

# MODELS AND ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS

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## SUMMARY

By reforming Seale's taxonomy of illocutionary acts we can classify them into 3 categories. Then we find out the following relations between several meanings of model and the illocutionary acts. There are three kinds of models. 'The 1st kind of model' is the model which is a copy of a fact. 'The 2nd kind of model' is the one which we make the fact resemble when we produce something or change the fact. Speaking of language, the 'assertive' utterance can be reckoned as the first kind of model and the 'directive' utterance and the 'commissive' utterance are the 2nd kind of model. On the other hand, the 'declarative' utterance itself is not a model; however 'the 3rd kind of model' comes into existence by the declaration of it.

## 1. INTRODUCTON

There are various usages of the word 'model'. For example 'a plastic model' is the model which is a copy of a real thing like a car, an airplane, a ship, etc. In this case, there is a real thing and we make a very similar thing based on it and we call such a similar thing 'model'. We think that the model in this meaning should be as similar to the real thing as possible. I call such a model 'the 1st kind of model'.

The word 'model' has another meaning. For example 'a fashion model' seems to mean the person who has a ideal style in order to show clothes very well. 'A model of a picture' also has an akin meaning. In these examples the word 'model' means the ideal example which the other thing should approach to. I call it 'the 2nd kind of model'. The word 'model' has these two meanings at least.

By the way, language also can be reckoned as a model. Because we describe the world by language. From this point of view facts and language seem to be in the same relation as plastic models and real things. In this case, the language (the model) must approach the fact. If the fact and the language are inconsistent, then the language (sentence or utterance) must be corrected. In this respect language is 'the 1st kind of model'.

On the other hand, language can be a model in a different meaning from this. For example, when someone says to me, "Broil this meat!", then I must change the meat (fact) according to this order (model). This utterance is belongs to 'the 2nd kind of model'. Therefore there are both kinds of models in the language.

Are there only these two ways in which language becomes a model? In order to help to analyze

language as model we can consider speech act theory. This theory is the analysis of the above mentioned functions of language such as an assertion, an order, and a promise.

## 2. J. SEARLE'S SPEECH ACT THEORY

First of all we will introduce an outline of the speech act theory by J. Searle, which has a great influence on this field. He distinguishes the following four linguistic acts.[Searle, 1969]

- (a) Utterance acts = uttering a word (the morpheme, the sentence)
- (b) Propositional acts = referring and predicating
- (c) Illocutionary acts = stating, questioning, commanding, promising, etc.
- (d) Perlocutionary acts = consequences or effects which illocutionary acts have on the actions, thoughts, or beliefs, etc. of hearers.  
For example, by arguing a speaker may persuade or convince a hearer, by warning a hearer a speaker may scare or alarm a hearer.

Searle classifies illocutionary acts into five categories as follows [Searle, 1975].

### (1) Assertives $\vdash\downarrow B(p)$

The first sign expresses a illocutionary point, in this case the sign ' $\vdash$ ' is Frege's assertion sign and it expresses the character of this illocutionary act, i.e., the assertion. The second sign expresses the direction of fit, in this case the sign ' $\downarrow$ ' expresses 'words to the world'. The third sign expresses sincerity conditions, which make utterances sincere; in this case the sign 'B' expresses 'belief'. The last sign expresses the

contents of utterances; in this case the sign (p) expresses the propositional variable. Most important feature of this utterance is to have a truth value (true or false).

nt of the proposition. The sign 'W' means 'want (or wish or desire)'. 'H does A' means that the hearer H does some future action A'. Verbs denoting members of this class are *ask, order, command, request, beg* and so on.

### (3) Commissives C↑I(S does A)

The sign 'C' expresses that by this utterance the speaker promises to do some future action. The sign of the direction of fit '↑' is 'world to words', i.e., we must do something to keep our words. The sign 'I' means 'intention'. 'S does A' means that a speaker S does some future action A.

### (4) Expressives E Ø (p)(S/H + property)

The sign 'E' expresses that by this utterance the speaker expresses the psychological state of a speaker. In this case there is no direction of fit (Ø is null). According to Searle "the speaker is neither trying to get the world to match the words nor the words to match the world, rather the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed" [Searle, 1975, p.15]. The sign '(p)' means the variable of psychological states. 'S/H + property' means that the speaker A or the hearer H has some property. Verbs denoting members of this class are *congratulate, apologize, condolence, welcome* and so on.

### (5) Declarations D↓Ø(p)

The sign 'D' expresses that by this utterance the speaker brings about the correspondence between the utterance and reality and guarantees it. The sign of the direction of fit '↓' means 'both word to world and world to words'. The next sign 'Ø' means that there is no sincerity condition. 'p' means the propositional variable.

Utterances of (2)-(5) are neither true nor false. For example, an utterance of an order "Fire!" is neither true nor false. And the most remarkable point of these utterances which J.L. Austin found out is that these acts are performed by utterances [Austin, 1962]. For example when I promise by saying, "I give you this book", I am not describing my act by this utterance and I make this promise by uttering this. The promise can be realized only by the utterance of the promise.

## 3. IMPROVEMENT OF SEARLE'S TAXONOMY

Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts is very enlightening, but I think it should be improved in some points [Irie, 1992]. Here I will mention two points.

### 3.1. About Expressives Utterances

### (2) Directives !↑W(H does A)

The sign '!' expresses that by this utterance the speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something. The sign of the direction of fit '↑' is 'world to words', i.e. we must realize the conte

As above mentioned, Searle thinks that this type of utterance has no direction of fit. But we could reckon it as a kind of declaration. For example, when someone made fun of me by saying "Do you mean it really?" after I said him on some event "Congratulations!", then I might answer, "Yes, I mean it really". The fact that this utterance "Congratulations!" seems to be able to be asked about the truth of it means that the expressive utterance has a character of fitting words to the world(mind). On the other hand, for example, the fact that parents sometimes tell their child to express his thanks more sincerely means that this type of utterance has a character of fitting the world (mind) to words.

Then it is obvious that the expressive utterance has both directions of fit. Therefore we could say that the expressive utterance is a kind of declaration, which is the declaration about a psychological state or attitude of a speaker.

Then, we can classify illocutionary acts into 3 categories by considering the direction of fit.

- (1) Utterances to match to the world: assertives
- (2) Utterances to get the world to match to themselves: directives and commissives
- (3) Utterances with both directions of fit: declarations

(In fact, the following 4th categories must be added.

- (4) Utterances which ask relations between the world and words: questions

The utterance of question was used to be classified into requests (commissives). But in my view the question is the particular utterance which differs much from all other illocutionary acts [Irie, 1992].)

By the way (1) is of the first kind of model and (2) is of the second kind of model. Then, how about (3)? Can the declaration be called "model" in any sense?

### 3.2. About Declarations

Declarations might be the basic utterances among three categories, because we create or define new words by declarations. For example the following declarations, "I name this baby 'Taro'" and "We call this kind of butterfly 'X'" definite new names. The naming is a kind of declaration.

But there might be the following objection, which points out that the naming is not a declaration but a promise. In order to make a declaration of a name valid, the speaker must have an entitlement of naming. If he has no entitlement, the declaration of the name merely becomes a proposal of it. To propose the name is to propose the promise to call something by the name. Most words are created not by declarations of names, but formed, explicitly or tacitly, by promises

or conventions.

I would like to answer this objection as follows. There are two kinds of promises. The one is the promise which should be performed later. The other is the promise which is performed at the same time when it is uttered. For example, the promise like "I will come here tomorrow" has the potential to be performed when tomorrow comes. On the other hand a promise like, "Shall I give you this book?", "Yes, I am willing to take it" is performed at the the promise is made. Even if the book has not yet been handed over, its ownership has already been moved. Therefore if the person who was the previous owner says, "This is mine", we can say, "You are wrong" or "Your claim is false". As this promise is already performed and the content of this utterance has already been realized, to act according to the promise means not to get an act to match to words, but merely to follow the fact.

Promises about usages of words belong to this kind of promise. For example when we decided to name an institute 'X', if someone call it 'Y', we can correct them by saying, "No, its name is 'X'". After the promise the utterance "It is named 'X'" has become an assertive utterance.

The utterance of this kind of promise belongs to declarations rather than to commissive utterances. Therefore we would like to classify utterances of this kind of promise into declarations.

Assertive utterances, directive utterances and commissive utterances come into existence on the basis of meanings or usages of words, which are made only by this kind of declaration. Therefore declarations might be the basic one among 3 categories of illocutionary acts.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS AND THE THIRD TYPE OF MODEL**

Here we would like to show 'the 3rd kind of model'. This kind of model is neither a model which is a copy of a real thing, nor a model which becomes an ideal example when we produce something. For example "the 1985 model of the car" and "the new model of coat this autumn" are of this kind of model. These models are series of products and neither copies of any real thing nor ideal examples which we get something to match to when we produce it. But the word 'model' in these cases doesn't mean to be merely a form or a shape, because it connotes the meaning of a norm.

By the way the plastic model car belongs to the 1st kind of model. We can judge whether a plastic minicar is the model of some real car or not, by finding whether it is similar to the real car or not. And if the headlights of the plastic model are circular and the headlights of the real car are tetragonal, we can say, "This is false". The 1st kind of model is able to be true or false.

The utterance "This plastic car is the model of that real car" is the assertion. And assertive utterances

belong to the 1st kind of model and they are also true or false.

In the case of the 2nd kind of model we can judge an utterance, e.g. "The model of this picture is that bridge" by studying the resemblance between them and we can say "The form of this part is false". But in this case what is true or false is not the real bridge as a model but the picture. We can't say about the 2nd kind of model whether it is true or false.

Directive utterances and commissive utterances which are the 2nd kind of model are also not able to be said to be true or false.

How about the 3rd kind of model? In the case of the 1st and 2nd kind of model there are two things and the one is the model of the other. But in the 3rd kind of model there are not two things in such a relation. The 1985 model of car is not a model of any other thing and nothing is the model of it. And a car can become the 1985 model of car when we declare, "This is the 1985 model of car"

We couldn't say that declarations belong to the 3rd kind of model. But the 3rd kind of model becomes possible only by the declaration of it.

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