critical error, which I have argued against in the previous
chapter, of taking statements to be identical with locutions. The
point of page 133 is not, as it must be if it is to be read as support
for Black, that statements, although locutions, have, in common with
warnings and pronouncements, illocutionary force. The point is that
statements are not identical with locutions because, in common with
warnings and pronouncements, they have illocutionary force. Black
mistakenly construes an argument to the effect that statements are not
to be identified with locutions as if it were an argument to the effect
that no actual utterance could be a forceless locution (to speak
pleonastically). Austin would agree with Black that no utterances
are forceless but page 133 of HTDTWW is not an argument in support of
that conclusion.

Finally, Black adds to the passage which I have already quoted
the following observation.¹

That Austin was troubled...is clear from a note which he made
as late as 1958 (p.103 f.n.) in which he says that the
distinctions he is trying to introduce are not clear and adds:
'in all senses relevant...won't all utterances be performative?'.

Now, Black is probably right in reading Austin's apparent concern that
the distinctions which he was making between locutionary and
illocutionary acts was blurring the distinction between constative and
performative utterances as evidence that Austin had not fully grasped

¹ loc. cit.
the implications of the new distinctions he was making. I can only reply that I am puzzled by Austin's footnote for it seems to me to be quite at odds with the whole tenor of HTDTW. Translated into the later nomenclature Austin's question becomes: 'In all senses relevant... won't all locutionary acts have illocutionary force?' or, better perhaps, 'In all senses relevant... won't all speech acts have both locutionary and illocutionary aspects?'. Such a question, far from being troublesome to Austin should, at this stage of the discussion, have been merely rhetorical. For Austin's principal aim in HTDTW is, surely, to argue that all speech acts have both locutionary and illocutionary aspects.

Before going on to the further distinction between illocutions and perlocutions I should like to make one other point about the distinction between locutions and illocutions. We saw, when discussing the distinctions between the three sub-acts which together make up the (full) locutionary act, that whereas the performance of a 'higher' speech act always involves the performance of a 'lower' speech act, the performance of a 'lower' speech act does not involve the performance of a 'higher' speech act. Thus, to perform a rhetoric act is always to perform a phatic act, but not conversely; and to perform a phatic act is always to perform a phonetic act, but not conversely. In the case of locutionary and illocutionary acts this relationship between 'higher' and 'lower' is reversed. To perform the (lower) locutionary act is 'also, and eo ipso' to perform a
Illocutionary and Perlocutionary Acts

Austin suggests that 'it is the distinction between illocutions and perlocutions which seems likeliest to give trouble' (HTDTW 109). He marks the distinction in two (related) ways. First, perlocutions are the 'real effects' of illocutions and not the mere 'conventional consequences' of illocutions (HTDTW 102). My persuading you is the

1 As I have already pointed out Austin explicitly denies this when he states (falsely): 'It has...been admitted that to perform an illocutionary act is necessarily to perform a locutionary act'. (HTDTW 113). Austin's statement is quite inconsistent with his later description of performing the illocutionary act of warning by the non-verbal means of stick brandishing and with his later remark that 'many illocutionary acts cannot be performed except by saying something' (118-9). See too (118) 'We can...warn or order or appoint or give or protest or apologize by non-verbal means and these are illocutionary acts'.

2 Cp. HTDTW 113. '...to congratulate is necessarily to say certain words...!'
real effect of my urging you and my deterring you is the real effect of
my warning you. The persuading and the deterring are here what Austin
calls the 'perlocutionary objects' of my urging and warning. I may, of
course, fail to achieve these objects, and by urging merely surprise
you or by warning merely amuse you. However, surprising you and
amusing you are still 'real effects' of my illocutionary acts; that is,
they are perlocutions. They are, Austin says, 'perlocutionary sequels'
rather than 'perlocutionary objects'. The 'conventional consequences'
of illocutionary acts with which these 'real effects' are contrasted
are such consequences as my having bound myself by saying 'I promise', or

... 'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth' has the effect
of naming or christening the ship; then certain subsequent
acts such as referring to it as the Generalissimo Stalin
will be out of order (HTDTWW 116).

Secondly, illocutions are themselves conventional acts, whereas
perlocutions are not conventional. It is clear that for Austin even
non-verbal illocutions, for example, protest by tomato-throwing, are
conventional. As he says:

Strictly speaking, there cannot be an illocutionary act
unless the means employed are conventional, and so the
means for achieving its ends non-verbally must be
conventional (HTDTWW 118).

Thus, and keeping, for simplicity's sake, to language, I can argue or
urge or warn simply by saying 'I argue' or 'I urge' or 'I warn'. But
I cannot convince you or persuade you or deter you simply by saying 'I
convince you' or 'I persuade you' or 'I deter you'. Conversely, you might ask: 'Are you urging me?' or 'Are you warning me?' but not 'Are you persuading me?' or 'Are you deterring me?'

These two distinctions between illocutions and perlocutions are, I believe, clear enough in their adumbration. However, Austin's later development of the distinctions leads to a great deal of confusion, as I shall now try to show.

Austin's treatment of the distinction between 'real effects' and (mere) 'conventional consequences' is confused from the outset by lack of clarity as to whether perlocutions are the real effects in question or whether perlocutions achieve these real effects. I believe that the argument clearly demands that we think of the perlocutions themselves (the persuasion, the deterrence, the intimidation and so on) as being the effects in question. To be sure, the perlocutions will themselves have further effects, but these are not the effects under discussion; and, indeed, it is difficult to see how one would begin to generalize about the effects of a perlocution. My persuading you may result in your going out or staying in; marrying or not marrying; going to China or going to Peru. It is certainly not these effects with which Austin is concerned. And indeed Austin does, on occasion, write as if he

1 'Trick example', as Austin has it, 'for exercise purposes only'. (Papers 207). By saying 'I surprise you' I should surprise you.
realized that the perlocutionary act was the effect and was not the act which achieved the effect. As he writes (HTDTWW 120-1):

...the perlocutionary act...is the achieving of certain effects by saying something...A Judge should be able to decide, by hearing what was said, what locutionary and illocutionary acts were performed, but not what perlocutionary acts were achieved (Austin's italics).

It might be argued that the above passage suggests not that the perlocutionary act is the effect but that it is the achieving of the effect. Such an argument will not be successful because 'achieve' is itself (strictly speaking) an achievement verb. When we construe 'achieve' in this way we must mean by 'the achieving of an effect' nothing more than 'the achievement of an effect'. What then is the distinction between effect and the achievement of effect, between persuasion and the achievement of persuasion? If, speaking less strictly, we construe 'achieve' as referring to a process of 'achieving', to those acts which precede and lead up to the actual 'achievement', then surely the achieving is illocutionary, not perlocutionary. For the precedent acts which result in persuasion, intimidation and so on just are the illocutionary acts of urging, threatening and so on. In another passage (HTDTWW 108) Austin writes that perlocutionary acts are 'what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say, surprising or misleading'.

Clearly, the perlocutions are the effects and are not the achieving of effects in anything but a pleonastic sense which does not distinguish between effects and achievement of effects.
However, in other passages, Austin writes about perlocutionary acts achieving their response or sequel (HTDTWW 118) and, when introducing the distinction between real effects and consequential consequences he notes that 'the consequential effects of perlocutions are really consequences' (HTDTWW 102, my italics). The following passage is a ripe example of the way in which this ambiguity (are perlocutionary acts effects or do they achieve effects?) can confuse the distinction between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

We must distinguish actions which have a perlocutionary object (convince, persuade) from those which merely produce a perlocutionary sequel. Thus we may say 'I tried to warn him but only succeeded in alarming him'. What is the perlocutionary object of one illocution may be a sequel of another: for example, the perlocutionary object of warning, to alert someone, may be a sequel of a perlocutionary act which alarms someone. Again, deterrence may be the sequel of an illocution instead of the object of saying 'Do not do it'. Some perlocutionary acts always have sequels rather than objects, namely those for which there is no illocutionary formula: thus I may surprise you or upset you or humiliate you by a locution, though there is no illocutionary formula 'I surprise you by...', 'I upset you by...', 'I humiliate you by...' (HTDTWW 117).

In the above passage Austin clearly takes it that perlocutionary acts achieve effects, which effects may be either the object of the perlocutionary act (convincing, persuading) or the sequel of the perlocutionary act (surprising, upsetting).
Now I realize that the first sentence of the paragraph which I have quoted is ambiguous\(^1\) but I believe that it must be read in the way that I have suggested (perlocutionary acts achieve effects) if any sense is to be given to the paragraph as a whole. The sentence is ambiguous in that we are not quite sure whether the 'actions' which we are to distinguish are illocutionary or perlocutionary actions.

That is to say, are we to distinguish 'illocutionary actions which have a perlocutionary object from those illocutionary actions which merely produce a perlocutionary sequel'? Or, are we to distinguish 'perlocutionary actions which have a perlocutionary object from those perlocutionary actions which merely produce a perlocutionary sequel'? I believe that it is clear from what Austin says later in the passage that we must think of the 'actions' which have either perlocutionary objects or perlocutionary sequels as being themselves perlocutionary, rather than illocutionary actions. For, when Austin comes to list some of the actions which have sequels (the actions which were to be distinguished from the actions which had objects) he says, quite unequivocally, that 'some perlocutionary acts always have\(^2\) sequels rather than objects' (my italics). And this is quite erroneous.

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1 Indeed, the entire paragraph equivocates a good deal. Thus Austin says: 'What is the perlocutionary object of one illocution may be the sequel of another'. And this is all right since it seems to indicate that perlocutionary acts (object or sequel) are the effects of illocutions and do not themselves achieve perlocutionary objects and sequels. However, for the most part, the paragraph is all wrong.

2 N.B. 'have', not 'are'.
The perlocutionary act (convincing, persuading, surprising, upsetting, humiliating) is the effect of an illocutionary act of which it may be either the object or the sequel.

Notice that Austin, by misusing the distinction between illocutions and perlocutions and writing as if perlocutions achieved effects makes quite empty the notion of a perlocutionary action. For the 'perlocutionary actions' described in the passage which I have quoted are, clearly enough, not illocutionary acts. But then neither are they such acts as convincing, persuading, surprising and humiliating, the acts which Austin originally wanted to think of as being perlocutions. For, persuading, convincing, surprising and so on have become the perlocutionary objects and perlocutionary sequels of new, and quite unidentified, perlocutionary actions. If Austin had not been operating with a quite vacuous sense of 'perlocutionary action' he would have recognized that the 'actions' which he was trying to distinguish must be either illocutionary acts or perlocutionary acts (proper). If the actions are illocutionary acts then he was attempting to distinguish between illocutionary acts which have perlocutionary objects and illocutionary acts which produce perlocutionary sequels. If, on the other hand, the 'actions' are proper perlocutionary acts, then he was attempting to distinguish between perlocutionary acts which are perlocutionary objects (of illocutionary acts) and perlocutionary acts which are perlocutionary sequels (of illocutionary acts). When the problem is stated clearly (on the basis of the clear distinction between
illocution and perlocution) it can be seen that no such distinction is possible, and, in consequence, there will be no temptation to attempt to 'solve' the problem by producing bogus distinctions. For, clearly, it is not at all the case that some illocutionary acts have objects while some illocutionary acts produce sequels. Equally clearly, it is not the case that some perlocutionary acts are perlocutionary objects and some perlocutionary acts are perlocutionary sequels. Any illocutionary act could have either a perlocutionary object or a perlocutionary sequel. Any perlocutionary act could be either a perlocutionary object or a perlocutionary sequel. No distinction is possible between acts which per se have/are an object/sequel.

'We must' says Austin, 'distinguish actions which have a perlocutionary object...from those which produce a perlocutionary sequel'. I have argued that if the actions which are to be distinguished are construed (as they should be) as illocutionary acts, then we cannot possibly distinguish between different illocutionary acts on these grounds. Take, for example, the illocutionary act of 'threatening'. I can threaten you with the perlocutionary object of alarming you and my threatening you may produce the perlocutionary sequel of amusing you. I can threaten you with the perlocutionary object of amusing you and my threatening you may produce the perlocutionary sequel of alarming you. If the actions to be distinguished are perlocutionary acts, can we distinguish between one perlocution and another on the grounds that some perlocutions are always objects while some are always sequels?
Consider again the very bad argument by means of which Austin tries to show that surprising, upsetting and humiliating are always perlocutionary sequels. Austin says: 'Some perlocutionary acts always have \(^1\) sequels rather than objects, namely those for which there is no illocutionary formula: thus I may surprise you or upset you or humble you by a locution, though there is no illocutionary formula "I surprise you...", "I upset you by...", "I humble you by..."'. Clearly, something has gone wrong. For there is no illocutionary formula for any perlocutionary act. Remember that if the actions to be distinguished are construed as being (proper) perlocutionary acts, then Austin's purpose in this passage is to distinguish such typical perlocutionary objects as persuading and convincing from such habitual perlocutionary sequels as surprising and humiliating. But an argument which classifies humiliating as a perlocutionary sequel on the ground that there is no illocutionary formula 'I humble you' will hardly serve to distinguish humiliating, a perlocutionary sequel, from convincing, a perlocutionary object. For there is no illocutionary formula 'I convince you'. In fact, of course, humiliating could be, like convincing, the perlocutionary object of an illocution; just as convincing could be, like humiliating, the perlocutionary sequel of an illocution. For example, I could argue (illocution) with the perlocutionary object of convincing you and produce the (mere)

\(^1\) More accurately, of course, 'are'.

perlocutionary sequel of humiliating you; or, I could argue with the
perlocutionary object of humiliating you and produce the (mere)
perlocutionary sequel of convincing you.

I have claimed that Austin's first distinction between illocutions
and perlocutions (perlocutions are 'real effects') is sound, but that
Austin abuses the distinction by arguing as if the 'real effects'
(convincing, surprising and so on) were not the perlocutions themselves
but were the effects (objects or sequels) of perlocutionary action.
The second distinction (illocutions are conventional, perlocutions are
not) seems to me also to be fairly clear. It too, however, is abused
by Austin, although to a lesser degree and with somewhat less
disastrous results.

In the passage which I have just criticised in some detail Austin
writes: '...we may say 'I tried to warn him but only succeeded in
alarming him'. But we cannot say that the illocutionary verb is always
trying to do something which might be expressed by a
perlocutionary verb, as for example that 'argue' is
equivalent to 'try to convince', or 'warn' is equivalent
to 'try to alarm' or 'alert'. For firstly, the
disjunction between doing and trying to do is already
there in the illocutionary verb as well as in the
perlocutionary verb; we distinguish arguing from trying
to argue as well as convincing from trying to convince.

1 The disjunction 'a warning or an alarm' is, on Austin's account of
the distinction between illocutions and perlocutions, one sort of
category mistake and, as such, further evidence of the way in which
Austin confuses his distinction.
Further, many illocutionary acts are not cases of trying to do any perlocutionary act; for example, to promise is not to try to do anything.

Now I agree, but for rather different reasons, that the relation between illocutions and perlocutions is not that for any given illocutionary act X, to perform X is equivalent to trying to perform some given perlocutionary act Y. Austin seems to think that some illocutionary acts have one specific perlocutionary object; and this is just wrong. 'To urge' is not equivalent to 'to try to persuade' because I might be urging you in order to achieve any one (or more) of an indefinite number of perlocutionary objects. I might, for example, be trying to annoy you; I might even be urging you to perform in order to dissuade you from performing if I thought you were that sort of person. Austin is wrong too when he says that to promise is not to try to do anything. For I might, in promising, be trying to please you or reassure you or make you believe me or persuade you or dissuade you.

Illocutionary acts in general cannot be equated with trying to perform some one, specific perlocutionary act, not, as Austin thinks, because the generalization breaks down in the case of some illocutionary acts, but because no illocutionary act X has one and only one perlocutionary object Y.

What concerns me here, however, is Austin's other reason for denying the equivalence - illocutionary act = trying to perform some specific perlocutionary act. Austin's argument is that the distinction between doing and trying to do occurs on the illocutionary level as well
as on the perlocutionary level. We are to distinguish arguing from trying to argue, warning from trying to warn, promising from trying to promise. I believe that Austin, in distinguishing between performing an illocutionary act and trying to perform an illocutionary act blurs his distinction between illocutionary acts as purely conventional acts and perlocutionary acts as non-conventional acts.

If the illocution is purely conventional how is it possible to try (and fail) to perform an illocutionary act? Austin's treatment of illocutions as purely conventional is reminiscent of his earlier doctrine on performative utterances. As, formerly, simply to say the words 'I promise' was to promise, so, now, simply to preface the locution that $p$ with the words 'I argue' or 'I warn' or 'I promise' is to perform the illocutionary act of arguing or warning or promising. Because the illocutionary act is purely conventional there seems to be no room for a dimension of success or failure within the performance of any illocutionary act. Yet we do, as Austin says, sometimes speak of trying to argue or trying to warn or even, more unusually, of trying to promise.

The distinction which Austin mentions between arguing and trying to argue is surely a distinction between arguing well and trying to argue well. Of someone who says 'I argue that $p$' we might claim either 'He tried to argue that $p$' or 'He argued, unconvincingly, that $p$'. Austin is surely, by his account of the illocutionary act, committed to the latter way of speaking. In saying 'I argue' a speaker performs the
Illocutionary act of arguing, or, in short, argues. This is pure convention and there could be no question of success or failure. Austin, in drawing a distinction between arguing and trying to argue is using 'argue' as elliptical for 'argue successfully'.

We might give yet another sense to 'trying to warn' or 'trying to promise'. Suppose that I shout my warning in the teeth of a gale and because you don't hear me you walk over the edge of the cliff. Or, suppose that I know that I ought to bind myself to perform some onerous duty but that I can't quite bring myself, although I try, to say the words 'I promise'. In these cases I think we should certainly say that I tried to warn you or tried to promise. However, notice that in these cases the interference which causes failure, and so creates a gap between trying and doing, is at the locutionary level. What we should not suggest, and what Austin does suggest by the comparison of illocutionary failure with perlocutionary failure, is that I could actually say the words 'I warn' or 'I promise', be heard and understood, and still fail to perform the illocutionary act of warning or promising. That is to say, we should not suggest that any distinction between the success and failure of an illocutionary act is possible at the illocutionary level; as a distinction between the success and failure of a perlocutionary act is possible at the perlocutionary level. The boy who cried 'Wolf'

\[1\] Philosophical Investigations I:546 'Words can be hard to say: such, for example, as are used to effect a renunciation, or to confess a weakness (Words are also deeds)'.

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Philosophical Investigations I:546 'Words can be hard to say: such, for example, as are used to effect a renunciation, or to confess a weakness (Words are also deeds)'.

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once too often did not try (and fail) to warn the villagers that the wolves really were imminent this time. He tried to alert them and failed. But by crying 'Wolf' (I warn) he warned them.

Take the distinction between the illocutionary act of telling and its common perlocutionary object - letting someone know something. If you ask me to let Jones know something untoward and, although I talk round the subject I cannot actually bring myself to come right out and say the words 'Your wife has gone off with your brother', then I might say that I tried to tell him but couldn't. I fail to perform the illocutionary act of telling but the breakdown is at the locutionary level. If, on the other hand, I come right out and say 'Your wife has left you' then although he might not believe me, and, in consequence, I should not have succeeded in 'letting him know' it would be less than apt to say that I tried to tell him.

I conclude then that Austin's attempted distinction between performing an illocutionary act and trying to perform an illocutionary act blurs his distinction between (conventional) illocutions and (non-conventional) perlocutions. Because perlocutions are non-conventional acts a distinction between performing them and trying to perform them is possible at the perlocutionary level. Because illocutions are conventional acts a distinction between performing them and trying to perform them is not possible at the illocutionary level.

I should like to enter here, without developing it, one short caveat. I wanted to discuss the distinction which Austin draws between
illocution and perlocution and, in consequence, I have followed Austin in reading the performative-type prefix to an utterance as fixing by convention what illocutionary act is being performed. To say 'I argue that p' is to argue and to say 'I advise that p' is to advise and so on. As Austin puts it (HTDTW 115 f.n.):

...the whole apparatus of 'explicit performatives'... serves to obviate disagreements as to the description of illocutionary acts.

However, this is unsatisfactory, for at least two reasons. First, the illocutionary act being performed is not always tied by convention to the performative prefix. When I say 'I X that p' I may in fact not be X-ing at all but may be performing some quite different illocutionary act Y. Secondly, what Austin says suggests that for any utterance only one illocutionary act is performed, ideally the act made explicit by the performative opening part. And this is not true, for in saying 'I X that p' I may be performing not only the illocutionary act of X-ing but also other illocutionary acts of Y-ing and Z-ing.

As an example of my first objection take the situation where the colonel says to the corporal 'I advise you not to see my daughter again'. Advice? That would be a fairly perverse description of what is obviously an act of warning. Clearly, the explicit performative will not always obviate disagreement as to the description of illocutionary acts.
As an example of my second objection I offer the following quotation from Jonathan Cohen's article Do Illocutionary Forces Exist?¹

...people often say things like 'In warning them of the danger he was committing himself to their cause'...Are we to suppose, therefore, a second-order force, as it were? But if so we shall need to suppose third-, fourth-, fifth-order forces, and so on, for we might also be in a position to say 'In committing himself to their cause he was condemning his own past actions', 'In condemning his own past actions he was repudiating his previous beliefs', 'In repudiating his previous beliefs he was making the obvious deductions from what had happened', and so on indefinitely.

I conclude, therefore, that because an utterance may have several different forces (may be used to perform more than one illocutionary act) the force(s) of an utterance cannot always be made explicit through the conventional mediation of a performative prefix. For, as Cohen points out, the original utterance whose several forces were uncovered in the above passage may well have been something like 'There is a plot to kill you'; and, although 'the element of warning in the utterance "There is a plot to kill you" may be made explicit by prefixing the performative "I warn you that" to the same sentence...the element of commitment is only made explicit by prefixing 'I commit myself' to quite a different expression'.²

Austin makes one further, notable attempt to distinguish between illocutions and perlocutions. He argues most ingeniously (HTDTW 121 ff.)

¹ PQ, 14:55 (1964), pp.130-1.
² op. cit. p.131.
that the formulae, 'In saying x I was doing y' and 'By saying x I did y' will help us to identify illocutionary and perlocutionary verbs. The 'in' formula is for picking out illocutionary verbs; 'In saying I would shoot him I was threatening him'. The 'by' formula is for picking out perlocutionary verbs; 'by saying that I would shoot him I alarmed him'. I shall not comment any further on this device. It is, as Austin admits, not entirely successful. Further, it seems to me that the argument is, to some extent, a work of supererogation, since the distinctions (perlocutions are real effects, illocutions are not; illocutions are conventional acts, perlocutions are not) on which I have already commented mark much more clearly the differences between illocutions and perlocutions. I should, however, like to make one comment about the formula for detecting illocutionary verbs, viz.,

'In saying x I was doing y' or 'I did y'.

This formula underlines the fact that Austin's later theory of language is, like the performative thesis before it, a theory about actions. It is a theory about 'the things we can do with words', much as the performative thesis had to do with the actions we could perform simply by uttering the prescribed words. Because this is so there are two important verbs in Austin's lists of illocutionary verbs (HTDTW 152-62) which the illocutionary formula certainly will not accommodate. They are 'know' and 'believe' (HTDTW 161).¹ For while

¹With question marks.
we may claim that in saying x we were promising, advising, warning, admitting, concluding, maintaining, stating, denying, welcoming, apologizing and so on through the complete list, we cannot say either 'In saying x I knew y' or 'In saying x I believed y'. Certainly we cannot say so in the sense which Austin's formula demands. We might, perhaps, remark: 'In saying that he was unreliable I believed what his professor said about him'. What we mean here is: 'When I said that he was unreliable I believed that his professor said about him'. We certainly do not mean that the believing was something we actually did in the saying. And, according to Austin, of course, the welcoming, stating, promising, warning and so on are things that we actually do in the saying. Knowing and believing, then, are not things that we do in or by saying. Knowing and believing are not things that we do with words. Knowing and believing are not things that we do.1

In the concluding part of this essay I shall go back to what is, after all, the beginning of the story, and enquire (1) how the verb 'I know' fares as a performative utterance, and (2) how both 'I know' and 'I believe' fare as illocutionary or force-showing verbs.

1 Knowing and believing have been said to be 'mental acts'. See below pp.217-22.
GRAMMATICAL INVESTIGATIONS

PART III
CHAPTER 6

'I KNOW' AND PERFORMATIVE UTTERANCES

Did Austin, in 'Other Minds', argue that 'I know' is performative?

Austin's Other Minds has been widely, and, I believe correctly, read as an application of his conception of a performative utterance to the theory of knowledge. Thus, Professor Ayer, for example, could say:

The fact is, as Professor Austin has pointed out, that the expression 'I know' commonly has what he calls a 'performative' rather than a descriptive use. (my italics).

And Professor Hampshire, in his obituary article on Austin, wrote:

The most famous of his discoveries in this field was of the element of performativeness that enters into many kinds of utterance ordinarily classified as statements and particularly into utterances that are claims to knowledge. This was certainly a substantial discovery which no one can henceforth neglect in giving an account of knowledge.

I shall, in the present chapter, be offering some criticism of the performative interpretation of 'I know'. Before doing so I should, however, point out that it has been contended by more recent critics that Austin did not really intend the argument in Other Minds to be read

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1 The Problem of Knowledge p. 17.
2 op. cit.
as an argument that 'I know' is a performative utterance. Brown, for example, commends a critical study of Austin\(^1\) in the following words:

It is one of the minor virtues of Furberg's book that it reminds us both that Austin nowhere said that 'I know' is performative, and that he took it, correctly, to be force-showing

Perhaps the most explicit, as it is, I believe, the earliest formulation of this type of argument occurs in J.O. Urmson's paper, Parenthetical Verbs. I shall, therefore, use Urmson's text as a stalking-horse in my criticism of what I take to be a quite erroneous interpretation of Austin. Urmson writes:\(^3\)

...Professor Austin...in his valuable paper on Other Minds...distinguishes a class of performatory verbs and compares our use of 'know' with our use of these verbs. In particular, he compares it with 'guarantee'. But Austin is careful not to say that 'know' is a performatory verb. He also points out important differences between the two verbs.

Now, the argument which Urmson enters here seems to me to be a complete travesty of the facts. (1) 'In particular', if the space devoted to the comparison is to be any criterion, Austin compares 'know' not with 'guarantee' but with 'promise'. (2) It is surely odd to claim that Austin is careful not to say that 'know' is a performatory verb in the light of the fact that Austin nowhere in his Other Minds uses the words 'performatory' or 'performative'. Since Austin does not use the word

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1 Mats Furberg: Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts.
2 AJP, 41 (1963) p.422
3 ECA, p.205
'performative' to describe 'I promise' and 'I guarantee', verbs which, in his later work, are construed as the very paradigms of performative utterance, Urmson cannot argue that Austin was 'careful' not to call 'I know' a performative. A fortiori he cannot argue that Austin's 'care' indicates that he did not think of 'I know' as being performatory. (3) Austin nowhere points out important differences between 'I know' and 'I promise' or between 'I know' and 'I guarantee'. He concedes one difference between 'know' and 'promise' (Papers 69) but immediately suggests that the 'contrast is more apparent than real'. In the following paragraph he argues that if, in the offending comparison, 'I swear' is substituted for 'I know' and 'I guarantee' is substituted for 'I promise', then, even this solitary (more apparent than real) difference between knowing (swearing) and promising (guaranteeing) disappears. I conclude then, that Urmson's argument that Austin did not really make the mistake of construing 'I know' as a performative utterance is based on premises that are either irrelevant or false. It is not relevant to point out that Austin did not say that 'I know' is performatory. For neither did he say that 'I promise' (or 'I guarantee') is performatory. And it is false to claim that Austin pointed out important differences between 'I know' and 'I promise'. For he did not.

The parallel between 'I know' and 'I promise' in 'Other Minds'.

In developing a parallel between knowing and promising Austin was concerned with the problem of the supposed incorrigibility of knowledge
If you know you can't be wrong' is like 'If you promise you can't fail'. Just as it is often reasonable to say 'I promise' even though circumstances may cause me to fail, so it is often reasonable to say 'I know' even though events may prove me wrong. The fact that it 'is always possible...that I may be mistaken or break my word...by itself is no bar against using the expressions 'I know' and 'I promise' as we do in fact use them' (Papers 66).

Knowing is not super-certainty any more than promising is a sort of super-intention. To say 'I know' is not to be more than absolutely certain; there is no certainty superior to absolute certainty. To say 'I promise' is not to fully intend and then intend some more; there is no intention more complete than full intention. Nevertheless 'I promise' is different from 'I fully intend' and 'I know' is different from 'I am absolutely certain'. 'I promise' differs from 'I fully intend' in that when I say 'I promise' I take a plunge, bind myself and stake my reputation. 'I know' differs from 'I am absolutely certain' in that when I say 'I know' I give my word.

What is wrong with both analogies is that Austin while affecting to offer an analogy between knowing and promising (if you know you can't be wrong, if you promise you can't fail) is really offering an analogy between saying 'I know' and saying 'I promise'. And, just because 'I promise' is a performative utterance while 'I know' is not, the latter...
analogy will not bear the weight of the former. Notice that in both Pl
and P2 Austin's remarks about saying 'I promise' will apply equally
well to promising. But his parallel observations about saying 'I
know' are not applicable to knowing. Thus (Pl), I can (i.e. it is
often reasonable to) say 'I promise' when circumstances cause me to
tail, and I can promise when circumstances cause me to fail. But
although I can (i.e. it is reasonable to) say 'I know' when events
prove me wrong I cannot know when events prove me wrong. Again (P2),
if, when I say 'I promise' I bind myself then when I promise I bind
myself. But, if saying 'I know' is giving my word it is not the case
that knowing is giving my word. For I can know something without giving
anyone my word or without saying a word.

By means of the analogy which I have called P2 Austin argues that
knowing is like promising because to say 'I know' or to say 'I promise'
is to perform an action of some kind. Austin does not suggest that
the action which we perform in saying 'I promise' is the act of
promising. That is to say, he does not suggest that to say 'I promise'
is to promise. Such a formulation suggests all too clearly the
unfortunate analogue 'To say "I know" is to know''. It is, I think, of
interest that when Austin wants to tell us what it is that we do when
we say 'I promise' he retreats into the past tense and the passive
voice.

...when I say 'I promise' a new plunge is taken...I have
bound myself to others and staked my reputation...
(Papers 67).
What Austin writes might, not unfairly, be paraphrased as 'When I say "I promise" I take a plunge, bind myself and stake my reputation'.

However, such a description of what it is that we do when we say 'I promise', couched as it is in the present tense, indicative mood and active voice, comes uncomfortably close to Austin's later characterization of a performative utterance (when I say 'I promise', I promise) and, in so doing, comes close to suggesting the very analogy which Austin must avoid, namely: 'When I say "I promise", I promise: when I say "I know", I know'.

When the 'promising side' of the parallel between saying 'I know' and saying 'I promise' is emphasized it seems to yield the unfortunate analogy 'When I say "I promise", I promise: when I say "I know", I know'.

When the 'knowing side' of the parallel is emphasized it suggests a perhaps less disastrous analogy, but one quite at odds with Austin's later writing on performatives. The analogy now suggested is: 'When I say "I know", I say I know: when I say "I promise", I say I promise'.

It is this analogy that Austin seizes on. 'The sense in which you "did promise" is that you did say you promised (did say "I promise"); and you did say you knew' (Papers 69, Austin's italics). The analogy raises two questions, one conceptual and one grammatical. The conceptual question is: Do I, when I say 'I promise' merely say I promise? The (related) grammatical question is: Is 'I say I promise' (or, 'I said I promised') indirect speech for 'I say "I promise"' (or, 'I said "I promise"')? An affirmative answer to either of these questions would be
inconsistent with the performative thesis which Austin later developed. Yet, in Other Minds, Austin gives an affirmative answer to both. For (1), he writes that if you said 'I promise' without fully intending to perform then you didn't promise. And (2) he offers 'You did say you promised' as the indirect speech form of 'You did say "I promise"'.

Of course, any analogy which suggests that 'saying "I promise"' is 'saying I promise' will not do. Because 'I know' is not a performative utterance I can (conceptual point) say 'I know' without knowing, and (related grammatical point) use 'I said I knew' as... indirect speech for 'I said "I know"'. Because 'I promise' is performative I cannot (conceptual point) say 'I promise' but not promise, and, (related grammatical point) I cannot use 'I said I promised' as indirect speech for 'I said "I promise"'. When I say 'I know' I say I know, but when I say 'I promise' I promise.

A Grammatical criterion for performative utterances

In Austin's later work on performative utterances there are several references to grammatical criteria for performative utterances.

1 At least, I cannot when speaking 'seriously'. As Austin says (HTDWM 92 f.n.) 'We shall not always mention but must bear in mind the possibility of "etiolation" as it occurs when we use speech in acting, fiction and poetry, quotation and recitation'.

2 In Truth Austin writes (Papers 99): 'We make a difference between "You said you promised" and "You stated that you promised": the former can mean that you said "I promise", whereas the latter must mean that you said "I promised". I can only retort that the former can not mean that you said 'I promise'.
Thus, early in the hunt, he remarks (HTDTWW 55):

...we should naturally ask first whether there is some grammatical (or lexicographical) criterion for distinguishing the performative utterance (Austin's italics).

and later (HTDTWW 91):

Now we failed to find a grammatical criterion for performatives...

W.H.F. Barnes, in his interesting paper, Knowing, suggests that we can derive from the objection to using 'You said you promised' as indirect speech for 'You said "I promise"' a purely grammatical criterion for what he calls practical, and what Austin would have called performative verbs.1

Because 'I promise' is a performative or practical verb, when I say 'I promise', I promise. In the past tense, when I said 'I promise', I promised. In consequence, I cannot say 'I said "I promise" but I didn't promise'. And because I cannot say 'I said "I promise" but I didn't promise' I cannot use 'I said I promised' as indirect speech for 'I said "I promise"'. For, as Barnes points out, 'the use of the oratio obliqua form "He said that he..." commits one to the possibility of adding by way of comment, "but he doesn't or didn't"'. A grammatical criterion for a performative verb would then be: any verb 'I X' is performative if the indirect speech form of the direct speech report 'I said "I X"' is 'I X'd' and not 'I said I X'd'. For

1 PR, 72 (1963) p. 6.
example, 'I like' is not performative because my saying 'I like' may be correctly reported in the form 'He said he liked'. 'I swear' is performative because the indirect speech form of the direct speech report 'He said "I swear"' is not 'He said he swore' but is simply 'He swore'.

Although, in Other Minds, Austin does give 'You said you promised' as the indirect speech form of 'You said "I promise"' and in this way effects a parallel with the (correct) oratio obliqua 'You said you knew', he is clearly unhappy about the completion of these apparently analogous expressions. For, although we may round on the ignorant by accusing: 'You said you knew but you didn't know', we cannot, even given Austin's mistaken locution, round on the defaulting contractor with the words 'You said you promised but you didn't promise' but only with 'You said you promised but you didn't perform'. In a further attempt to expand the analogy in order to show that this contrast between 'I know' and 'I promise' is 'more apparent than real', Austin offers to substitute for 'I know', 'I swear', and for 'I promise', 'I guarantee'. Now since 'I swear' is, like 'I promise', explicitly performative, it is not surprising to find that when 'I swear' is substituted for 'I know' we can round on someone who swears 'falsely' in much the same way that we round on someone who promises but does not perform.

1 'He said he swore' is, of course, indirect speech for 'He said "I swear"'.
not perform. 'You did swear: you did promise'. However, that 'I swear'
is in this way like 'I promise' does not seem to me to serve the
purpose which Austin wants the resemblance to serve (i.e. the purpose of
drawing a more complete analogy between 'I know' and 'I promise').

Austin comments in a footnote (Papers 70):

'Swear', 'guarantee', 'give my word', 'promise', all these
and similar words cover cases both of 'knowing' and of
'promising', thus suggesting the two are analogous.

However, this is far from being the case. The list of verbs 'guarantee',
'know', 'swear', 'assure', 'give my word' and so on reads like an (all
too easy) intelligence test for philosophers; pick the odd verb out. If
I say to you 'I swear, predict, assure you, know, give you my word and
guarantee that Jones is at home' when Jones is not in fact at home, then
although I did swear, predict, assure you, give you my word and
guarantee that he was at home I did not know that he was at home.

Of somewhat greater interest to us, however, is Austin's proposal
to substitute for 'I promise', 'I guarantee'. For, since both these
verbs seem to be clearly performative we should not expect them to
behave differently. (Remember that Austin's purpose in proposing this
substitution is to make the analogy between knowing and promising more
effective by patching it up where it breaks down on the impossibility
of paralleling 'You said you knew but you didn't know' with 'You said
you promised but you didn't promise'). Austin writes (Papers 70):

Suppose again that, instead of 'I promise', I had said
'I guarantee' (e.g. to protect you from attack); in that
case, upon my letting you down, you can say, exactly as
in the knowing case 'You said you guaranteed it, but you didn't guarantee it' (Austin's italics).

Now, if Austin's locution (you said you guaranteed) is allowable, Barnes' criterion breaks down in the case of 'guarantee', a verb which, on the face of it, certainly seems to be practical or performative. However, I believe, with Barnes, that the locution is not allowable and that Austin's unfortunate friend in thus speaking spoke incorrectly. Properly, he should have rounded on his guarantor by saying: 'You guaranteed to protect me but did nothing about it'. 'You said you promised' is a beguiling expression; it beguiled as nice an ear as Austin's. 'You said you guaranteed is even more beguiling since it seems plausible to add 'but you didn't guarantee' where it does not seem possible to add 'but you didn't promise'.

Barnes suggests two reasons why this should be so but neither of them seems to me to be correct. They are:

(1) ...it may be claimed that certain chains guarantee freedom from skid. I can then say 'You said these chains guaranteed freedom from skid but they don't'.

(2) We sometimes say 'I'll guarantee...' rather than 'I guarantee...'. You may in the former case round on your guarantor by complaining 'You said you would guarantee it but you didn't'.'

Now Barnes concedes that since the verb in his second example is in the future tense, and practical verbs function as practical verbs only in the present tense the expression 'I'll guarantee' is being used

\[\text{op. cit. p.12 (2) is my paraphrase of what Barnes says.}\]
descriptively rather than practically. 'Promise' is, perhaps, not often used in the future tense but if it were so used it would behave no differently. A facetious fiancé might say 'Tomorrow I'll promise...'. When he fails to turn up at the church 'You said you would promise but you didn't' seems at least a possible reproach. Barnes' first example fails too, and for a similar reason. 'These chains guarantee' is indeed present tense but it is also third person plural. In consequence, it is not practical but descriptive. 'These chains guarantee' parallels not 'I promise', but 'They promise'. 'You said they promised but they didn't promise' is a perfectly proper locution.

I believe that 'You said you guaranteed' may have a use as the indirect speech form of 'You said "I guarantee"', and that what follows is a better explanation of the plausibility of 'You said you guaranteed it but you didn't guarantee it'. Austin pointed out that first person, present tense occurrences of verbs ordinarily taken to be performative are descriptive when employed as habitual indicatives. Take the verb 'I bet'. Normally, when I say the words 'I bet' I do not describe an act of betting or state that I bet; I bet. However, suppose that I say something like 'I bet only during the flat season'. Then clearly, although I am using the very words ('I bet') that I use to make a bet, I am not, in this instance, making a bet, and my utterance is not

\[^1\] I except the perhaps statistically normal use of 'I bet' where it is well enough understood that the speaker has no intention of actually wagering. 'I bet he'll be late again' and so on.
performative, but rather, descriptive.

Now although the words 'I promise' are not commonly used with the sense of a habitual indicative ('I promise more than is good for me'; 'I promise more than I perform') the words 'I guarantee' have a very common employment in just this sense. A shopkeeper might say 'I guarantee all the refrigerators I sell'. Suppose that he made this general claim and then sold me a refrigerator without handing over any note of warranty. Upon his later refusing to do so, or, in the absence of a note, to fix the refrigerator, I might well complain: 'You said you guaranteed all your refrigerators but you don't'. It is, I think, this possibility of a descriptive use of 'I guarantee' which makes Austin's example so plausible. But, of course, such an explanation will not cover the situation imagined by Austin in which I say 'I guarantee to protect you'. In such a situation, having said 'I guarantee' I have guaranteed, and, in consequence, the indirect speech report 'You said you guaranteed' is not apt.

Could I say 'I promise' without promising, thus licensing the indirect speech report 'You said you promised'? When Austin, in his later work, discusses the infelicities to which performative utterances are prone, he divides the infelicities into two classes, the misfires and the abuses (HTDFW 18). When a performative utterance misfires the act is 'purported but void'; when a performative utterance is abused the act is 'professed but hollow'. In Other Minds Austin suggests that
if something is wrong with my saying 'I promise' then there is a sense in which I don't promise.

...it may well transpire that you never fully intended to do it...in another 'sense' of promise you can't then have promised to do it, so that you didn't promise (Papers 69).

Clearly the infelicity which Austin has here in mind is of the type which he was later to call an abuse. I didn't really promise because I didn't fully intend. But although I may abuse the convention of promising by promising without intending to perform, it is clear that when I say 'I promise', however insincerely, I promise. 'Promising without intending' is, like 'apologizing without feeling sorry' a perfectly proper locution. If it were true that whenever I say the words 'I promise' without intending to perform (or 'I apologize' without feeling sorry) I do not promise (or apologize) then it would be logically impossible to promise without intending (or apologize without feeling sorry). What then should we make of such expressions as 'a very formal apology indeed' or 'we know what his promises are worth'? These expressions, and others like them, are meaningful just because to say 'I apologize', however coldly, is to apologize, and to say 'I promise', however insincerely, is to promise. This is the position adopted by Austin in his later work. Thus, in his \textit{Performativ}e

\footnote{It is not clear to me why Austin speaks of a 'sense' of promise rather than a sense of 'promise'. Perhaps because he has qualms about the doctrine, to which he appears to be subscribing, that the word 'promise' has a number of senses ('senses').}
Utterances Austin says of promising without intending that 'we should not say that I didn't in fact promise, but rather that I did promise but promised insincerely' (Papers 226 my italics). And in HTDTWW he says: (p.10) 'Accuracy and morality alike are on the side of the plain saying that our word is our bond'. I take it then that Austin came to reject the notion that to say 'I promise' while not intending to perform is in any sense of promise not to promise. I conclude, therefore, with some support from Austin, that we cannot, in the abuse of promising, find any justification for the expression 'I said I promised but I didn't promise'. In consequence, we cannot find any justification for using 'I said I promised' as the oratio obliqua form of the direct speech report 'I said "I promise"'.

What then of the other type of infelicity described by Austin and called by him a misfire? As it is not so easy to think of an occasion on which my saying 'I promise' may misfire let us consider first some other, more vulnerable performatives.

If I say to you 'I bet you sixpence it will rain' and you don't take me up on it, would it then be in order for me to say 'I said I bet you sixpence but I didn't bet you since you didn't take me on'? Or, if I say 'I challenge you' and you turn away muttering something about anachronisms, would it then be in order for you to report: 'He said he challenged me but he didn't challenge me since I don't accept his ridiculous code of honour'? When the corporal shouts at the colonel 'I
order you to pick up your musket' can the colonel retort: 'You said you
ordered me but you didn't order me because you can't order me, you
haven't got the right to order me'? In the case of promising it is
rather more difficult to find an example of a possible misfire.

Austin suggests that it is a misfire if I attempt to promise you
something that will be to your detriment. Austin's example of this
sort of infelicity is 'I promise I will bash your face in' (HTDTW 35).
I am not sure that I agree with Austin that it is infelicitous to
promise someone ill. The dictionary allows to 'promise' the colloquial
sense of 'assure' and expressions like 'You'll be sorry, I promise you'
are not uncommon. However, if Austin were right about this, then, if
I said 'I promise to bash your face in' could you reply 'You said you
promised to bash my face in but you didn't promise because bashing my
face in is not the sort of thing that you can promise to do'? Or,
suppose that at the village dramatic society's rehearsal the school-
master, in the course of the play says to the postmistress 'I promise to

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1 A different analysis from this essay might remark on a submarine (or
not so submarine) streak of violence in Austin's work. Thus, in
HTDTW, he promises to bash your face in and gently persuades someone
by swinging a big stick or mentioning aged parents still in the Third
Reich. In Pretending a lump is bitten right out of your calf, and
the preferred modal example in Ifs and Cans is 'I can ruin you'. A
Plea for excuses provides an especially rich lode. There, Austin
offers to shoot the reader's donkey and push him (the reader) over a
cliff, and, an especially gratuitous example - 'Something in the lad's
upturned face appealed to him, he threw a brick at it'.

2 Not uncommon though, perhaps, a bit 'common'. The problem of common
usage and best usage.
marry you'. If the postmistress happens to be a bit unhinged and tries in 'real life' to hold the schoolmaster to his 'promise', might the schoolmaster say, by way of explanation, 'I said I promised but of course I didn't promise; it was only a play'?

'I said I bet but I didn't bet', 'I said I ordered but I didn't order' and 'I said I promised but I didn't promise' all strike us as being artificial and even whimsical ways of accounting for unusual situations. We might notice that without a subsequent 'explanation' - 'I was only a corporal', 'it was only a play' - such locutions are not intelligible. When they have been 'explained' they are just intelligible. Our response will ordinarily be to think that if that is what the speaker means he has found a very odd way of putting it. Consequently, Barnes' criterion for a performative or practical verb will do very well for at least such obviously performative verbs as 'bet', 'order', 'swear' and 'promise'. For, even in the case of, for example, bets and promises which are in some way infelicitous (abuse or misfire) the locutions 'I said I bet but I didn't bet' and 'I said I promised but I didn't promise' do not seem to be in order. And because these locutions are not in order 'I said I bet' and 'I said I promised' cannot be the indirect speech forms of 'I said "I bet"' and I said "I promise"'.

Are there verbs to which Barnes' rule sometimes applies but sometimes does not apply? That is to say, are there verbs which appear to be performative in some contexts and non-performative in others?
Barnes suggests that 'approve' is such a verb.¹ When the Permanent Secretary writes 'I approve' across a civil servant's minute the civil servant reports that the Permanent Secretary approves the minute and not that he says he approves it. The civil servant does not ask: 'You say you approve but do you really approve?'. However, we may say of Grandmama who remarks: 'I disapprove of rock-and-roll' that although she says she disapproves she doesn't really disapprove.

Barnes' example is not, I think, a good one because he has not distinguished between the rather different verbs 'approve' and 'approve of'. To be sure, usage is sometimes loose. Mrs Jones, having bought a new hat, will ask Mr Jones whether or not he approves and will report either that her husband approves or that he does not approve. Nevertheless, the two verbs are quite distinct and distinguishable. Notice that while Grandmama can both approve of and disapprove of rock-and-roll there is no verb 'disapprove' analogous to the performative 'approve'. Again, the Permanent Secretary may, of course, approve what he doesn't approve of and approve of what he can't approve. However, while attempting to distinguish between a practical and a non-practical use of 'approve' Barnes makes the interesting suggestion that 'the Permanent Secretary has a function which he exercises by writing "I approve"...Grandmama has no function in the home'. Austin,

¹ op. cit., p.7.
interestingly enough, makes a similar suggestion apropos the verb 'to hold' (HTDTW 88).

...If you are a judge and say 'I hold that...' then to say you hold is to hold; with less official persons it is not so clearly so: it may be merely descriptive of a state of mind.¹

Many of Austin's performatives might be assessed in this way. When a magistrate, believing me to be innocent says: 'I find you guilty', or, when a valuer, wishing to defraud me says: 'I value it at £3000, we shall want to round on them using such locutions as 'You found me guilty but believed me to be innocent' and 'You valued it at £3000 knowing all the time that it was worth much more'. But if, speaking as a non-professional I say: 'I find it to be such and such' or 'I value it at so much' then you may round on me by saying 'You said you found it to be such and such but you really found it to be no such thing' and 'You said you valued it at so much but you really valued it at a great deal more'.

Although such verbs as 'hold', 'class', 'date', 'find' and 'place' do not have two senses as distinct as the senses of 'approve' and 'approve of' (we cannot say 'I hold but I don't hold' while we can say 'I approve it but I don't approve of it') they might, perhaps, be classified as performatives or descriptive according to whether they are

¹ Austin, nowhere in his writing on performatives recognizes Barnes' grammatical point. If to say 'I hold' is to hold then 'To say "I hold"' is not 'To say you hold'.
used in a professional or a lay context. However, take the verbs 'agree', 'concede', 'admit' and so on. When I say (insincerely) 'I agree that $S$ is $P$' or 'I concede the point' how do you retort on discovering that I was being disingenuous? If 'agree' and 'concede' are performative or practical verbs, then, with Barnes' criterion in mind you will reply: 'You agreed that $S$ was $P$ although you didn't believe it was' and 'You conceded the point although you didn't accept the argument. If, however, 'agree' and 'concede' are not thought of as being performative you will reply: 'You said you agreed but you didn't agree' and 'You said you conceded the point but you didn't really concede it'.

'You conceded the point but ought not to have done so since you didn't accept the argument' parallels 'You promised but ought not to have done so since you didn't intend to perform'. 'You said you conceded but you didn't really concede' parallels 'You said you knew but you didn't really know'.

In the case of 'approve' and 'approve of' we distinguished between a performative verb (approve) and a non-performative verb (approve of). In the case of 'hold', 'find' and so on we distinguished between a professional context in which these verbs were best thought of as being performative and a lay context in which they were not. Because 'I approve' is (always) performative we report that the Permanent Secretary approved the proposal and not that he said he approved it. Because the context is professional we report that the judge held or found and not that he said he held or said he found. In the case of 'agree', 'concede',
etc., we hardly know what to say. In order to get rid of the common room bore did you agree with him or did you (merely) say you agreed with him.

Performing and Describing

One thing, however, seems clear. We take a rather different view of agreement or concession according to whether we report an 'insincere' agreement or concession (1) in the form 'I agreed that...', 'I conceded that...', or, (2) in the form 'I said I agreed that...', 'I said I conceded that...'. When we speak in the former way we think of agreement or concession as an act which we perform in or by uttering the words 'I agree' or 'I concede'. No doubt we abuse the convention of agreement if we say 'I agree' without having the requisite thoughts or feelings, just as we abuse the convention of promising if we say 'I promise' without having the requisite intentions. Nevertheless, we agree (we perform the act of agreeing). When, however, we report an 'insincere' agreement in the words 'I said I agreed' we think of agreement, not as an action, but as a frame of mind, or a state of mind (as Austin says of unofficial 'holding') or a disposition to behave in such and such a way. 'I said I agreed' is a report that I described myself (falsely) as being in that state or frame of mind or as being disposed so to behave.

These considerations bring us back to 'I know'. Because we can think of agreement and concession as being (speech-) actions which we perform, it is possible to construe 'I agree' and 'I concede' as performative verbs. That is to say we can use 'I agreed' as a report
of the insincere utterance 'I agree' as we must use 'I promised' as a report of the empty utterance 'I promise'. However, because knowing is not any kind of action\(^1\) it is not possible to construe 'I know' as a performative utterance. We can not use 'I knew' as a report of my having said 'I know' when I did not in fact know. We have, then, the following three cases.

1. Because promising is an action 'I promise' is a performative utterance. In consequence, my saying 'I promise', however insincerely, must always be reported in the form 'I promised', 'He promised', etc., and never in the form 'I said I promised', 'He said he promised'.

2. Because agreement can be thought of as being an action 'I agree' can be construed as a performative verb. Because 'I agree' may be read in this way we can report a speaker's (insincere) 'I agree' in the form 'I agreed', 'He agreed' and so on. However, we may think of agreement not as an act to be performed but as a state of mind or disposition to be described. When we think of agreement in this way we don't read 'I agree' as performative. We then report an insincere agreement in the form 'I said I agreed', etc.

\(^1\) Not even a 'mental act'. See below pp.217-23.
(3) Because knowing is not an action 'I know' cannot be read as a performative utterance. Consequently, your saying 'I know' (when you don't) must be reported in the form 'You said you knew' and cannot be reported in the form 'You knew'. It is true that if you say to-day 'I know' I may, if I believe you, say to-morrow 'You knew yesterday' rather than 'You said you knew yesterday'. But I do not report 'You knew' merely on the grounds that you said 'I know'. And I do say 'You promised' or 'You agreed' merely on the grounds of your having said 'I promise' or 'I agree'. That is to say, 'You knew' is not a report of your having said 'I know' as 'You promised' is an indirect speech report of your having said 'I promise'.

In the light of the foregoing comments a passage from Robert Brown's review of *HTDTW* reads rather oddly. Brown says:  

...the excitement of the performative thesis lay in its exposure of the 'descriptive fallacy' - the belief that phrases like 'I know' and 'I promise' describe actions. Once it was realized that they do not, only confusion could arise from treating all such non-descriptive phrases as performatives (my italics).  

Now, Brown's characterization of the descriptive fallacy as 'the belief that phrases like "I know" and "I promise" describe actions' is rather more plausible in the case of 'I promise' than in the case of 'I know'.

1 op. cit. p.422
To be sure, promising is an action and it is, perhaps, true that philosophers have construed the phrase 'I promise' as describing the action which it in fact constitutes. But knowing is not an action and I should have thought that the excitement of the performative thesis might lie in the 'exposure' of the fallacious belief that phrases like 'I know' and 'I promise' describe — period; the question of what they describe being left open. After all it seems much more plausible to read 'I know' as being descriptive, not of an act of knowing, but, like Austin's unofficial 'I hold', of a certain state of mind. True, Austin himself is vague as to what 'I know' is believed, fallaciously, to describe. Indeed, in one passage he comes close to suggesting that it is an act of knowing. '...saying "I know"...is not saying "I have performed a specially striking feat of cognition..."' (Papers 67). As I shall argue in the following chapter the source of Austin's errant application of the performative thesis to the phrase 'I know' may lie in the confused assumption that knowing is an action.

In the meantime, I should like to claim that it is just because knowing is not an action that Austin is unable to show that the phrase 'I know' (like the phrase 'I promise') is used to perform an act (of knowing). Further, because Austin has not shown that the phrase 'I know' is performative he has not shown that it is non-descriptive. For, Urmson's argument notwithstanding, the conjunction non-descriptive but

1 See above pp. 188-9.
not performative is not argued for in Other Minds. In consequence, the question whether or not the phrase 'I know' describes (something) remains quite unresolved, and Austin's argument in Other Minds does nothing to license Brown's characterization of 'I know' as a non-descriptive phrase.

In the following chapter I shall deal with further attempts to show that 'I know' (and 'I believe') are non-descriptive, not because they are performative, but because they are illocutionary or force-showing or parenthetical verbs.
CHAPTER 7

PERFORMATIVE UTTERANCES, ILOCCUTIONARY FORCES

AND PARENTHETICAL VERBS

If we mark a distinction between, on the one hand, Austin's more oblique approaches to philosophy, and, on the other hand, his frontal onslaughts on notorious philosophical storm centres, Other Minds certainly falls within the latter category. It is a direct application of Austin's methods to some central problems of epistemology. Not so HTDTW which bears only very obliquely on epistemological questions. Nevertheless, Mats Furberg, writing after the publication of HTDTW, reads Austin's earlier work on 'I know' as anticipating his later theory of illocutionary or force-showing verbs, rather than as exemplifying the 'cruder' performative thesis. As I have argued in the preceding chapter, the 'evidence', most clearly assembled by Urmson, to the effect that Austin, in Other Minds, did not think of 'I know' as being performative is quite unsatisfactory. On the contrary, I believe that a candid reading of Other Minds can only show that Ayer and Hampshire (in common with most other philosophers)

2 op. cit.
were quite justified in their belief that Austin construed 'I know' as a performative utterance, however implausible that thesis may now appear.

Read as contributions to epistemology there are two important differences between Other Minds and HTDTW. First, as I have said, HTDTW has a very oblique bearing on epistemology, containing only two brief references to verbs which interest epistemologists. Thus on page 90 Austin writes:

> We may also mention 'I know that', 'I believe that', etc. How complicated are these examples? We cannot assume that they are purely descriptive.

And on page 161 Austin includes in his list of 'expositive' illocutions the verbs 'doubt', 'believe' and 'know', each preceded by a question mark. In Other Minds Austin went far beyond not assuming that 'I know' was purely descriptive; he was, indeed, at some pains to establish a close analogy between 'I know' and the paradigmatically performative 'I promise'. 'To suppose', he wrote, 'that "I know" is a descriptive phrase, is only one example of the descriptive fallacy, so common in philosophy' (Papers 71 Austin's italics).

Secondly, and more importantly, in Other Minds 'I know' is compared with 'I promise' as a way of distinguishing 'I know' from 'I believe'. Just as promising is not a sort of super intention, so knowing is not a sort of super certainty. It is a common element of what Austin later calls performativeness which distinguishes 'I know' and 'I promise' on the one hand, from, on the other hand, 'I believe' and 'I intend'. But
in HTDTW 'I know that' and 'I believe that' are not distinguished in this, or indeed in any other, way. Whatever performative status (or illocutionary force) they are to have they are to have equally. It is of some interest that Furberg nowhere notes that whereas, in the later theory, 'I know' and 'I believe' are coupled (very tentatively) as illocutionary verbs, in Other Minds a substantial part of the argument depends on the contrast between them. Urmson too, passes over this distinction between 'know' and 'believe'. In developing his force-showing thesis Urmson concentrates on 'believe' and invokes Austin's support in the (supposedly) parallel case of 'know', without noticing that Austin's argument is, in no small part, intended to explain 'the very great difference between saying even "I'm absolutely sure" and saying "I know"'. (Papers 68, first italicized phrase mine).

As I say, Austin is not concerned, in HTDTW, with epistemological matters; 'know' and 'believe' have very low priority in his lists of illocutionary forces. However, in the light of what Furberg and, especially, Urmson have to say about 'know' and 'believe' as force-showing verbs we might well ask: Will Austin's theory of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts accommodate 'know' and 'believe' as illocutionary verbs?

I believe not, for, as I have already stressed, Austin's later theory, like the performative thesis before it, is a theory of speech acts; the locutionary act of saying something, the illocutionary act performed in saying something and the perlocutionary act performed by
saying something. Because knowing, believing and doubting are not actions 'know', 'believe' and 'doubt' are three verbs in Austin's long lists of illocutionary verbs (HTDTW chap.12) that his theory will not accommodate. The most explicit formula which Austin gives for the selection of illocutionary verbs is:

'In saying x I was doing y' or 'I did y' (HTDTW 121).

However, because knowing, believing and doubting are not things that we do we cannot say 'In saying that, I knew or believed or doubted'. At least we cannot so say in the sense which Austin's formula demands. We might, of course, say: 'In saying that, I showed that I knew', or, 'In saying that, I affirmed that I believed', or, 'By saying that, I let him know that I doubted'. However, the actions performed in or by saying something are not, in these instances, the acts of knowing, believing or doubting. They are, rather, the illocutionary acts of showing and affirming and the perlocutionary act of letting someone know.

One of Austin's principal conclusions in HTDTW is that 'I state' is, like 'I promise' or 'I warn', illocutionary. Austin argues for this conclusion in the following passage (HTDTW 133):

Surely to state is every bit as much to perform an illocutionary act as, say, to warn or to pronounce (my italics).

Now if we wanted to show that 'I know' is, like 'I state' (or 'I warn' or 'I pronounce') illocutionary or force-showing we could hardly argue in support of this contention that 'to know is every bit as much to
perform an illocutionary act as, say, to state (or to warn or to pronounce). For to know is not to perform any act at all, still less an illocutionary act. If I want to state or warn or pronounce, I say 'I state' or 'I warn' or 'I pronounce'. But if I want to know I don't (just) say 'I know'. 'I state' is an illocutionary or force-showing verb because in saying 'I state', I perform the illocutionary act of stating. 'I know' is not an illocutionary verb because in saying 'I know' I do not perform the illocutionary act of knowing. For knowing is not any act, and, a fortiori, not an illocutionary act.

To say 'I know that p' is, of course, to perform the locutionary act of saying something (viz. 'I know that p'). And in performing a locutionary act I may be performing any number of illocutionary acts (informing you that I know or warning you that I know). Similarly, by performing the locutionary act of saying 'I know' I may be performing any number of perlocutionary acts (convincing you or deceiving you). Analogously, in and by performing the simple locutionary act of saying 'I state' I might be performing, over and above the illocutionary act of stating, further illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of informing, warning, convincing and deceiving. However, it is not on grounds such as these that Austin argues that 'I state' is illocutionary. 'I state' is illocutionary because in saying 'I state' I perform the illocutionary act of stating. Because knowing, believing and doubting are not actions of any kind the formula 'In saying x I did y' will not accommodate 'I know', 'I believe' and 'I doubt' as illocutionary verbs.
It has been said by some philosophers that knowing and believing are 'mental acts' and therefore, if the word 'act' is to keep any of its ordinary connotation, a sort of doing. It is of some interest, in the light of Austin's application of the performative thesis to the theory of knowledge, to note that Cook Wilson thought of knowing as a sort of activity; and that Cook Wilson believed that linguistic usage supported this conception of knowing.

Let us then first endeavour to follow actual linguistic usage and take for granted the application of the name thinking to certain kinds of consciousness and its exclusion from certain other kinds. We shall then ask what is common to the things to which the name is applied. Thinking then, in its normal use, always has something to do with knowing.

There is some knowing, viz. the process of reasoning, to which the name 'thinking' is applied without any doubt. It is true that, according to an idiom of our language, when we prove by reasoning that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal we should not be said to think that the angles are equal, but to know that they are. We might therefore vaguely suppose that perhaps the process of reasoning is to be called thinking and that knowing is a result of such a process. This would be a mistake; for the process of reasoning is precisely the activity of knowing... and here, therefore, the ordinary idiom encourages a fallacy¹ (Cook Wilson's italics).

Here then we have a fairly typical argument from ordinary language. The central, and 'undeniable' appeal to common usage is made; the aberrant idiom is considered and dismissed. However, in this instance, as it seems to me, the appeal is only too deniable, the dismissal all too summary.

¹ Statement and Inference Vol.I Part I chap.2 pp.34-5.
'There is some knowing', says Cook Wilson, 'viz. the process of reasoning, to which the name "thinking" is applied without any doubt'. Of course Cook Wilson rather begs the question by using extraordinary language in his appeal to ordinary language. If, in making our appeal we assume that reasoning is a sort of knowing we can hardly deny that the word 'thinking' is applicable to a sort of knowing since the word 'thinking' certainly applies to the process of reasoning. Indeed, the question is begged at the very outset by Cook Wilson's curious use of the present continuous tense of the verb 'to know'. We do say: 'There is some reasoning which is inspired, illogical, doubtful'; 'there is some thinking which is crooked, slow, perverse'. We do not say 'There is some knowing...'. Thus, as I see it, Cook Wilson's appeal to ordinary usage is vitiated by the language in which the appeal is couched; language which assumes, incorrectly, that knowing is, like reasoning and thinking, an activity.

'We might...suppose that...the process of reasoning is to be called thinking and that knowing is a result of such a process'. Cook Wilson rejects this very reasonable supposition by reiterating, slogan-like, what he has already assumed to be implicit in ordinary language, viz. that 'the process of reasoning is...the activity of knowing'. It is worth noting that the supposition which Cook Wilson deems a fallacy encouraged by ordinary idiom approximates roughly to Professor Ryle's conclusion that knowing is an achievement, not a process. On the other hand, Cook Wilson's assimilation of (the activity of) reasoning and
knowing encourages the belief, which Ryle has derided, that there is a kind of reasoning (knowing) which can't be wrong. As Ryle puts it:

So men are sometimes infallible. Similarly if hitting the bull's eye were construed as a special kind of aiming, or if curing were construed as a special kind of treatment, then, since neither could, in logic, be at fault, it would follow that there existed special fault-proof ways of aiming and doctoring. There would exist some temporarily infallible marksmen and some occasionally infallible doctors.1

Later in the chapter from which I have already quoted there is a passage which reveals very clearly both Cook Wilson's assumption that knowing is an activity on all fours with other mental activities and the oddness of that assumption. Cook Wilson writes:

When a man is planning something he would certainly be said to be thinking. He is partly wondering and inquiring, partly learning and knowing, and partly forming opinions as to what would suit his purpose.2

Planning, thinking, wondering, inquiring, learning and forming opinions are all activities. 'I am planning', 'I am thinking', 'I am inquiring' and so on are all legitimate answers to the question 'What are you doing now?'. Knowing is not an activity; 'I am knowing' is not a proper answer to the question 'What are you doing'? 3

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1 The Concept of Mind pp.152-3
2 op. cit. p.37
3 It is of some interest to compare Cook Wilson's list - 'plan', 'think', 'wonder', 'inquire', 'learn', 'know' - with Austin's list (Papers 70) - 'swear', 'guarantee', 'give my word', 'promise', 'know'. In each case 'know' is clearly the odd verb out; and, in each case, for much the same reason.
Both Cook Wilson and Austin appealed, in their philosophizing, to ordinary language and warned of the danger of neglecting it. As Cook Wilson says: 'Distinctions current in language can never be safely neglected'. And Austin warns: 'One can't abuse ordinary language without paying for it', adding, in a footnote, 'Especially if one abuses it without realizing what one is doing' (SS 15). Cook Wilson's and Austin's discussions of 'knowing' might be read as parables exemplifying these texts. For certainly Cook Wilson neglects a distinction current in language when he assumes that knowing, like reasoning, is an activity. And Austin may follow him in just this abuse of ordinary language when he argues that knowing is not performing 'a specially striking feat of cognition, superior, in the same scale as believing and being sure, even to being quite sure' (Papers 67, my italics). Here Austin seems to suggest that to believe or to be quite sure is to perform a feat of cognition and that to know is also to perform a feat of cognition, though not a superior feat. Moreover, and even if this passage will not bear the interpretation I have put on it, it seems plausible to argue that Austin applied his conception of a performative utterance to 'I know' at least in part because he thought knowing to be, like promising, a sort of activity. If I am right about this we have an illustration to yet another Austin text. In A Plea for Excuses Austin recommended the study of Excuses on the ground that

1 ibid. p.46
we should prefer a field which is not too much trodden into bogs or tracks by traditional philosophy, for in that case even 'ordinary' language will often have become infected with the jargon of extinct theories, and our own prejudices too, as the upholders and imbiers of theoretical views, will be too readily, and often insensibly, engaged (Papers 130-1).

Epistemology is certainly a well trodden field and it would appear that Austin did not escape the infection of earlier jargon.

I have argued that knowing is not an action but I have said rather less about believing. Let us subject both 'I know' and 'I believe' to four tests which Austin proposes (HTUWW 83-4) for deciding whether or not any verb, 'I X', is a performative utterance. (As I have argued, 'I X' can be performative only if X-ing is an action). I paraphrase Austin's four tests as follows:

(1) When I say 'I X' does it make sense to ask 'But does he really X'?
(2) Can I X without saying 'I X' or performing some equivalent action?
(3) Can I X deliberately; can I be willing to X?
(4) When I say 'I X' could it be literally false that I X?

Now clearly 'I promise', the paradigmatic performative (speech-act) passes all four tests. For (1), when I say 'I promise' it does not make sense to ask 'Does he really promise?'; (2) I cannot promise without saying 'I promise' or performing some equivalent act, crossing my heart and hoping to die; (3) I can promise deliberately, I can be willing to promise; (4) When I say 'I promise' it cannot be literally false that I promise. When I say 'I promise' you don't retort 'That's not true', even when you believe that I have no intention to perform.
Equally clearly 'I know' fails all four tests. For, (1) When I say 'I know' it makes sense to ask 'Does he really know?'; (2) I can know without saying 'I know' or without performing any conventionally equivalent act; (3) I cannot know deliberately, I cannot be willing to know; (4) When I say 'I know' it may be literally false that I know. 

What about believing? It seems to me that 'I believe' certainly fails tests 1, 2 and 4. For it makes sense to ask 'Does he really believe what he says he believes?'; I can believe something without saying that I believe it; it may be literally untrue that I believe what I say I believe. About test 3 we may be in some doubt since pastors and masters are prone to such locutions as 'I shall try to believe your story' and 'I am willing to believe you this time'. However, such locutions are not usually, I imagine, understood as reports that the speaker actually believes, or is trying to believe you. Ordinarily, they will be taken as superior periphrases for 'I shall try to act as if your story were true' and 'I am willing to behave as if I believed you'. Even when, less self-righteously, I say 'I have tried to believe your story and I cannot' I surely do not mean that I have tried to believe it, but only that having examined your story from all angles and in the most favourable light I don't believe it.

I conclude, then, that the attempt to show that 'I know' and 'I believe' are non-descriptive because force-showing, like the attempt to show that 'I know' is non-descriptive because performative, fails because the theory on which the attempt is based is, in each case, a
theory of speech acts. Because stating, promising, advising, warning, threatening and so on are things that we do such theories can accommodate 'I state', 'I promise', 'I advise' and so on. The performative thesis can explain that expressions like 'I promise' and 'I warn' are not used to describe acts of promising and warning but rather constitute acts of promising and warning. Similarly the illocutionary thesis of HTDTWW can explain that these expressions are used to indicate that the utterance to which they are attached has the force of an act of promising or warning. Because knowing and believing are not actions they are not speech acts, and, in consequence, a theory of speech acts cannot accommodate 'I know' and 'I believe'. Such a theory cannot explain that 'I know' and 'I believe' are not used descriptively either because their use is to constitute the acts of knowing and believing that they purport to describe (performative thesis) or, because they are used to indicate that an utterance has the force of an act of knowledge or an act of belief (illocutionary thesis).

Urmson's 'Parenthetical Verbs'

Urmson's Parenthetical Verbs is a rather more successful attempt to argue that 'I know' and, especially, 'I believe' are non-descriptive because force-showing.

Though, in a wide sense, psychological verbs, they are not psychologically descriptive. They function...to orient the hearer aright towards the statements with which they are associated. The ways in which they do this may be roughly
indicated as being aids to placing the statements aright against the...evidential background.¹

Urmson's attempt is more successful than Austin's because it is not associated with any theory of speech acts. Nevertheless, it seems to me to fail for reasons which I shall now try to make clear.

What is a parenthetical verb? Urmson offers as an example the verb 'suppose'. We may say any one of the following:

I suppose that your house is very old.
Your house, I suppose, is very old.
Your house is very old, I suppose.

A verb, then, is parenthetical if in some contexts it will be virtually indifferent, on all but stylistic grounds, whether the verb occurs at the beginning, middle or end of the indicative sentence with which it is conjoined; this will not always be so, but when it is the verb will be said to be used purely parenthetically.²

Now, it seems to me that at the very outset of his discussion Urmson introduces a distinction which, although nowhere made very clear, is, having regard to some of the things which he says about 'I believe', of the greatest importance. This is the distinction between 'parenthetical' and 'purely parenthetical'. From the passage I have quoted I should understand that a verb which is not in actual parenthesis would, nevertheless, be used purely parenthetically if it could be put into actual parenthesis. Thus, 'I suppose' in 'I suppose your house is old' is purely parenthetical although not in actual parenthesis. The example

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¹ op. cit. p.205
² ibid. p.193
which Urmson gives to mark the distinction between parenthetical and pure parenthetical does not, however, make this point sufficiently clear.

...if one person says 'I suppose that your house is quite new' and another says 'Well I suppose that it is very old', then in the latter statement the verb 'to suppose' is not being used purely parenthetically.¹

I take it that in the former statement the verb is being used purely parenthetically; that it is not being used purely parenthetically in the second statement because it is not open to the latter speaker to retort 'Well it is, I suppose, very old'. Now I doubt very much if this is true, but I call Urmson's example unclear because it seems to me that in such a conversation a speaker might well mimic the structure of the remark he was correcting. Thus, if the former speaker were to say 'The house, I suppose, is new' the latter might certainly retort 'Well, the house I suppose, is old'. In this case the question of whether the second 'I suppose' is in actual parenthesis (and if it is in actual parenthesis it will certainly be purely parenthetical) will depend on purely stylistic considerations.

However, let us take it, the deviousness of the example notwithstanding, that the distinction which Urmson has in mind is the following distinction. A verb is parenthetical and used purely parenthetically when the verb could be (whether it is or not being beside the point) put into actual parenthesis in the statement. A verb

¹ ibid. p.194
is parenthetical but not used purely parenthetically when the verb could not be put into actual parenthesis in the statement. The distinction is of some importance to Urmson because he wants to hold that "I believe" is always used parenthetically, though not always purely so. However, as I shall argue, Urmson's category 'parenthetical-but-not-pure-parenthetical' is quite without a cash-value. A case can be made for a non-descriptive use of 'I believe' only in those instances where 'I believe' is used as what Urmson would call a pure parenthetical (i.e. as potentially an actual parenthetical). In its most frequent employment 'I believe' is not used purely parenthetically (or, as I should want to say, is not used parenthetically at all). In these, the interesting cases, which Urmson wants to classify as parenthetical but not pure parenthetical employments of the verb, there seems to be no good reason for reading 'I believe' as a device for indicating the force of a subsequent statement rather than as the 'psychological-descriptive' which Urmson wants to eliminate.

An example of the pure parenthetical use of 'I believe' would be: 'I believe he will be there'. We might say either 'He will, I believe, be there' or 'He will be there, I believe'. Now doubtless the point of such remarks is not to fasten on the question of the speaker's belief. The statement 'He will be there' is what is important and the 'I believe' (merely) indicates the degree of the speaker's commitment to that

\[1\] ibid. p.203
statement. His commitment is stronger than it would have been if he
had used a parenthetical 'I imagine' but weaker than it would have been
if he had used a parenthetical 'I'm sure'. The contradiction of such a
remark naturally takes the form: 'He won't' rather than 'You don't'.
To reply 'You don't' would, normally, be to exhibit what Austin calls
'the sort of Alice-in-Wonderland over-sharpness of taking "I think that
p" as a statement about yourself which could be answered: "That is just
a fact about you"' ("I don't think..." began Alice: "then you should not
talk" said the Caterpillar or whoever it was) (HTDTMW 89-90). However,
can Urmson go on to argue that 'in the analysis of belief the non-
descriptive parenthetical use [of "I believe"] is primary'? On the
contrary, it seems to me that the essentially trivial, parenthetical
use of 'I believe' is not particularly relevant to any analysis of
belief.

When St Peter made his famous confession of faith - 'I believe that
Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God', he was making what
Urmson would call a parenthetical but not a purely parenthetical use of
'I believe' (And what I should call a non-parenthetical use of 'I
believe'). That is to say, it would be quite absurd to place the 'I

1 Not necessarily so, of course. The parenthetical 'I believe' is a
very 'casual' use of the verb. Trading on this I might, if I wanted
to deceive you about what I believed rather than about his being there,
say 'He will, I believe, be there'. If you saw what I was trying to do
you would certainly retort 'No, you don't'. Here we seem to have some
evidence for the ultimate primacy of the 'psychological-descriptive'
'I believe' over the parenthetical, force-showing 'I believe'.

2 ibid., p.204
believe' of Peter's confession in actual parenthesis to his statement. 'The Son of the Living God, I believe' smacks all too loudly of 'Dr Livingstone, I presume'. Why should this be so? Surely it is that with 'serious' uses of 'know' and 'believe', in those instances where we are really concerned to state what a person knows or believes (a central use, surely, of 'know' and 'believe') the trivializing use of 'know' and 'believe' as parentheses within the statement of what is known or believed is not apt.

Take the verb 'to think'. Urmson does not, strangely enough, cite 'think' as a parenthetical verb. However, 'I think' has a paradigmatically parenthetical use especially in the more cautious run of academic writing. 'It is, I think, a matter for no small concern' and so on. Yet I can hardly believe that Urmson would be prepared to assert that in the philosophical analysis of thought the philosopher's hyper-cautious, parenthetical 'I think' is of primary importance. Urmson might argue that the 'I think' in my example does not really mean 'I think' but is roughly equivalent to 'I am prepared to say' or some such expression. If he should do so, tu quoque would seem to be the apt retort for the parenthetical 'I believe' is surely in similar case. In fact, as parenthetical caveats 'I think' and 'I believe' are, as nearly as matters, synonymous expressions; a consideration which should give Urmson pause since 'the philosophical analysis of belief' is not the same as 'the philosophical analysis of thought'.
I should like to claim that the 'parenthetical' verbs 'know' and 'believe' cannot always be used parenthetically, and that, furthermore, it is the non-parenthetical uses of 'know' and 'believe' which are of primary concern to the analyst of belief or knowledge. Urmson obscures this point by claiming that all uses of, for example, 'I believe' are parenthetical although not all uses are purely parenthetical. If we follow Urmson in this we are seduced into thinking of 'believe' as a 'parenthetical verb' in all its uses, characterized in all its uses by features which are proper only to its purely parenthetical uses. If we talk in Urmson's way we must remember that the important distinction is not, as Urmson assumes it is, between parenthetical and non-parenthetical verbs, but between parenthetical and purely parenthetical uses of certain verbs.¹

Urmson's short discussion² of performatory verbs suggests an interesting parallel with the argument that I have been advancing. In the following passage Urmson gives short shrift to the possible objection that because some performatory verbs can sometimes be used parenthetically they are not performatory verbs.

...we will anticipate a possible criticism. It may be said that the grammatical feature of being used sometimes in parenthesis, in the grammatical sense, is not a sufficient test of a verb's parenthetical character in my sense.

¹ It is implicit in the title of Urmson's paper that there are parenthetical verbs, tout court.
² ibid, p.209-10.
'Guarantee', it may be said, is a performatory verb, since to say 'I guarantee' is to guarantee, not to orientate the hearer. Similarly to say 'I bet' is to bet... But we can put these verbs into parenthesis. My answer is that we do not put these verbs into parentheses when we are using them in a performatory way. To treat 'He'll come to a bad end, I guarantee' as a guarantee, or to ask for the odds... when someone says 'He'll forget to come, I bet' would be, as Aristotle would say, the mark of an uneducated man (my italics).

Now, I shall not be much concerned here with the badness of the arguments by which Urmson tries to show that performatory verbs, when used parenthetically, are not performatory. Suffice it to say that one would not, educated or uneducated, normally ask for the odds on 'I bet he'll forget to come' where the performative verb is not in parenthesis. Contrariwise, one might make a serious wager in the form 'He'll forget to come, I bet five hundred pounds on it'. What is of greater interest is that Urmson uses, in the matter of performatory verbs, the very argument which I wish to advance in the matter of those verbs which, Urmson believes, have been construed, mistakenly, as 'psychologically descriptive'. For Urmson, in effect, argues that we should not think of performatory verbs as being parenthetic merely on the grounds that they are sometimes used parenthetically (purely parenthetically?). We need only note that when performatory verbs are used parenthetically they do not have their (primary) performative function. 'My answer is that we do not put these verbs into parentheses when we are using them in a performatory way'. In a similar way, I should argue that 'psychologically descriptive' verbs like 'know' and 'believe' ought not to be characterized as parenthetical verbs (with all the implications...
which Urmson draws from that characterization) merely on the grounds that they are sometimes used parenthetically. We need only note that when 'know' and 'believe' are used parenthetically they do not have their (primary) descriptive function. My answer is that we do not put these verbs into parentheses when we are using them in a descriptive way. When used parenthetically these verbs may indeed (merely) indicate the evidential background of the statement to which they stand in parenthesis. But this insight ought not to be used to deny the descriptive force of their more common, non-parenthetical use. [Just as Urmson claims that the occasional parenthetical use of 'bet' and 'guarantee' does not take away from the performative force of their more common, non-parenthetical use].

Parenthetical verbs must, because they are parenthetical, operate in a context in which they can be parenthetical. It is one of the weaknesses of Urmson's essay that he is compelled by his thesis to write as if 'I know' and 'I believe' were always used in conjunction with what he calls 'associated statements'. Thus, at the outset, he defines a parenthetical verb as 'a verb which, in the first person present, can be used... followed by "that" and an indicative clause, or else can be inserted at the middle or end of the indicative sentence'.

1 'Non-parenthetical', of course, in my sense. 'Not purely parenthetical' in Urmson’s (somewhat misleading) formulation.
2 ibid., p.193.
Further on\textsuperscript{1} he notes that 'when these verbs are used in the first person of the present tense, as is very clear when they occur grammatically in parenthesis, the assertion proper is contained in the indicative clause with which they are associated' (my italics).

The close connexion which \textsc{Urmson} assumes between 'p' and 'I believe that (or know that) p' has two unfortunate results. (1) It leads \textsc{Urmson} into the sort of confusion which results from a failure to distinguish between 'p' and 'I believe that p'. (2) More importantly, it leads him to neglect all those uses of 'I know' and 'I believe' in which these verbs function without benefit of context, i.e. without benefit of a propositional or statemental context in which they can act as parenthetical directives.

(1) The sort of confusion I have in mind is exemplified by the following passage:\textsuperscript{2}

To say 'The king is visiting Oxford to-morrow', and then, when asked why, to answer 'Oh for no reason at all', would be to sin against the basic conventions governing the use of discourse.

The passage is difficult to criticize because of course one would be unlikely to answer 'For no reason at all' since, if this were a public visit the purpose of it would be well advertised, and if it were a private visit one would probably not be in a position to know the king's

\textsuperscript{1} ibid., p.211
\textsuperscript{2} ibid., p.201-2.
reasons or to know whether he had any reason or not. However, if it were a private visit, then, supposing you were close to the king you might reply 'For no reason at all that I can see'. Suppose further that the king's behaviour were quite erratic, berserk and unreasoned, then surely you might reply, without in the least sinning against the basic conventions governing discourse, 'For no reason at all'. It seems clear that Urmson's question 'Why?' cannot be read (as it surely ought to be read) as 'Why is the king coming?' but must be read as 'Why do you say (believe) that the king is coming?'. Certainly, when the question 'Why?' is read in this way it would be a sin to reply 'For no reason'. However, such a reading is, in the context, only confused, and the confusion is, I believe, engendered by Urmson's assimilation of the very different propositions 'p' and 'I believe that p'. If we construe 'I believe' as a device in (merely) parenthetical relation to 'p' we may well be encouraged to make just such an assimilation.

(2) Urmson treats as paradigms of the use of 'I know' and 'I believe' such statements as 'I know that the battle of Hastings was fought in 1066' and 'I believe that the battle of Blenheim was fought in 1804'. It is tempting to read these statements as being composed of an 'assertion proper' - namely that such and such a battle was fought as such and such a date - together with a parenthetical device indicating, amongst other things, that the speaker regards the assertion proper about the battle of Hastings as being more reliable than the assertion proper about the battle of Blenheim. However, both 'I know' and 'I
believe' have many other uses. I might, for example, say 'I know when the battle of Blenheim was fought' and I might say 'I believe you'. What, in these instances, is the assertion proper for which the 'parenthetical' verbs supply the evidential background or degree of reliability? Urmson tells us that his essay provides an alternative to the 'mistaken view' that verbs like 'I know' and 'I believe' 'report dispositions to behave in certain ways'. I have agreed that (purely) parenthetical uses of these verbs are best construed as indicating what degree of reliability may be placed on the assertion to which they stand in parenthesis. It seems perverse, though, to extrapolate from a plausible generalization about peripheral uses of 'I know' and 'I believe' the wider theory that all uses of 'I know' and 'I believe' are non-descriptive, that is, do not report dispositions to behave in certain ways. For, even when 'I know' and 'I believe' are conjoined with 'associated assertions' we are often interested in the question — whether or not the speaker really knows or believes what he says he knows or believes, rather than in the truth or falsity of the associated assertions. In such instances, surely important occasions for the use of 'I know' and 'I believe' the 'assertion proper' is not 'p' but rather 'I know that p' or 'I believe that p'; and the evidence for these assertions is, in the last resort, the speaker's disposition to behave as if he knew or believed that p. Again, 'I know' and 'I believe' are not always used in alliance with an associated statement. 'I know when' and 'I believe you' are surely most plausibly read as true or false
The verbs can hardly be construed as parenthetical indicators of the speaker's evidence for 'when' or 'you'.

I should now like to make two final points connecting Urmson's work on parenthetical verbs with Austin's work on performative utterances and illocutionary forces.

1. As I pointed out above, Urmson invokes Austin's support in the matter of the parenthetical 'I know' claiming that Austin did not really think of 'I know' as being performatory, but rather thought of it as being force-showing or degree-indicating much in the manner of 'I believe' (as that verb is construed by Urmson). I have already mentioned the oddness of this view in the light of the fact (among others) that part of Austin's concern in his *Other Minds* was to argue for a contrast rather than a parallel between 'I know' and 'I believe'. There is, however, a further, important difference between Austin and Urmson which springs directly from Urmson's treatment of 'I know' as if it were primarily a parenthesis. If 'I know' is parenthetical, indicating degree of evidence, its adverbial equivalent is 'absolutely certainly' or 'most assuredly'. For there can be no evidence superior to absolute certainty or complete assurance. Austin, of course, pointed this out. But then part of Austin's purpose in *Other Minds* was to explain the difference between 'I am absolutely certain' on the one hand, and 'I know' on the other. This distinction, which cannot be accounted for by Urmson (his treatment of 'I know' as a degree-showing parenthesis puts reports of a disposition to behave as if I knew when or believed you.
'I know' exactly on a par with the parenthetical 'I am certain' which indicates the greatest degree of reliability possible) Austin accounts for by claiming that 'I know' is performative.¹

(2) At the beginning of the present chapter I argued that Austin's later theory of illocutionary forces could not, any more than the earlier performative thesis, accommodate such verbs as 'I know' and 'I believe'. This argument was, to some extent, supererogatory, since, although Austin does, briefly, suggest that 'I know' and 'I believe' are not 'purely descriptive', and, although he does list 'know' and 'believe' (with queries) as illocutionary verbs, it would be perverse to read HTDTMW as being, to any important degree, an argument that 'I know' and

¹ I am pointing out a difference between Austin and Urmson. Austin argued for a distinction between claims to certainty and claims to knowledge, a distinction which is not possible on Urmson's account of the matter. Of course Urmson might argue that 'I know' and 'I am certain' are equivalent parentheses. In doing so he would be following the Cook Wilson-Prichard line on knowledge and certainty, of which a fair summary may be found in Prichard's essay on Descartes (Knowledge and Perception p.69). Prichard is quite explicit: 'To be certain of something is to know it' (p.96). He considers the objection that we have often, in the past, been 'certain' and wrong. '...we should first notice that there is a state of mind which we may fail to distinguish from one of certainty, and so regard as one of certainty when it is not. This is what we may describe as an unquestioning frame of mind - or one in which it did not occur to us to doubt something...'. (95-7). States of mind are notoriously chancy bases for conceptual distinctions. Grammar is altogether more reliable. We can say 'I am absolutely certain but I may be wrong'. We cannot say 'I know but I may be wrong'. Cook Wilson might claim that the ordinary idiom encourages a fallacy, but Austin is surely right when he says: 'We all feel the very great difference between saying even "I'm absolutely sure" and saying "I know"' (Papers 68).
'I believe' are illocutionary. However, some critics, for example Furberg, have done just this and more. For they have argued that whatever argument there is in *HTDTWW* to the effect that 'I know' and 'I believe' are illocutionary points to a truer interpretation of *Other Minds* as an argument that 'I know' is force-showing rather than performative. I have, in consequence, thought it as well to argue that neither the doctrine of illocutionary forces nor the performative thesis will accommodate 'I know' (or 'I believe'). However, I believe that the interesting parallel between Urmson's *Parenthetical Verbs* and *HTDTWW* lies elsewhere than in the attempt of one writer to show that 'know' and 'believe' are parenthetical and the attempt of the other to show that they are illocutionary. It is rather that Urmson, in his essay, was trying to 'reduce' some important, 'psychologically descriptive' verbs to the class of parenthetical or force-showing or degree-indicating verbs, while Austin, in *HTDTWW* was trying to reduce the class of performative verbs to the class of illocutionary or force-showing verbs. Austin's attempt is, to a lesser degree, unsatisfactory, and for much the same reason that Urmson's attempt is unsatisfactory.

There are a great many parallels between what Austin says in *HTDTWW* about performative and illocutionary verbs, and what Urmson says about parenthetical verbs. Thus (*HTDTWW* 77), Austin tells us that the possibility of using a verb in parenthesis 'is almost as good a test of

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1 *op. cit.* chap.4.
a performative as our normal forms.\(^1\) Again (70), 'such a performative formula as "I promise" makes it clear how what is said is to be understood'. And further on we are told (85):

...the main body of the utterance has generally or often the straightforward form of a 'statement', but there is an explicit performative verb at its head which shows how the 'statement' is to be fitted into the context of conversation...

Just as Urmson treats 'I know' and 'I believe' as if they were always used in conjunction with an 'associated assertion' so Austin, in HTDTW thinks of performatives as being always conjoined to discrete and separable utterances.

...we could distinguish the performative opening part... which makes clear how the utterance is to be taken...from the bit in the that clause (HTDTW 90, my italics).

Operating with this distinction, Austin comes to regard even such classic performative utterances as 'I promise that I shall be there' or 'I guarantee that it will be all right' as locutions (bits in that clauses) which acquire illocutionary force through the ministry of their performative opening parts. 'I shall be there' and 'It will be all right' are bare locutions having sense and reference but without force.

When prefaced by a performative (illocutionary) verb, they become illocutions, i.e., locutions used with a certain force, promises or guarantees or statements or predictions. Thus, Austin comes to the

\(^1\) Urmson, see above, suggests that performatives in parenthesis are not being used 'in a performatory way'.
conclusion that 'when we have an explicit performative we also have an illocutionary act' (HTTP:324 131). As Urmson collapses the descriptive 'I know' and 'I believe' into parenthetical devices so Austin collapses all performative verbs into illocutionary devices. Moreover, because 'illocutionary acts' are locutions used with illocutionary force, Austin's reduction depends, like Urmson's, on the wedding of first-person, force-showing verbs to associated locutions which could occur, forceless, on their own.

Now clearly many of Austin's performatives can be wedded to locutions as force-showing devices, just as 'I know' and 'I believe' can be wedded parenthetically to associated assertions. Thus, if, looking deep into your eyes and shaking you solemnly by the hand, I say 'I shall be there' then I can hardly evade my obligation to attend, on the grounds that I didn't promise (didn't say 'I promise'). If, in this instance, I add 'I promise', the words 'I promise' don't constitute my promise. For clearly, I had promised before I said 'I promise'. The added words merely indicate, somewhat unnecessarily in this case, the force of my original utterance. However, as I argued in the case of the parenthetical 'I know' and 'I believe', it seems to me that we should not draw from the observation that 'I promise' is sometimes used not to make a promise but to show the force of a related utterance, the conclusion that 'I promise' functions always as an illocutionary, force-showing verb rather than as a performative. You ask me will I promise. I consider a moment and then say: 'I promise'.

Here my saying 'I promise' constitutes my promise and does not lend a specific force to a non-existent that-clause. That is to say, 'I promise' is here a performative utterance and not an illocutionary verb.

It might be argued that 'I promise' must always be read as 'I promise sc. that p'. I don't, however, think that an argument which demands that 'I promise' always be 'expanded' really supports Austin's position. For Austin is concerned to argue that the words 'I promise' indicate the force of a related utterance rather than themselves constituting the promise. But clearly, on occasion the words 'I promise' do constitute the promise, and this point is in no way impugned by the argument that a promise (here constituted by the utterance of the words 'I promise') is always a promise to do something. However, take the performative utterance 'I apologize'. 'I apologize' is never the performative curtain raiser to a that-clause. When I say 'I apologize for being late', the phrase 'for being late' is not a locution (in Austin's sense of that word). That is to say, it is not a 'saying something' in the full sense of saying something (HTDTTW 94), a theme with a certain sense and a certain reference. Therefore it cannot be the case that 'for being late' is, when prefaced by 'I apologize', used with illocutionary force in the performance of an illocutionary act. For only themes are used, and 'for being late' is not a theme. Consequently, on Austin's definition of an illocutionary act, I cannot see that 'I apologize for being late' is an illocutionary act at all. Of course,
this squares well enough with what I should like to hold, namely, that it is a performative utterance.

Brown suggests that 'I apologize' in 'I have been slow; I apologize' is illocutionary or force-showing rather than performative. Certainly, in this example, the performative opening (or closing) part is associated with a complete utterance, and therefore with a locution whose force it might be construed as indicating. I believe, however, that 'I apologize' is here, too, performative rather than illocutionary. The point is that 'I have been slow' is not, in itself, an apology. The longer hiatus in 'I have been slow; I apologize' seems to mark a distinction which it would be unnatural to make in the case of 'I shall be there, I promise'. Notice that we might say: 'I have been slow; I don't apologize'. True, we might say: 'I shall be there but I don't promise'. However, the concurrence here is, as Austin would say, more apparent than real. When I add 'I don't promise' I mean that my locution has not quite the force of a promise but only some lesser, related force, say, that of a firm intention. But when I add 'I don't apologize' I don't mean that my utterance has some lesser but related force. I merely mean that I don't apologize for being slow.

When Austin remarks that the possibility of using a verb in parenthesis 'is almost as good a test of a performative as our normal forms', the notion of a performative has already begun to suffer dilution.

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1 op. cit. p.422.
For many performatives, including some of the paradigms introduced by Austin at the outset of the discussion (*HTDTW* 5) 'I do', 'I name', 'I give', could not possibly be used in parenthesis to an indicative 'statement'. It seems quite unplausible to classify, as illocutionary verbs, such performatives as 'I name' and 'I baptize'. When I say 'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth' or 'I baptize thee John' I am certainly not indicating the force of a subsequent or prior locution. I am simply performing the act of naming a ship or baptizing a child. In the case of purely ceremonial acts like these it is difficult to imagine what forceless locutions might be clarified as being illocutionary acts of naming and baptizing by the addition of a prefatory or parenthetical 'I name' or 'I baptize'. As for those performatives which can be used parenthetically, 'I promise', 'I guarantee', 'I bet', and may therefore be thought of as indicating illocutionary force rather than constituting an action, what Urmson says is relevant: '...we do not put these verbs into parentheses when we are using them in a performatory way'. Without going so far as Urmson I should certainly maintain that these verbs, and others like them, have a non-parenthetical use which is best thought of as performative, not illocutionary. For they may occur independently, apart from the matrix of a statement or that-clause. In

1 Austin's mistaken idea of the formula by means of which consenting adults 'indulge' (*HTDTW* 6) in matrimony.

2 It is perhaps significant that Austin does not include 'baptise' in his list of exercitives (*HTDTW* 154). He does, however, include 'name'.
the absence of a locution they cannot be construed as supplying illocutionary force. Saying 'I promise', I promise. I do not indicate that 'what' I said (I said nothing, apart from 'I promise') had the illocutionary force of a promise.

We might, then, classify Austin’s illocutionary verbs (HTDTW 152-62) under three different heads. First, there are those verbs which have no independent or self-sufficient employment, but are always used in conjunction with a that-clause or an associated assertion. Examples are: 'I affirm', 'I deny', 'I state', 'I argue', 'I mean' and 'I inform'. We cannot say 'I state' or 'I argue' or 'I inform' tout court, but only 'I state that...' or 'I argue that...' or 'I inform you that...'

Secondly, there are those verbs, for example, 'I promise' which may occur either self-sufficiently or in conjunction with an associated locution. Thirdly, there are those verbs, 'I nominate you', 'I baptize thee', 'I name this ship', 'I thank you' and 'I pick you' which are quite self-sufficient and are certainly never wedded to locutions, in Austin’s sense of 'locution'. In 'I nominate you for the job' and 'I baptize thee John', 'for the job' and 'John' are not rhemes whose force is clarified by the prefatory illocutions. 'For the job' and 'John' are not rhemes.

Austin tells us that: 'The doctrine of the performative/constative distinction stands to the doctrine of locutionary and illocutionary acts in the total speech act as the special theory to the general theory' (HTDTW 147, Austin’s italics). In developing his general theory Austin
seems to have had in mind the verbs of my first category rather than the verbs of my third. It is of interest that a great many of these first category verbs fall into the group which Austin calls 'expositives'. And expositives are markedly similar to Urmson's parenthetical verbs. As Austin says: 'They make plain how our utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation, how we are using words, or, in general, are expository' (HTDTW 151). It is surely by concentrating on expositive-type illocutions which have certain grammatical affinities with more paradigmatic performatives (to say 'I state' is to state, to say 'I baptize' is to baptize) that Austin comes to the distinction between the 'performative opening part' and the 'bit in the that clause' and to the conclusion that performatives are potentially parenthetical.

For in the case of what I have called the paradigmatic performatives the distinction between 'performative opening part' and 'that clause' is not possible; nor is the parenthetical use of these verbs even remotely apt.

Austin's general theory postulates a distinction between the illocutionary aspect (force) and the locutionary aspect (meaning) of an utterance. Austin invokes as supporting this distinction, the distinction between the performative or parenthetical or force-showing part of an utterance and the rheme with which it is associated. In the case of self-sufficient and paradigmatic performatives this distinction between the performative part of the utterance and the associated that-clause breaks down. When I say 'I apologize' my performative utterance is not construed as clarifying the force of a non-
existent theme. In consequence, the further distinction between the force and the meaning of an utterance seems to me to break down in the case of paradigmatically performative utterances. As Jonathan Cohen puts it:1 '...in some cases, such as explicit performatives, there is no clear difference at all between sense and force'.

Why did Austin develop a 'general' theory of illocutionary forces, passing over in the process many of the more distinctive features of performative utterance? The trouble is, I rather suspect, that we had hoped for more from performatives than they were able to give. Performative utterances were to be magical - the transmutation of (mere) words into (real) deeds. '...the uttering of the sentence is...the doing of an action' (HTDTW 5). However, in practice, the act so often misfires or is abused and we are left with simply words. Take the case of naming a ship where Austin's base fellow 'snatches the bottle out of your hand, breaks it on the stem, shouts out "I name this ship the Generalissimo Stalin", and then for good measure kicks away the chocks' (Papers 226-7). Reluctantly, we must agree with Austin that 'the ship certainly isn't now named the Generalissimo Stalin'. Yet, if naming were a 'real action' like kicking or bottle breaking, then surely the ship would now be named the Generalissimo Stalin just as surely as the chocks were kicked away.

What do I mean by a 'real action'? As Austin says (HTDTW 91-2):

1 op. cit. p.134
'doing something' is a very vague expression. When we issue any utterance whatsoever, are we not 'doing something'? Certainly the ways in which we talk about 'action' are liable here, as elsewhere, to be confusing. For example, we may contrast men of words with men of action, we may say they did nothing, only talked or said things; yet again, we may contrast only thinking something with actually saying it (out loud), in which context it is doing something (Austin's italics).

I argued above that promising, warning, stating and so on are actions in a way that knowing, believing and doubting are not actions. Promising, warning, etc., are things that we do, and, in consequence, possibly things that we do with words. However, as 'doings' the things that we do with words seem rather different from the 'physical' things that we do.\footnote{Different too, of course, from the 'mental' things we do, thinking, learning, planning and the like.} What this difference is might be suggested in the following way.

When we say that a man can climb Everest or run a mile or solve quadratic equations we mean that he has the ability to perform these actions. Now we say that judges can condemn people to death and priests can baptize babies. However, we do not mean that they have the ability to perform these actions. When a man is elevated to the bench or inducted into the ministry he does not acquire the ability to sentence and pardon on the one hand, or to marry and confirm on the other. When we say that he can do these things we rather mean that he has the entitlement or authority to do these things. Similarly, I believe, with the less esoteric things we can do with words. If I say that I can...
promise or make promises I do not mean that I have the ability to promise, but rather that I have the right or entitlement to promise. True, we do not often claim of such a commonplace activity as promising, that we can promise. However, we often have occasion to say things like 'I can't promise'. Clearly we do not mean that we lack the ability to promise but rather that we lack the right to promise, perhaps because we foresee that we shall be unable to perform. Compare 'I can say "I promise"'. It is true that such a claim is not usual but it might be made by, for example, a convalescent aphasic. Because saying 'I promise' is a 'real action' the speaker's 'can' relates to ability rather than to entitlement. Austin's unfortunate left winger could not name the ship the Generalissimo Stalin. I could not run a mile in four minutes. But we are not in the same case, for I lack the ability while he lacks the entitlement. His finest endeavours will not even bring him nearer his objective (as mine will bring me nearer the four minute mile) for the simple reason that he is not the person nominated by the owners to name the ship.

Not only are the actions which we perform with words rather different from our more 'physical' actions; they are, qua actions, strangely vulnerable. Thus it would appear that we can often, even in the most formal speech situation, retract what we say or disallow what another says in a way that we could not retract or disallow our (actual) deeds. What is done cannot be undone, but what is done with words can very often be undone. When the priest says 'I baptize thee James' where
he should have said 'I baptize thee John' the child is, nevertheless, John. The painters will not be called in to redecorate the hull just because the director's wife says 'Queen Mary' where she should have said 'Queen Elizabeth'. Suppose that during the ceremony I say 'I will' and then refuse to sign the registrar's book. Am I married or does the 'bride' (merely) have a very sound case for breach of promise? Few performative utterances are irrevocable like Isaac's 'I bless' when, having blessed Jacob with the kid-skins on his arms, he could not, even in his heart, bless Esau.

For these reasons then we may be inclined to think that many performative utterances cannot really be actions but should rather be thought of as force-markers for what, in the last analysis, are only words. However, I believe that if we follow Austin in 'reducing' the class of performative verbs to the class of illocutionary or force-showing verbs, we do so at the cost of ignoring, as Austin ignores, important differences between, for example, 'I conclude that your argument is fallacious' and 'I apologize'.
If Austin's grammatical investigations into epistemology resulted in what Hampshire calls 'the most famous of his discoveries' his grammatical investigations into the grammar of 'I can' are almost as famous, and, to my mind, a great deal more satisfactory. In the concluding chapter of this essay I shall discuss what is at issue between Austin on the one hand, and Moore and Professor Newell-Smith on the other, in the matter of ifs and cans.

Austin ascribes to Moore the view that expressions of the form 'I can do X' or 'I could have done X' require an if-clause in either their expansion or their analysis. The if-clause favoured by Moore is 'if I choose' or 'if I had chosen'. Thus, on the expansion view, and keeping, for simplicity's sake, to present tense examples, 'I can do X' means 'I can do X if I choose' ('an if is required to complete a can-sentence' Papers 162) while on the analysis view 'I can do X' means 'I shall do X if I choose' (an if is required in the analysis of a can-sentence). A version of the, to my mind, more interesting analysis view is ascribed to Newell-Smith. I shall now deal in turn with both the expansion view and the analysis view of 'I can'; first the expansion view, then the analysis view.
'I can if I choose' is, Austin claims, very different from what he calls a 'normal' conditional statement like 'I pant if I run'. From 'I pant if I run' we can infer the contrapositive 'If I don't pant I don't run' or, more usually, in the continuous tense, 'If I'm not panting I'm not running'. But from 'I can if I choose' we should certainly not infer 'If I cannot I don't choose to'. Contrariwise, while we can infer from 'I can if I choose' both 'I can simpliciter' and 'I can whether I choose to or not' we can not infer from 'I pant if I run' either 'I pant simpliciter' or 'I pant whether I run or not'.

Austin's point might perhaps be made in a different way. 'I can ruin you if I get one more vote' means 'I shall be able to ruin you if I get one more vote'; but 'I can ruin you if I choose' does not mean 'I shall be able to ruin you if I choose'. From my ability to ruin you if I get one more vote together with my getting one more vote it surely follows that I can ruin you. But from my ability to ruin you if I choose together with my choosing to ruin you it would be perverse to infer that I can ruin you. For, if I have the ability to ruin you if I choose then I have (absolutely) the ability to ruin you and this ability is not dependent on, does not follow from, my choosing to ruin you. From 'I can if I choose' together with 'I choose' it 'follows' not that I can, but, rather, we might think, that I shall. I shall have something further to say on this point when I discuss the view that 'I can' is analysed in terms of what I shall do if I choose.
Austin advances, too, a related but more general argument against construing 'I can' as a verb which requires supplementation by a conditional clause. Could any verb to X be such a verb that it always required supplementation by an if clause so that 'we shall never say simply "I X", but always "I X if I Y"'? Surely not; for if, on occasion, it is true that I Y it must surely follow that "I X", simpliciter, without any if about it any longer (Papers 164). From 'I X if I Y' together with 'I Y' we infer, by modus ponens, 'I X'.

I do not believe that Austin's objections to treating 'I can' as a verb in need of supplementation by the conditional clause 'if I choose' can be met. Professor O'Connor, however, in his 1960 presidential address to the Aristotelian society argues that Austin's objections can be met if we interpret the if of 'if I choose' or 'if I had chosen', not as the if of sufficient condition (as Austin does) but as the if of necessary condition. O'Connor points out that if Moore is interpreted in this way his expansion of 'I can do X' becomes, not 'I cannot do X if I choose' but 'I cannot do X if I do not choose to'. And his analysis of 'I can do X' becomes, not 'I shall do X if I choose' but 'I shall not do X if I do not choose to'. The expressions 'I cannot do X if I do not choose to' and 'I shall not do X if I do not choose to' yield the contrapositives 'If I can do X then I choose to' and 'If I do X then I shall choose to do it' and these contrapositives

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1 Possibility and Choice, PASS xxxiv (1960).
are, O'Connor says, although unusual, quite permissible locutions. Thus, by interpreting the conditional clause as expressing necessary rather than sufficient condition O'Connor claims to have evaded at least one of Austin's objections, i.e. the objection that because we cannot infer the contrapositive of 'I can if I choose' it is not a normal conditional statement. Now while this may be so it should, I think, be noted that the evasion is accomplished only by offering interpretations of 'I can' which are surely remote from the ordinary meaning of that verb. Who but an existentialist would want to interpret, for example, 'I can ruin you', as 'simply meaning' 'I cannot ruin you if I do not choose to'? Again, O'Connor objects that if the if of Moore's analysis 'I shall do X if I choose to' is read as the if of sufficient condition this will mean that 'I quite certainly shall, come what may, provided only that I choose'; which, according to O'Connor, is absurd (Austin makes a similar objection - Papers 159). But the objection may be brought equally against O'Connor's interpretation in terms of necessary condition that it implies that I quite certainly shall not do X provided only that I do not choose to. If O'Connor will have it that choosing is a necessary condition of doing he must accept that not choosing is a sufficient condition of not doing.

1 ibid., p. 7.
O'Connor goes on to claim that 'analogous transformations' on sentences in the past tense ('I could have done if I had chosen' and so on) give similar results. In the past tense, I suggest, the results are even more disastrous. If O'Connor had attended to some of these analogous transformations he would, I believe, have been compelled to reject his interpretation in terms of necessary condition. For, an analogous transformation will compel O'Connor to read 'I could have done X' not as equivalent to 'I could have done X if I had chosen' (Moore) but rather as equivalent to 'I could not have done X if I had not chosen'. Now, if we except such locutions as 'I could have done X for all you know' (which Austin suggests is a vulgarism for 'I might have done X for all you know') the clear implication of the expression 'I could have done X' (or 'I could have done X if I had chosen') is that I did not in fact do X. O'Connor's interpretation, 'I could not have done X if I had not chosen' carries precisely the opposite implication, i.e., that I did in fact do X. O'Connor must, on his account of the business, interpret 'I could have ruined you' as meaning 'I could not have ruined you if I had not chosen to' and that is a very strange interpretation.

Of course, O'Connor's revision or interpretation of Moore in terms of necessary condition does not meet Austin's further objections to the effect that from 'I can if I choose' we can infer both 'I can'
simpliciter and 'I can whether I choose to or not'. O'Connor admits that 'if these inferences are fatal to the supposition that the if clause expresses a sufficient condition they are equally so to the view that I am propounding'\(^1\) (i.e. to the view that the if clause expresses a necessary condition). Before suggesting a possible answer to Austin's objections O'Connor digresses 'to consider the "possible complication" that induced Moore to recommend us to say that "I can do X" means "I shall do X if I choose" rather than "I can do X if I choose"'. O'Connor's theory about the possible complication is as follows. The interpretation of 'I could have done X' as meaning 'I could have done X if I had chosen' may seem to lead to an infinite regress. Moore perhaps thought that it did, and, in consequence, suggested as an alternative 'I should have done X if I had chosen'. However, O'Connor wants to argue that there is an infinite regress only if the 'can' in 'I can do X' means the same as the 'can' in 'I can do X if I choose'. And, according to O'Connor, the two 'cans' do not have the same meaning (see my discussion, below). Had Moore realized this he would not have felt obliged to substitute the analysis 'I shall if I choose' for the expansion 'I can if I choose' in order to avoid an infinite regress.

Having introduced in the above way the suggestion that the two 'cans' have different meanings O'Connor goes on to argue that because

\(^1\) ibid., p.8.
the 'can' in 'I can' does not mean the same as the 'can' in 'I can if I choose' his earlier claim that 'the elective if introduces a necessary condition...is immune to Austin's objections'. (It might be noted here that a claim that the elective if introduces a sufficient condition would surely for this reason also be immune to Austin's objections).

According to O'Connor then, we can infer from 'I can if I choose' 'I can' simpliciter, only 'because the "can" in the phrase "I can if I choose" has a different meanings from the same word in "I can" simpliciter...'.

O'Connor distinguishes between the two meanings in the following way. He claims:

'I can do X' is sometimes elliptical for 'I shall do X if conditions C₁,...,Cₙ are satisfied'. But sometimes too, it is short for 'I can do X if conditions C₁,...,Cₙ are satisfied'...[The occurrence of 'can' in 'I can simpliciter'] warns the hearer that the operation of the main verb modified by 'can' is subject to the operation of...let us say, n necessary conditions [The occurrence of 'can' in 'I can if I choose'] hints at only n-1 such conditions, one of them having been already made explicit by the if-clause.

I reject O'Connor's distinction and his arguments for it for the following reasons:

(1) In the passage which I have quoted O'Connor italicizes the 'can' in his second version of what 'I can' is sometimes elliptical for, presumably to point a contrast with the 'shall' of the first version.

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1 ibid., p.9.
2 ibid., p.9-10.
Since I am not clear what contrast O'Connor has in mind I shall make no comment but merely point out that since O'Connor is marking some contrast between the auxiliary verbs in the first and second versions, he presumably full intends the 'shall' in the first version. It is not, as I was at first inclined to think, a slip of the pen. Now, 'I can do X' is surely never elliptical for 'I shall do X if a number of necessary conditions is fulfilled'. 'I can do X' may be a somewhat misleading ellipsis for 'I shall be able to do X if...'. For example, I may say 'I can ruin you' meaning only that I can if I get together enough votes, recover from pneumonia, catch the speaker's eye, etc., etc. What I mean is not that I shall ruin you if these conditions are fulfilled but only that I shall be able to if they are.

(2) 'I can do X' when it is not misleadingly elliptical for 'I shall be able to do X if...' implies that I am able (absolutely) to do X, and certainly does not warn the hearer that my ability to do X is subject to the operation of n necessary conditions. 'I can ruin you' does not warn you that I can (and certainly not that I shall) ruin you if I get the votes, recover, etc., and choose to.

(3) 'I can ruin you if I choose' does not hint at my ability to ruin you being subject to my getting the votes, my recovering, my choosing and so on, minus my choosing. When I say 'I can ruin you if I choose' and if-clause perhaps implies that the main clause is no sort of ellipsis, that is, that the sense of 'can' is absolute. In fact, when I say that I can ruin you if I choose I imply that there are no ifs
about my ability to ruin you: certainly not that there are n-1 ifes about my ability. As Austin says (Papers 164), 'We might almost go so far as to say that the addition of the "conditional" clause "if I had chosen" makes it certain that (in Moore's language) the sense of "could have" is the absolute sense, or as I should prefer to put it, that the mood of "could have" is indicative'.

(4) My choosing to do X is not one condition (sufficient or necessary) among others, of my being able to do X. If anything 'follows' from my choosing to do X it is my doing X and not my being able to do X. If anything 'follows' from my not choosing to do X it is my not doing X and not my not being able to do X.

I believe, then, that Austin's arguments against the expansion view of 'I can', the view that 'I can' means 'I can if I choose' where the if-clause is a normal conditional clause stating a condition (sufficient or necessary) of my being able to do something, cannot be met. However, before turning to the more interesting analysis view of 'I can' I should like to make two further, minor points, first, about 'I can if I choose', and second, about the more general question of cans and conditional clauses.

(1) There is, perhaps, a sense in which 'I can do X' follows from 'I choose to do X'. This sense has not, so far as I can see,

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I have some qualms about the indicative 'could have'. See below, p. 263.
been remarked by Austin or by his critics and may be one source of
the confusion in this area. Why is it absurd for me to say that I
choose to go outside now and jump eight feet in the air without
gymnastic aids? Surely it is that my choosing to do something implies
that I can do it (or at least that I believe I can do it). It would
be logically odd to say 'I choose to do X but I can't do X'. There is
then at least this sense of 'I can if I choose' though perhaps the
logical point is made more naturally by saying 'if I choose then I can'.
That is to say: 'If I (can) choose then I can (or, believe I can)'.
From this implication the usual contrapositive inference can be drawn
and the abnormal inferences cannot be drawn. That is, we can infer 'If
I cannot then I do not (cannot) choose to'. And we can not infer 'I
can whether I choose to or not (whether or not it is within my choice)'.
Nor can we infer 'I can' simpliciter, i.e. 'I can (do anything)'.

(2) Austin, as I have said, points out that we may derive from
the expression 'I can if I choose' such 'abnormal' inferences as 'I
can' simpliciter and 'I can whether I choose to or not'. Now, Austin
is at some pains to suggest that deviant if-clauses supporting abnormal
inferences are not confined to statements containing 'difficult' verbs
like 'can' and 'choose'. In making this suggestion Austin points to
such allegedly parallel examples as 'There are biscuits on the sideboard

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1 It was, however, remarked on by Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics III b 20-22 '...for choice cannot relate to impossibles, and if any one
said he chose them he would be thought silly.'
if you want them' and 'I paid you yesterday if you remember' (Papers 160-1). The latter is an 'excellent example' supplied by Mr Geach. The presence of biscuits on the sideboard is not conditional on your wanting them nor is my having paid you conditional on your remembering that I have. There are biscuits whether you want them or not and I paid you whether you remember or not.

I want to suggest that Austin's examples are not really parallel to the more interesting eccentricities of if-clauses and cans. As Austin himself concedes of his example:

It is tempting, I know, to 'expand' our sentence here to this: 'There are biscuits on the sideboard which you can (or may) take if you want them' (Papers 160, Austin's italics).

There is a host of other rogue if-clauses all deviant in ways different from Austin's examples and different from the way in which 'I can if I choose' is deviant. For example, the expression 'I wonder if you will go' might seem to generate similar puzzles to those generated by 'I can if I choose' since we may derive from 'I wonder if you will go' 'I wonder whether or not you will go', but not 'If I don't wonder then you won't go'. There is, however, little or no temptation to construe the if-clause of 'I wonder if you will go' as a conditional clause. The expression is obviously equivalent to 'I wonder "Will you go?"'. The if-clause gives you the object of my wondering and not the condition of my wondering. An expression like 'I don't mind if you go' is different again. Earlier examples, 'I pant if I run', 'I can if I choose' and 'I wonder if you will go' are all alike in this at least
that their grammatical analyses are (fairly) straightforward. The main clauses are, respectively, 'I pant', 'I can' and 'I wonder'. But the phrase 'I don't mind' is certainly not a detachable main clause of the sentence 'I don't mind if you go'. This seems clear enough when we contrast 'I don't mind if you go' with a sentence in which 'I don't mind' is the main clause, for example, 'I don't mind if you don't mind'. Notice that the if-clause, 'if you don't mind', is now what Austin called an 'orthodox' if-clause expressing condition. From 'I don't mind if you don't mind' we cannot draw the aberrant inferences 'I don't mind whether you mind or not' and 'I don't mind simpliciter, and we do infer the idiomatic contrapositive 'If I do mind it is because you mind'.

I have argued that we might discover a great many examples of if-clauses which, on Austin's formal tests, would seem to be 'abnormal' or 'unorthodox'. Very often, however, there will prove to be different and distinguishable reasons for the abnormality. In the end, it will not, I think, be helpful to liken 'I can if I choose' to 'I don't mind if you go' on the grounds that, although we can infer the 'contrapositive' of neither, we can infer from each, respectively, 'I can whether or not I choose' and 'I don't mind whether you go or not'.

What may prove more helpful is an examination of some if-clauses other than 'if I choose' as they occur in conjunction with 'can' and 'could have'. For, as it seems to me, these clauses, though apparently conditional, very often are, at least to some extent,
abnormal in the way in which 'if I choose' is abnormal. Take, for example, such clauses as 'if I want to' or 'if I have a mind to'. These clauses, though markedly different from 'if I choose to' resemble it to the extent that we should normally infer from 'I can if I have a mind to' that I can simpliciter. However, if these clauses seem insufficiently 'conditional' what of such locutions as 'I could have got it for you wholesale if you had told me' or 'I could have helped him if I had known his circumstances'. It would appear that my ability to get you that thing or help my poor friend then was in no way conditional upon my knowing your requirement or his straitened circumstances. In fact, I could have got it and helped him simpliciter.

Or, consider the following, interesting example from Mr Ved Mehta's New Yorker account of a conversation with Professor Ayer. Ayer is reported as saying:

I actually don't think my television discussions interfere with my philosophy, because if I consistently worked a four-hour day on my subject I could produce a philosophical work every six months.

I think we would be justified in inferring from the above statement that Ayer could (simpliciter) produce a philosophical biannual. Austin's second anomalous inference cannot, it is true, be paralleled in this instance since we should not infer that Ayer could produce a philosophical work every six months whether or not he worked a four-

hour day. But then am I mistaken in thinking that 'I can whether I choose to or not' is a curious expression unless 'expanded' to something like 'I can; whether I choose to or not is another question'? Read in this way a parallel inference could be drawn from Ayer's claim. For we might certainly infer: 'Ayer can; whether or not he works a four-hour day is another question'.

Austin distinguishes between an 'ability' sense of 'can', an 'opportunity' sense and an 'all-in' sense. The 'ability' sense operates in the antecedent of, for example, 'I could have saved him if I had known he was drowning'; the 'opportunity' sense in the antecedent of 'I could have saved him if I had been able to swim'. Now, clearly Austin is right when he points out that the clause 'if I had chosen' serves to mark out the 'all-in' sense of 'can'. When I say 'I could have done it if I had chosen', I indicate that there are no 'ifs' either of ability or of opportunity about the 'could have'. If either I did not know that he was drowning (and so lacked the opportunity to save him) or I was not able to swim (and so lacked the ability to save him) I should not say 'I could have saved him if I had chosen'. Therefore, from 'I could have if I had chosen' we infer 'I could have' simpliciter. I have been arguing that when the 'ability' sense of 'can' is operative it seems plausible, too, to infer from 'I could have if...', 'I could have' simpliciter. This is because our idea of what we can do is more closely tied to our abilities than to our opportunities. Our strong swimmer might say, simply, 'I could have
saved him; a non-swimmer (without boat or tackle, of course) if he said the same, would mislead. My ability to save you is not conditional on my realizing that you are drowning; my ability to save you is conditional on my being able to swim.

It would appear, then, that not only the 'all-in' 'could have' but also the 'could have' of ability, modified by an if-clause suggesting lack of opportunity, may be read as 'could have' simpliciter, or is, as Austin would say, of the indicative mood. I have already suggested that I have qualms about this indicative 'could have': I shall not try to say what they are.

How do we reformulate 'He could have done X' using the verb 'to be able' in place of the verb 'can'? If the mood of 'could have' is indicative we shall surely say 'He was able to do X' rather than 'He would have been able to do X'. It is in this way that most philosophers have understood Austin. Thus, for example, Mrs Warnock says about Ifs and Cans that

one distinction of the greatest importance was brought out, and that is the distinction between the conditional or subjunctive use of 'he could have' and the indicative use. The indicative use of 'he could have' means 'he was able to', and this is very different from 'he would have been able to, if something or other'...1

Again, Nowell-Smith, in his reply to Austin, comments as follows:2

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1 Ethics Since 1900 p.149.
2 Ifs and Cans, Theoria, XXIV, p.87.
There are two points in Austin's paper which may be accepted from the start. (i) There are at least three senses of 'can', which Austin calls the 'ability', the 'opportunity' and the 'all-in' senses. (ii) The form 'could have' is often, not a subjunctive, but the past indicative of 'can' in any of these three senses. It means, not 'would have been able, if...', but categorically 'was able' (Nowell-Smith's italics).

Austin himself, indeed, suggests in at least one passage that 'I could have' is equivalent to 'I was able'. 'If the if-clause is "if I had chosen", then I was able, was in a position, to ruin you; hence "potui" (Papers 164 f.n.). For the most part, however, Austin (wisely, as I shall urge) prefers a 'vaguer' expression: 'I was in a position to', 'I had the ability' and so on.

It is agreed that if I could have (absolutely) done something or other, then I had the ability to do it, and 'no ifs about it any longer'. But can we go on to claim (pace, Mrs Warnock and Nowell-Smith) that 'I could have done it' sometimes means 'I was able to do it'?

Even when the sense of 'could have' is the 'all-in' sense the two expressions seem to function very differently (compare the different functions of the parallel pair of questions: 'Were you able to do it?': 'Could you have done it?'). Nowell-Smith is certainly wrong in proposing that for all three senses of 'can' the form 'could have' may mean categorically 'was able'. This is clearly not the case when the 'opportunity' sense of 'can' operates and the if-clause suggests lack of ability. We say: 'I could have done X if I had been able to do Y'. We do not say: 'I was able to do X if I had been able to do Y'. 'I was able to save him if I had been able to swim' is nonsense. When the
'ability' sense of 'can' and the 'all-in' sense of 'can' operate we may, perhaps, substitute for 'I could have' 'I was able': Though, 'I was able to save him if I had known' and 'I was able to save him if I had chosen' strike me as being what Austin might have called 'queer specimens of English'. However, none of this touches on the more important question whether, having read the 'all-in' or the 'ability' 'could have' as 'could have' simpliciter, i.e. as Austin's indicative mood, we may then substitute for 'could have' 'was able' simpliciter without changing the meaning of the utterance. The answer to this question is, surely, that we can not. For while 'I could have saved him' carries with it the strong implication that I did not save him, 'I was able to save him' carries with it the equally strong implication that I did save him.

It is instructive to compare 'could have' with 'could'. Austin suggests that 'the double role of "could"' is 'exactly similar' to the subjunctive/indicative ambiguity of 'could have'. However, Austin is surely wrong about this. 'I could do it' may mean either 'I was able to do it' (indicative) or 'I would be able to do it' (subjunctive). 'I could do it in those days' means 'I was able to do it in those days', while 'I could do it if I had a hammer' means 'I would be able to do it if I had a hammer'.

1 'I would' rather than 'I should' because 'I should' is ambiguous. 'I should (ought) to be able to do it' is, of course, neither subjunctive nor iky.
if I had a hammer'. However, it is far from clear that 'I could have done it' ever means 'I was able to do it'.

Austin's well-known example (discussed in more detail below) of the golfer who tries and tries again to sink a putt, failing each time, but not convinced that he could not have done it, illustrates very well the difficulty of reading 'I could have done it' (indicative) as simply meaning 'I was able to do it'. One way of characterizing the golfer's performance would be: Although he tried all morning he was not able to sink the putt. Certainly, though we might agree that he had the ability or, even, that he could have done it, it would be misleading to say that he was able (simpliciter) to sink the putt; for sinking the putt was just what he was unable to do.

It is 'could have', even more than 'can' 'that we seem so often to uncover, just when we had thought some problem settled, grinning residually up at us like the frog at the bottom of the beer mug' (Papers 179). Perhaps we ought to resist the temptation to render Austin's absolute, indicative 'could have' into a past tense form of the verb 'to be able'. For, as I have argued, 'I could have done it' (simpliciter) never means 'I was able to do it' (simpliciter). And the only alternative seems to be: 'I would have been able to do it'. Furthermore, the latter expression is, as all parties agree, subjunctive and iffy. When I try and fail I may claim: 'Nevertheless I could have done it'. I should not claim 'I would have been able to do it' simpliciter since to assert 'I would have been able to do it'
is to invite the query 'if?'. In fact, as it seems to me, the expression 'I would have been able to do it' stands always in need of supplementation of an if-clause, albeit sometimes a concealed one. Thus we may say: 'I would have been able to do it in Moscow' or 'I would have been able to do it twenty years ago'. That is to say, 'I would have been able to do it if I had been in Moscow' or 'I would have been able to do it if it had been twenty years ago'.

The analysis view of 'I can'

I turn now to the analysis view of 'I can'. This view is presented in different ways by Moore and Nowell-Smith. Moore suggests that 'I can do X' simply means 'I shall do X if I choose' and 'I could have done X' simply means 'I should have done X if I had chosen'. Nowell-Smith argues from an earlier position towards a similar conclusion. The argument, as presented in his Ethics goes as follows:

It is logically odd to say 'Smith can run a mile, has had several opportunities, is passionately fond of running, has no medical or other reasons for not doing so, but never has in fact done so'. And, if it is true that this is logically odd, it follows that 'can' is equivalent to 'will...if...' and 'could have' is equivalent to 'would have...if...'.

Moore's first person formulation seems to me, for reasons which I shall give later, to be rather more plausible than Nowell-Smith's although the two formulations have a good deal in common. What they have in common might be expressed in the following way, I have already remarked

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1 p.278.
that it seems odd to infer from 'I can' (or 'I can if I choose')
together with 'I choose' the conclusion 'I can'. What seems to 'follow'
from 'I can' and 'I choose' is 'I shall'. We might then try to explain
this odd inference by arguing that 'I can' simply means 'I shall if I
choose'. To be sure this means interpreting 'I shall if I choose' as
a conditional statement but Austin's arguments against interpreting it
in this way are not nearly so strong as his arguments against
interpreting 'I can if I choose' as a conditional. In fact, Austin
concedes that the aberrant inferences 'I shall whether I choose to or
not' and 'I shall' simpliciter cannot be drawn from 'I shall if I choose'.
True, he argues that the contrapositive cannot be inferred but in this I
believe he is mistaken (Papers 159). We might very well infer from 'I
shall if I choose' the perfectly proper, if idiomatic contrapositive
'if I don't I don't choose to'. In a similar way Nowell-Smith's
argument might be represented as deriving the conclusion that 'Smith
can' means 'Smith will if he has a preponderant motive' from the
consideration that if Smith can and Smith has a preponderant motive
then Smith will.

We might bring out what is common to the two positions by
applying Nowell-Smith's notion of 'logical oddness' to the terms of
Moore's formulation. Nowell-Smith argues (roughly) that because the
conjunction of ability, preponderant motive and non-action (p and q
and not r) is logically odd it follows that 'Smith has the ability'
just means 'Smith will act if he has a preponderant motive' (p is
equivalent to $\text{if } q \text{ then } r$). However, as Austin has pointed out, from the logical oddness of $(p \land q \land \neg r)$ it follows only that if $p$ then $(\text{if } q \text{ then } r)$. In order to draw the further conclusion that $p$ is equivalent to $(\text{if } q \text{ then } r)$ - that 'ability' means 'action if there is a preponderant motive' - we must infer both $[\text{if } p \text{ then } (\text{if } q \text{ then } r)]$ and $[\text{if } (\text{if } q \text{ then } r) \text{ then } p]$. And the second inference, $[\text{if } (\text{if } q \text{ then } r) \text{ then } p]$, does not follow from the logical oddness of $(p \land q \land \neg r)$. What is wrong with Nowell-Smith's argument may be seen more clearly when we try to derive Moore's formulation ('I can' means 'I shall if I choose') from parallel considerations of logical oddness. We might say: 'Because it is logically odd to assert "I can and I choose to and I shall not" it follows that "I can" means "I shall if I choose"'. But, as I have already argued, there is a sense in which 'I choose' itself implies 'I can'. I should not assert that I choose unless I am prepared to assert also that I can. In Nowell-Smith's phraseology it would be logically odd to say 'I choose to go but I cannot go'. If, therefore, we substitute for 'I can and I choose to' simply 'I choose to' we may claim, what seems to be true, that it is logically odd to assert 'I choose to and I shall not'. Following Nowell-Smith we might then conclude, mistakenly, that 'I choose' means 'I shall'. Mistakenly, because from the logical oddness of 'I choose and I shall not' we are licensed to infer only 'If I choose, I shall' and not 'If I shall, I choose'. The second inference is clearly false. The first seems to me to be true on a certain
interpretation of 'I shall'. Herein lies the plausibility of Moore's formulation.

I want to leave, for the moment, the question - how the plausibility of Moore's analysis depends on our interpretation of 'I shall', and turn to Nowell-Smith's more sustained analysis of what a man can do in terms of what he would do if...

When Austin restates Nowell-Smith's argument (Papers 174) he tells us that he is 'emending Nowell-Smith's formula, but only in ways that are favourable to it and demanded by his own argument'. Here is Austin's version of the passage which I have already quoted from Nowell-Smith's Ethics.

Smith has the ability to run a mile, has the opportunity to run a mile, has a preponderant motive for running a mile, but does not in fact do so.

There are clearly several emendations here and Austin does not tell us which emendations are, or in what way they are, favourable to and demanded by Nowell-Smith's argument. Austin indicates that Smith can in the 'all-in' sense of 'can' by saying that Smith has the ability and the opportunity. Nowell-Smith does the same, rather less neatly, when he tells us that Smith can, has had several opportunities, has no medical or other reasons for not doing so. Austin's 'preponderant motive for running a mile' is perhaps better than Nowell-Smith's 'is passionately fond of running'. For I can see nothing logically odd

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1 See above p.267.
about the notion of a sprinter who, although passionately fond of running and quite capable of running a mile, has never in fact run a mile. Austin does not explicitly refer to either of these two points; nor does he refer to what seems to me to be quite the most important of the emendations which he makes to Nowell-Smith's formula. Where Nowell-Smith writes 'Smith has never in fact run a mile', Austin has 'Smith does not in fact run a mile'.

I consider this emendation important because it draws attention to what is certainly a confusion in Nowell-Smith's argument between that sense of 'can' in which I can-in-general do something and that sense of 'can' in which I can do some particular thing now. I hope to make clearer just what this confusion is when I come to discuss Nowell-Smith's Ifs and Cans. In the meantime I want to point out that very often when we say that someone can do such and such a thing we mean that he can in general do that thing. Meaning that he can in general do that thing we imply, by saying he can, that he in fact has done it. In consequence, it would be 'logically odd' in such cases and quite apart from the introduction of hypothetical clauses about Smith's passions and motives to claim that Smith can do X but has never in fact done X. When we claim that Smith can speak Russian and play the piccolo we do not add that he has never in fact spoken Russian or played the piccolo. 'Smith can run a mile' seems to me to be a similar example; 'Smith can run a mile in four minutes' certainly would be. I am not quite certain about 'Smith can run a mile' because
I do not want to argue, as I was at one time inclined to argue, that we should say 'I could' rather than 'I can' of all tasks which we have never in fact performed although we believe them to be within our ability. It does, however, seem more natural to say 'Smith could run a mile although he has never in fact done so' rather than 'Smith can run a mile although he has never in fact done so'. Some such convention certainly seems to operate in the past tense. I don't say 'In those days I could run a mile in five minutes' unless I actually did run a mile in five minutes. If I believe that I was capable in those days of running a mile in five minutes although I never in fact did so I claim that I could have run a mile in five minutes and not that I could.

To sum up this part of the argument. Nowell-Smith in his statement of what is logically odd uses a 'can-in-general' or, let us say, a continuant sense of 'can'. It is logically odd to say that Smith can in general do X, wants to do X but has never in fact done X. Nowell-Smith then argues from this premise to a conclusion about the meaning of 'can' in its occurrent sense. 'Smith can' means 'Smith will if he has a preponderant motive and so on'. I have argued that if the sense of 'can' is continuant then in the inference of what Smith has done from what Smith can do hypothetical clauses about Smith's motives are redundant. From 'Smith can in general do X' we should normally infer 'Smith has done X'. If, however, the sense of 'can' is occurrent then no hypothetical clause will ensure the passage
from what Smith can do now to what Smith will actually do now. For, as Austin puts it, 'human ability or power or capacity is inherently liable not to produce success, on occasion, and that for no reason' (Papers 166).

Interestingly enough, Nowell-Smith in his reply to Austin undertakes to observe the distinction which, as I have claimed, he fails to observe in his earlier formulation of the argument. He writes:

I shall be concerned... solely with that use of 'can' which is relevant in connection with the freedom of the will, to the ascription of responsibility and to moral condemnation. In such cases we are always concerned, not with the question whether anyone can, in general, do or avoid something, but with the question whether he could or could not have done or avoided doing some particular thing that, as a matter of fact he failed to do or did.

Unfortunately, Nowell-Smith relapses, offering an analysis of 'he can do' or 'He could have done' a particular thing $X$ in terms more appropriate to the analysis of 'he can - in general - do $X$'. He takes up the analysis of 'can' in terms of what does or would happen if... to which 'Austin allows the greatest plausibility', namely the analysis of 'He can' as 'He succeeds if he tries'. Austin said of this analysis that it had 'some plausibility'. However, he went on to say:

Plausibility, but no more. Consider the case where I miss a very short putt and kick myself because I could have holed it. It is not that I should have holed it...
if I had tried: I did try and missed. It is not that I should have holed it if conditions had been different: that might of course be so, but I am talking about conditions as they precisely were, and asserting that I could have holed it. There is the rub. Nor does 'I can hole it this time' mean that I shall hole it this time if I try or if anything else: for I may try and miss, and yet not be convinced that I could not have done it (Papers 166 f.n.).

Nowell-Smith undertakes to show that an analysis of 'The golfer can sink the putt' in terms of 'The golfer succeeds if he tries' is, Austin's objections notwithstanding, possible.

Such an analysis is possible, Nowell-Smith argues, because 'He can sink a three-foot putt' does not mean 'He always succeeds if he tries' but only 'He usually succeeds if he tries'. He writes: 'If you miss an occasional three-foot putt your ability to hole three-foot putts may not be in doubt; but if you miss too many you lack the ability'. 1 It seems clear to me that Nowell-Smith's revised analysis will not do: the following arguments might be advanced against accepting it.

(1) When the commentator tells us that the famous golfer can sink the twelve-foot putt which he is now addressing he does not mean that the golfer has usually sunk twelve foot putts in the past but only that he has quite often done so. Even if it were a thirty-foot putt and the stroke important for the championship we can imagine the commentator whispering into the microphone 'He can sink this one; I remember at

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1 op. cit., p.96.
Hoylake in 1956 and again at St Andrew's in 1960' and so on. What the commentator says would not be construed as meaning that the golfer is so prodigiously successful a putter that he usually sinks putts from thirty feet. On the contrary, it suggests that he has very seldom done so - but he can sink this one.

(2) A professional golfer misses a three foot putt and asks 'Could I have sunk that one?' Nowell-Smith's quite reasonable answer would be 'Of course, you usually do'. The same golfer sinks a three foot putt and, being a bit of a metaphysician, asks 'Could I have missed that one?'. To which I, but apparently not Nowell-Smith, would want to reply 'Of course, you sometimes do'.

(3) The amateur champion misses a putt from nine inches. I, who have never been even on the municipal putting greens, say 'I could have sunk that one'. I certainly don't mean 'I usually succeed if I try'.

(4) I take up golf and one day I miss a three-foot putt, but this is nothing new - I am always missing them. If Nowell-Smith's analysis is correct I have no business to reproach myself. 'If you miss too many you lack the ability'. Since I lack the ability I could not have sunk the putt, although I believe I could have done it. Notice too that when I am addressing the ball to attempt a three foot putt (the sort I usually miss) I am trying to do what I cannot do; what I lack the ability to do.

(5) If the analysis of 'I can sink this putt' is 'I usually succeed if I try' what is the analysis of 'I could have sunk that putt'? Is
it 'I usually succeeded if I tried'? It is surely clear that Nowell-Smith's analysis is the analysis of neither 'I can sink this' nor 'I could have sunk that'. For it is plausible only as the analysis of the continuant sense of 'can' and not as the analysis of the occurrent sense with which Nowell-Smith professes himself to be concerned. 'I usually succeed if I try' is a possible analysis not of 'I can sink this (or that) three foot putt' but of 'I can sink three foot putts'.

(6) In the analysis of 'I can (in general) sink a three foot putt' into 'I usually succeed if I try' the if-clause is, as in the example from Ethics, superfluous. In fact, its inclusion in the analysis serves the undesirable end of allowing ability to be consistent with one hundred per cent non-performance, since I may never be trying. Nowell-Smith has once again imported an if-clause into the analysis of the continuant 'can' in order to pass from the fact that 'I can in general' implies that I perform (at least usually) to the desired conclusion that 'I can do this particular thing' implies that if something (in this case 'if I try') I shall succeed. Usually? What would it be to succeed usually in doing this particular thing now? Austin maintained correctly that my trying can never ensure my success since I did try and missed, and I may try again and miss again. To point out that 'I can in general do X' means 'I usually do X (if I
try' is not to counter Austin's argument. 1

Why, finally, does it seem more plausible to argue that 'I shall' follows from 'I can' and 'I choose' (or from 'I choose' itself) rather than that 'Smith will' follows from 'Smith can and has a preponderant motive'? It is surely that while 'Smith will' is a prediction 'I shall' may be either a prediction or an expression of intention. When Nowell-Smith claims that it is logically odd to say that Smith can do X, has a preponderant motive and won't do X, and, that from this it follows that if Smith can do X and has a preponderant motive for doing X he will do X, he is committed to the view that Smith's actual doing of X follows from his ability and preponderant motive. Similarly, if 'I shall' expresses prediction then from my choosing to do X my actual doing of X follows. Clearly, however, neither of these implications will do. There is nothing logically odd about my choosing to do something and never actually doing it, or about Smith's being able to run to-morrow's mile and having a preponderant motive but not doing so. For I may change my mind and Smith may break his leg.

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I do not believe that Nowell-Smith's argument goes against what Austin says. Nevertheless, I am somewhat uneasy about Austin's example, since it is not clear to me just what the golfer is asserting when, having tried and failed, he maintains that he could have done it (absolutely). Not that he was able to do it, for he was not. Not that he would have been able to do it, for 'I would have been able to do it' is iffy (see above pp.263-7). Yet, we often claim, in just such circumstances: 'I could have done it'. What about: 'Although I was unable to do it, I know I could have done it'? Perhaps there is room, here, for a spot of 'straightening out' - armchair legislation of an afternoon.
Compare (a) 'I shall ruin him if I am extravagant' with (b) 'I shall ruin him if I get another vote' and (c) 'I shall ruin him if I choose'. (a) seems to me a clear expression of prediction. If it is true that I shall ruin him if I am extravagant then if I am extravagant it follows that he will be ruined. It is not the case that I am extravagant and then I ruin him. My extravagance ruins him. (b) is precisely different. My getting another vote does not ruin him. I get another vote and then I ruin him. Thus it might transpire that I get the vote and yet he is not ruined. For I might die on the way to the senate. (c) is like (b). From my choice alone it does not follow that he is ruined. I choose to ruin him and then I ruin him. And I may be prevented from implementing my choice. My choosing implies my saying 'I shall', or, better, implies my not saying that I shall not. It could, perhaps, be put this way. 'I choose' implies 'I shall' but not that I shall.
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