

Einführung in die Pragmatik und Diskurs

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Exercise: Speech Acts

Task 1

The utterance in (1) counts as performing an action (is explicitly performative), whereas the utterance in (2) not.

- (1) I hereby pronounce you man and wife.
- (2) I sneeze.

Make a list of 3 explicitly performative utterances (that are not discussed in the slides or in the course book) and in each case describe briefly the conditions under which it would be felicitous to utter them. (When listing examples, vary declarative, interrogative and imperative form.)

Task 2

Explain how speech act theory helps to understand the following dialogue (from a cartoon strip of *Mr. Logic*, published by House of Viz / John Brown Publishing).

- (3) In the post office
 1. Mr.Logic: Do you sell postage stamps?
 2. Clerk: How many do you want?
 3. Mr.Logic: I do not necessarily require any. I merely asked whether or not you sold postage stamps.
 4. Mr.Logic: However, I do at present require one first class stamp.
 5. Clerk: That's 16p please.
 6. Mr.Logic: You assume that I wish to make a purchase. . .
 7. (Clerk is looking puzzled)
 8. Mr.Logic: I merely stated that I required a stamp, a purchase does not necessarily follow.

9. Mr.Logic: However, I do at this point intend to purchase the stamp. Accordingly, I remit the sum of 16 new pence.
10. Another customer: Are you finished yet, smart arse?
11. Mr.Logic: My financial transaction is complete, but my name is not “smart arse” ...
12. Mr.Logic: I was christened ...
13. (The other customer punches him.)

The lines are numbered so that you can easily refer to them in your explanation.

Literatur