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The expressive dimension and score-changing function of speech acts from the evolutionist point of view

Abstract: My aim in this paper is two-fold. First, I examine Mitchell Green's (2009) account of the expressive power and score-changing function of speech acts; second, I develop an alternative, though also evolutionist approach to explaining these two hallmarks of verbal interaction. After discussing the central tenets of Green's model, I draw two distinctions – between *externalist* and *internalist* aspects of veracity, and between *perlocutionary* and *illocutionary* credibility – and argue that they constitute a natural refinement of Green's original conceptual framework. Finally, I use the refined framework to develop an alternative account of expressing thoughts with words. In particular, I argue that theorising about expressing thoughts with words – as well as about using language to change context – we should adopt a Millikanian view on what can be called, following Green, *acts of communication* and an Austinian approach to *speech* or *illocutionary acts*.

Keywords: expression, score-keeping, speech acts, acts of communication, veracity, credibility

1 Introduction

Many speech acts express mental states and, as a result, are subject to Moorean absurdity (Green 2007a). In making an assertion that *p*, for instance, the speaker expresses her belief that *p* and thereby closes off the option of seriously saying that she does not believe that *p*. In other words, it would be absurd to say "It's raining, but I do not believe it". Likewise, directives express desires, promises intentions, and apologies regrets. In making a promise to come to your lecture, for instance, I express my intention to come to your lecture and, as a result, forfeit the right to tell that I have no intention to do it. In short, a hallmark of some illocutionary act types – e.g., assertions, directives, promises, etc. – is their characteristic

expressive dimension: to perform an act of the expressive family is to express the mental state that is specified in its sincerity condition (see Searle 1969, 65; see also Green 2009, 140) and thereby constrain what can happen next in the conversation.

In making an illocutionary act, then, the speaker re-defines the scope of appropriate conversational moves that can be subsequently made. Speech acts are "context-changing social actions" (Sbisà 2002, 421) that can be typed by reference to their effects. The context affected by speech acts can be represented as *conversational score* (Lewis 1979). The score at a given stage of a language game is a sequence of contextual elements relative to which every move made at that stage is to be interpreted; it can also be defined as a data structure that tracks publicly recognizable effects of conversational moves. The second hallmark of speech acts, then, is their score-changing function. What determines the force of an act is the effect it has on the context of its production. Some of these force-determining effects can easily be explained by reference to the expressive dimension of speech acts. For instance, in telling you to close the door I express my desire that you will close the door and thereby modify the score of our conversation by closing off the option of my adding "But I do not want you to close the door". There are, however, other force-determining effects of speech acts that can hardly be explained by reference to their expressive dimension. In asserting that *p* I not only (*a*) forfeit the right to tell "But I do not believe that *p*", but also (*b*) commit myself to the truth of the proposition that *p* as well as (*c*) entitle you to add this proposition to your belief box and assert it at other occasion; effects (*b*) and (*c*) can be spelled out in terms of how my assertion modifies the scope of appropriate conversational moves that can be subsequently made.

In this paper I examine the idea put forth by Mitchell Green (2009) that the two above-mentioned hallmarks of speech acts are to be accounted for in terms of the Handicap Principle and other concepts from the evolutionary biology of communication. I also develop an alternative, though also evolutionist approach to explaining the expressive power and score-changing potential of speech acts. Following Green, I distinguish between *acts of communication* and *speech acts*. Unlike Green, however, I do not adopt the Gricean perspective. I argue that theorising about expressing thoughts with words – as well as about using language to change context – we should adopt a Millikanian view on acts of communication (Millikan 2005; see also Witek 2015a, 2015b, 2019) and an Austinian approach to speech acts (Austin 1975; Sbisà 2002, 2019; Witek 2015c).

The paper consists of two parts. In the first one, I discuss Green's (2009) model of the expressive dimension and score-changing function of speech acts. In particular, I draw two distinctions – between *externalist* and *internalist* aspects of veracity, and between

perlocutionary and *illocutionary* credibility – and argue that they constitute a natural refinement of Green's conceptual framework. In the second part, I use the refined framework to develop an alternative approach to theorizing about expressing mental states and score-keeping in speech acts.

2 Green on the expressive dimension and score-changing function of speech acts

In "Speech Acts, the Handicap Principle and the Expression of Psychological States", Mitchell Green (2009) considers two questions:

(Q$_1$) How is it possible for a speech act to express a mental state?

(Q$_2$) How to account for the score-changing function of speech acts?

Question (Q$_1$) corresponds to the central topic of the above-mentioned paper (see Green 2009, 148); question (Q$_2$), by contrast, is addressed indirectly and, it seems, is treated as a matter of secondary importance. It is not clear what is, according to Green, the relation between questions (Q$_1$) and (Q$_2$). On the one hand, Green declares that his model of expressing thoughts with words results from "blending features of the scorekeeping model of conversation with an elucidation of the norms characteristic of speech acts" (Green 2009, 156); in other words, an adequate account of the score-changing potential of speech acts will help us understand their expressive power. On the other hand, Green suggests that expressive norms – than play a key role in his account of expressive speech acts – enable us to indicate (*a*) the force of an utterance and (*b*) at least part of its score-changing potential: they "enable us to indicate [(*a*)] how what is said is to be taken and [(*b*)] what would count as an appropriate reply" (Green 2009, 160), respectively; taking this suggestion at face value, then, it is natural to expect that an adequate model of the expressive dimension of speech acts will shed light on their score-changing function.

According to Green, in expressing a mental state I show it by making it knowable to an appropriate observer. Nevertheless, not all cases of showing are cases of expression. My tears show and express my sorrow, whereas the bulging of a vein in my forehead shows, but does not express my anger. To account for the contrast between expressing a mental state and merely showing it, Green argues that "all cases of expression (…) are cases of showing guided by design" (Green 2009, 143). Tears are designed to make one's grief and sadness knowable to an appropriately endowed observer, whereas the tendency of a vein to bulge is designed to supply more blood in situations of anger rather than to show them.

Consequently, speech acts express thoughts in that they are designed to show the states that are specified in their sincerity conditions: assertions are designed to show beliefs, directives desires, and promises intentions. It remains to be examined, however, what stabilizes the signalling system that consists of our assertions understood as expressing signals and the beliefs they express. To settle this issue is to answer question (Q$_1$).

According to Green, expressive speech acts are reliable signals of mental states because they are *handicaps:* signals difficult to fake because of being costly to produce. Consider, for instance, a peacock carrying a long tail. The size of such a train correlates reliably with the fitness of its owner. Carrying a long tail, the peacock increases the risk of being spotted by a predator; therefore, it must be very fit since it managed to survive in a predatory environment. A peacock that has a long train incurs the cost of closing off the option of having low fitness without the exposure to the risk of being easily caught by a predator.

Green's point is that expressive speech acts in general and assertions in particular are handicaps, too. They are issued and interpreted in a normative environment and are subject to the so-called expressive norms, the general form of which is "One who produces S is to be in condition C; otherwise she is subject to a loss of credibility." For example, the practice of making assertions is governed by the following expressive norm:

(AN)   One who asserts that *p* is to believe that *p*; otherwise she is subject to a loss of credibility.

In performing an expressive speech act, the speaker incurs the cost of closing off the option of not being in the relevant state without exposure to censure. For instance, in performing an *insincere* assertion, the speaker incurs the cost of being exposed to the risk of a loss of credibility or, in other words, of being spotted by a normative 'predator': a social agent who, after recognising the speaker's insincerity, would publicly reproach or even punish her, thereby compromising her reputation as a credible social partner. For this reason – Green argues – expressive speech acts are reliable indicators of what is within: it is difficult to fake them because of being costly to produce. It is true that in many cases it is relatively easy to lie. Nevertheless, what stabilizes the practice of making sincere assertions as a whole – and, by the same token, what makes lying a successful strategy of deceiving others in individual cases – is the fact that assertions are subject to norm (AN). In general, expressive speech acts

are reliable signals of what is within in virtue of being difficult to fake because of the limitations put on by expressive norms.

Let us now consider question (Q2). Green seems to provide two accounts of the score-keeping function of speech acts: one in terms of expressive norms (Solution A) and the other in terms of credibility (Solution B).
Solution A rests on the Gricean idea that our conversational contributions *flow from* our mental states and that the score-changing potentials of the former are determined by the properties of the latter.

> Holding fixed what is said, expressive norms enable us to *indicate* [1] how what is said is to be taken and [2] what would count as an appropriate reply. Such norms enable us to do that by enabling us to show the psychological state (belief, acceptance, belief as justified, etc.) from which the conversational contribution flows. (Green 2009, 160)

In other words, the job of expressive norms is to help *indicate* both [1] the force of a speech act, and [2] how the performance of the act affects the conversational score.

Solution A involves three claims: first, expressive norms enable us to express mental states; second, the states thereby expressed involve different types of commitment to their propositional contents; third, the kind of commitment the speaker undertakes determines the score-changing potential of her act, which – at least in the case of assertion and its kin – can be spelled out in terms of allocating the burden of proof among the participants in speech situation. Green considers six illocutionary act types that belong to what he calls the *assertive family*: assertions, conjectures, educated guesses, (mere) guesses, presumptions, and suppositions. The results of his proposed analysis can be summarised by means of the table below. The term 'acceptance' occurring in the second column comes from Stalnaker, who uses it in his definition of presuppositions. According to him

> [t]o accept a proposition is to treat it as true for some reason. One ignores, at least temporarily, and perhaps in a limited context, the possibility that it is false. (2002, 716)

The relevant *as-clauses*, in turn, determine how the expressed mental state is presented; the mode of presentation so determined corresponds to the kind of commitment to the propositional content of the speaker's state. The last column presents how the performance of

the speech act affects the score of conversation: how it allocates the burden of proof and, as a result, what kind of responses it invites.

Speech act type	Expressed mental state	Effects on score or score-changing potential
S's assertion that *p*	S's belief that *p as* justified in a way appropriate for knowledge	S has the burden of proof. H is entitled to reply with the challenge 'How do you know?' In response to a proper challenge S should either offer reasons of her own, or defer to another's authority; otherwise S should retract the challenged assertion.
S's conjecture that *p*	S's belief that *p as* backed with some justification	H has the burden of proof if he wants to challenge S's assertion.
S's presumption that *p*	S's belief or acceptance that *p as* justified for current conversational purposes	H has the burden of proof if he wants to challenge S's assertion.
S's supposition that *p*	S's acceptance that *p as* aimed at the production of justification for some related content *r*.	H has the burden of proof if he wants to challenge S's assertion.

Solution A is based on the idea that the score-changing potential of a speech act is determined by normative properties of the state that the act expresses. Solution B, by contrast, involves no direct reference to expressive norms, but rests on the notion of credibility. According to Green, one's credibility is a score components that evolves in response to what's going on in conversation and determines the weight of one's conversational contributions:

> Finding someone credible is a matter of believing what they say to be reliable; it is also a matter of believing them to be sincere if their utterance admits of sincerity. (Green 2009, 152)
>
> A natural refinement of [the score-keeping model] would keep tabs on which interlocutors are credible and to what extent, and that will in turn determine the *weight*—as one might call it—of their conversational contributions. (*Ibid*, 153)

In short, one's credibility determines the weight of one's contributions, which, in turn, determines the range of allowable subsequent moves. For instance, a pronouncement made by

an expert is 'weighty' in that it results in putting the onus of proof on the addressee who would like to challenge it; an opinion expressed by a layman, by contrast, is not 'weighty' enough and as such is open to criticism.

3 Extending Green's conceptual framework

In this section I introduce two conceptual distinctions – between *externalist* and *internalist* aspects of veracity, and between *perlocutionary* and *illocutionary* credibility – and argue that they constitute a welcome refinement of the framework used by Green.

To answer question (Q_1) is to determine what vouchsafes the veracity of speech acts understood as expressive signals. However, veracity has two aspects: the externalist one, that can be called 'accuracy', and the internalist one, that can be called 'frankness'. We expect our interlocutors to be both accurate and frank, *e.g.*, to issue assertions that are both true and sincere. In most cases, however, our focus is on the externalist rather than internalist aspect of veracity: we take assertions made by our interlocutors to convey information about worldly states rather than to signal their beliefs. Of course, sometimes we switch our attention from what the speaker says to the belief that her utterance expresses; nevertheless, usually it happens for a reason. For instance, it takes place when the speaker proves herself to be non-veracious in the light of the externalist's standards – that is to say, when the proposition she asserts turns out to be false – and we want to determine whether she lies or is merely mistaken about the actual state of the world. Therefore, why does sincerity matter as a general normative standard for assertions?

Moreover, we can distinguish between (*a*) the cost of closing off the option of being wrong about the truth of *p* without exposure to the risk of a loss of credibility (the externalist aspect) as well as (*b*) the cost of forfeiting the option of not believing that *p* without exposure to the risk of a loss of credibility (the internalist aspect). Unlike being accurate, however, being frank in asserting something is under the speaker's voluntary control: putting aside cases of malapropism and other involuntary slips of the tongue, it is up to the asserter whether her assertion is sincere, whereas it is not entirely up to her whether her assertion is true. Therefore, the externalist aspect of the cost of making an assertion is in a sense more serious than the internalist one: the speaker can successfully manage and minimize the latter by simply speaking her mind, whereas ensuring a desired correspondence between her words and facts is not something that she can entirely control.

Let us now focus on the notions of *credibility* and *conversational weight* that play a key role in Green's account of the score-changing function of speech acts. Considering the conversational weight of a given speech act we can be interested *either* in its power to "produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience" (Austin 1975, 101); in short, we can distinguish between the act's *perlocutionary power* and its *illocutionary force*. For instance, the characteristic perlocutionary power of an assertion *qua* assertion is its ability to get the hearer to believe what he is told; its illocutionary force, in turn, involves its ability to bring about the speaker's commitment to the truth of what she says as well as the hearer's right to add the asserted content to his belief box and assert it on other occasions. To say of an assertion that it is *perlocutionarily weighty* is to assume that it succeeds in getting the hearer to believe what he is told; to say that it is *illocutionarily weighty*, by contrast, is to assume that it modifies the domain of second-personal normative relations and re-defines the scope of admissible conversational moves that can be subsequently made. Consequently, we can distinguish between two score components that evolve in response to what is going on in conversation: the speaker's *perlocutionary credibility*, which determines the perlocutionary weight of her acts, and her *illocutionary credibility*, which determines the acts' illocutionary weight.

In my view, Solution B proposed by Green seems to involve the notions of perlocutionary credibility and perlocutionary weight, whereas his Solution A seems to employ the illocutionary variants of these concepts. If Solutions A and B are to be regarded as complementary components of a coherent and comprehensive account of score-keeping in illocutionary practice, then one has to consider the relation between perlocutionary and illocutionary aspects of both the speaker's credibility and the weight of her conversational contributions.

4 An alternative account of the expressive dimension and score-changing function of speech acts

My aim in this section is to outline a non-Gricean account of the expressive dimension and score-changing function of speech acts. Following Green, I distinguish between *acts of communication* (acts in which information is conveyed from one agent to another) and *speech acts* (acts named by such illocutionary verbs as "state", "pronounce", "warn", "order", "advise", "promise", "apologize", etc.) Unlike Green, however, I claim that we can account for the two hallmarks of speech acts in non-Gricean terms, i.e., without assuming, first, that

the primary function of our utterances is to reveal our mental states and, second, that the force and meaning of a speech act is determined by the normative and semantic properties of the state "from which [it] flows" (Green 2009, 160). I put forth two hypotheses: first, that we should adopt a Millikanian perspective on acts of communication; second, that the expressive power and score-changing function of speech acts can be best accounted for along the Austinian lines.

According to Green, acts of communication "are acts in which information is conveyed from one system to another" (Green 2009, 147); their function is to contribute new propositions to the common ground among the interacting *individual* agents. Speech acts, by contrast, "are acts of the sort that can be performed by saying that one is doing so (*ibid*); they have a characteristic normative dimension, which, in my view, can be best explained by using the framework of Austin's theory of illocutionary acts (Austin 1975; see also Sbisà 2002, 2009, 2019). Illocutionary acts "take effect" (Austin: 1975, 117) by bringing about changes in the domain of entitlements, rights, comments, obligations of the participant in speech situation. For instance, a successful order takes effect by creating the hearer's obligation to perform a certain action as well as the speaker right to expect the hearer to perform it as well as reproach or even punish him in the case of disobedience. The normative effect of a speech act can be spelled out in terms of the responses it invites "by convention" (Austin 1975, 117); for instance, a successful assertion that p invites the hearer's response of either forming the belief that p, challenging the speaker by saying "How do you know?", or correcting the speaker "if [he knows or has] strong evidence that not-p" (Heal 2013, 140). Felicitous speech acts, then, affect the score of conversation by putting constraints on the range of appropriate moves that can be subsequently made.

I assume that acts of communication function in *second-person* or *dyadic interactions* based on skills and motivations of what Tomasello (2014) calls *joint intentionality*. In acts of joint intentionality, individual agents involved in direct or *face-to-face* cooperative interaction "form with one another joint goals toward mutually beneficial ends, structured by joint attention (…) [and recognise] simultaneously different individual roles in the collaborative activity" (Tomasello 2016, 62). Consider, for instance, a group of early humans who work together to hunt a big animal and face a coordination problem: not every combination of their individual acts ensures the achievement of their joint goal. This is where acts of communications enter the scene: their job is to help the collaborating agents coordinate their individual acts and thereby achieve their joint goal.

According to Tomasello (2014, 2016), acts of communication – which are performed by prelinguistic and just-linguistic human infants and, hypothetically, were performed by early humans – function against the background of propositions mutually believed by the interacting individuals, i.e., against their *second-personal* common ground. When you and I are communicating with each other, our second-personal common ground consists of propositions that I believe that I share with you, you believe that you share with me, I believe you believe that you share with me, you believe I believe that I share with you, and so on. The job of our indicative acts is to contribute new propositions to our second-personal common ground.

Finally, acts of communication have a characteristic normative aspect which can be called *local* normativity. It takes the form of our *individual* tendencies to be truthful speakers and trustful hearers, which are formed and maintained by what Tomasello (2014, 74n) calls *second-personal self-monitoring*. In making an act of communication that contributes to the achievement of our joint goal, I have a normative motive to be sincere and you have a normative motive to trust me (if my act is indicative) or comply with (if my act is imperative); these motives are normative for reasons indicated by Green in his discussion of expressive rules: insincere speakers and untrustful hearers expose themselves to the risk of a loss of reputation of cooperative agents. For this reason, in making an act of communication, I self-monitor its performance by simulating how it would be evaluated by my interlocutors. As Tomasello puts it,

> the informative motive led communicators to make a commitment to informing others of things honestly and accurately, that is, truthfully. Initially during collaborative activities, but then more generally (as humans' interdependence extended outside of collaborative activities), if individuals wanted to be seen as cooperative, they would commit themselves to always communicating with others honestly. (Tomasello 2014, 51)

By contrast, I assume that speech acts in general and assertions in particular function in a cultural group-oriented environment constituted by what Tomasello (2014) calls *collectively known cultural practices* based on skills and motivations for *collective intentionality*.

> As modern humans transitioned to culture they became group-minded creatures whose collective intentionality included all kinds of things not just in their [second-]personal

common ground with other individuals, but in their cultural common ground with the group, such supraindividual things as cultural conventions, norms, and institutions. Early humans' dyadic collaboration scaled up to modern humans' collectively known cultural practices – including those constituting the conventional symbols and constructions (...) of the local linguistic community – to which anyone who would be one of "us" must conform. This designation in principle – "anyone who would be one of us" – led to an objectification of the group's social and institutional norms (…). (Tomasello 2016, 63-64)

Speech acts, then, are performed by enculturated human agents. What is more, one can distinguish different assertive acts: *pronouncements*, *verdicts*, *statements*, *guesses*, *suppositions*, *presumptions*, *explanations*, etc. They all function against the background of *cultural* or *group* common ground, which differs from second-personal common ground in at least two respects: first, it contains not only commonly shared propositions, but also norms, rules, conventions, patterns, scripts and other culture-constituting standards; second, elements of our cultural common ground are shared not only by you and me, but also by any competent member of our group, by anybody who would be one of "us".

The function of a speech act is to affect the score of conversation: a data structure that registers publicly recognizable contributions of our conversational moves, where "publicly recognizable" means "what any competent member of our group would recognize". What is more, in performing speech acts we self-monitor them by simulating how they would be interpreted and evaluated by anyone who shares our standards of meaning-making. Therefore, the normative aspect of our illocutionary practice is global rather than local: it takes the form of normative tendencies and motivations that are formed and maintained by what can be called, following Tomasello, group-oriented *normative self-monitoring* (Tomasello 2014, 118).

The above-presented discussion of the distinction between acts of communication and speech acts suggests that the former are evolutionary and developmental precursors of the latter. Let us, then, consider a hypothetical scenario of the phylogenetic and ontogenetic origins of the uniquely human ability to produce and interpret illocutionary acts.

The proposed scenario involves two stages. At $STAGE_1$, we find individual agents – early humans and prelinguistic modern children – engaged in the practice of making acts of communication for the sake of coordinating their joint projects. Normally, in performing their communicative acts, they follow conventional patterns in Millikan's sense (Millikan 2005; see also Witek 2015a), which I explain in Subsection 2.3. below. The acts thereby produced

are interpreted against the background of second-personal common ground and have a characteristic normative aspect: they are subject to local norms that take form of individual expectations of truthfulness and trust.

The process of institutionalisation leads us to STAGE$_2$, at which we find enculturated human agents involved in the practice of performing and interpreting communicative acts, some of which can be justifiably described as illocutionary acts: conversational moves made by following conventional procedures and typed by reference to their normative effects. For instance, some of the acts performed at STAGE$_2$ are moves in argumentative games and as such take effect as *expert pronouncements*, *arguments*, *conclusions*, *challenges*, *presumptions*, etc. They function against the background of *cultural* or *group* common ground that comprises common standards – norms, rules and procedures – of meaning-making. Illocutions performed at STAGE$_2$ affect the score of conversation: a data structure that registers publicly recognizable contributions of our conversational moves. The practice of making and interpreting illocutionary acts exhibits a characteristic normative aspect that can be called *global*: our speech acts are subject to *commonly binding* norms and standards that are part of our cultural common ground.

Let us now focus on veracity and norms in acts of communication. Undoubtedly, veracity is a norm of indicative acts of communication: we expect our interlocutors to be veracious and, if they fail to meet this expectation, we have right to reproach them and thereby lower down their reputation as credible conversational participants. However, veracity has two aspects – *accuracy* and *truthfulness* – and normally our focus is on the former rather than on the latter, since the primary function of communicative acts is to convey information about the external world rather than to reveal our mental states. One can ask, therefore, why sincerity, besides accuracy and truth, is a norm of indicative acts of communication.

My answer to this question draws on two hypotheses. According to the first one, the proper function of indicative acts of communication is to induce beliefs on the part of the hearers and thereby to contribute to the achievement of what I call *mental coordination*; according to the second hypothesis, the sincerity of an act is a Normal condition ('Normal' in Millikan's technical sense, see Millikan 2005) for its proper functioning. Elsewhere (Witek 2019) I have discussed these two hypotheses in more detail and argued – using the framework of the interactional model of illocutionary acts (Witek 2015a) – that they jointly enable us to explain why sincerity is a norm for indicative acts of communication.

The interactional account results from integrating elements of Millikan's biological model of language (Millikan 2005) within the framework of Austin's theory of speech acts (Austin 1975). A central idea behind the interactional model is that acts of communication in general and illocutionary acts in particular are to be typed by reference to their conventionally determined *interactional effects* or *outcomes*, i.e., by reference to the responses they invite by convention. One problem with the original framework developed by Austin is that he was unspecific about the nature of conventions and conventional procedures. My proposal (Witek 2015a, 2019) is to explicate the Austinian notions of conventions in terms of Millikan's concept of language conventions as reproduced patterns of interaction.

According to Millikan, language conventions are lineages of counterpart-reproduced patterns of verbal interaction. Within every pattern of this type one can distinguish two parts: the speaker's portion, that involves the utterance of certain linguistic elements, and the hearer's complementary portion, that takes the form of his cooperative response. The production of the former initiates, and the occurrence of the latter completes the reproduction of the pattern. For instance, the speaker's portion of a pattern that underlies the performance of an indicative act involves the speaker's utterance of an indicative sentence, whereas its complementary portion involves the hearer's coming to believe what he is told; by analogy every pattern underlying the performance of imperative acts involves the speaker's utterance of an indicative sentence and the hearer's compliance with what he is told. What makes a given utterance an indicative or imperative act, however, is not the specific form of its performance, but its *conventional outcome* (Millikan 2005) or its *interactional effect* (Witek 2015a, 2019), i.e., the response the act "invites by convention" (Austin 1975, 117). The proper purpose of indicative and imperative acts of communication – i.e., the effects for which they have been selected for as types of interactional moves – is to evoke the hearer's cooperative response of trust and compliance, respectively. In short, aActs of communication in general and illocutionary acts in particular are typed by reference to their proper *cooperative* effects.

The proper function of speaker-hearer patterns, in turn, is *coordinative*: what stabilizes their use as conventional standards of communicative behaviour is that sufficiently often their reproduction results in the achievement of *mental coordination* between the interacting agents; in other words, the patterns have been selected for because sufficiently often they help speakers and hearers to keep their individual representations of their second-personal common ground sufficiently aligned. Viewed from this perspective, the proper job of the speaker's indicative communicative act is to get the hearer to believe what he is told and *thereby* to

contribute to the achievement of mental coordination between the speaker and the hearer; by analogy, the proper function of the hearer's cooperative response is to translate the act produced by the speaker into an appropriate belief and *thereby* to contribute to the achievement of mental coordination between the speaker and the hearer, too.

A key idea behind the proposed account of the normative dimension of communicative practice is that the sincerity of the speaker's act is a Normal condition – "Normal" in Millikan's technical sense – for the proper functioning of the hearer's trust. Roughly speaking, Normal conditions for the proper functioning of a device are conditions to which the device has been adapted to. For example, a Normal condition for the proper functioning of a rabbit's disposition to flee when it hears a soft noise is that the noise is caused by a predator; if the rabbit reacts to a noise that is not produced by a predator, this disposition functions properly, though not Normally. By analogy, the Normal condition for the proper functioning of the hearer's trust – i.e., of his disposition to believe what the speaker says – is that in making her act the speaker is sincere. If the hearer forms the belief that *p* in response to the speaker's insincere act of telling that *p*, his disposition to trust functions properly, though not in conditions that can be called 'Normal'. The hearer's disposition to translate what the speaker says into an appropriate belief is beneficial to both the speaker and hearer – i.e., it contributes to the achievement of mental coordination among them – only if the speaker in making her act is sincere. The Normal condition for the proper functioning of the speaker's sincerity, in turn, is that the hearer trust the speaker. The two tendencies in question – sincerity in speakers and trust in hearers – have co-evolved and adapted to each other.

Sincerity matters as an aspect of veracity because the sincerity of the speaker's indicative act of communication is the Normal condition for the proper functioning of the hearer's disposition to trust: if the speaker's act were not sincere, the hearer's trust would not contribute to the achievement of mental coordination. Sincerity and trust, then, are norms for communicative acts. More specifically, they are local norms, i.e., they take the form of individual agents' normative tendencies to be sincere speakers and trustful hearers.

Finally, let us discuss credibility and score-keeping in assertive speech acts. According to Green, the *credibility* of a speaker is to be defined as her power to issue *weighty* conversational contributions. However, credibility so defined can be understood either along the perlocutionary or illocutionary lines; in other words, we can distinguish between one's power to make perlocutionarily effective acts of communication (acts that succeed in evoking their interactional effect) and one's power to make felicitous illocutionary acts (acts that take

effect by bringing about changes in the domain of second-personal normative relations between the participants in social life).

In my view, *perlocutionary credibility* is registered by the second-personal common ground among the interacting individual agents, whereas the dynamics of *illocutionary credibility* or *authority* (Langton 2015; Witek 2015c) is tracked by the score of conversation. Recall, however, that every illocutionary act is an act of communication and as such can be characterised by reference to how it affects the beliefs and actions of the audience; in other words, it can be defined by reference to its interactional effects construed as its conventionally determined perlocutionary consequence or as the response it "invites by convention" (Austin 1975, 117). Nevertheless, not all acts of communication can be adequately accounted for as illocutionary acts, i.e., as norm-producing conversational moves. In short, I do not claim that our illocutionary competence that occurs at STAGE$_2$ replaces our evolutionary and developmentally earlier communicative competence that allows us to participate in verbal interactions characteristic of STAGE$_1$; rather, I take the former not only to transcend, but also to draw and build on the latter.

My hypothesis is that the dynamics of the conversational score is a ruled-governed process and that our ability to perform and interpret speech acts can be best understood in terms of illocutionary procedures. Following David Lewis (1979), I assume that in making a speech act we follow rules of appropriateness and rules of kinematics. The former define, for every stage of a language game, the scope of conversational moves that can be appropriately made at this stage. For instance, one can make a felicitous order in issuing an imperative sentence only if one stands in an appropriate authority relation to one's audience. The rules of kinematics, in turn, can be likened to what Searle (1969) calls *essential rules*: they define how the performance of a successful illocutionary act of a certain type affects the score of conversation. For instance, one of the kinematics rules determines that the speaker's felicitous order brings about the hearer's obligation to perform a certain action as well as the speaker's right to expect the hearer to comply with what he is told.

Elsewhere (Witek 2015c) I have distinguished between two mechanisms – the direct mechanism of *illocution* and the indirect one of *accommodation* – that are responsible for modifying the distribution of *illocutionary powers* among the participants in a language game. Roughly speaking, one's *illocutionary power* or *credibility* determines the scope of illocutionary acts that one can felicitously make at this stage. It can be created *either* directly, by a felicitous exercitive (Austin 1975) or declarative (Searle 1979) act, *or* indirectly, through the mechanism of accommodation due to which the speaker's authority over the hearer can be

created indirectly by the hearer's taking the speaker's utterances of imperative sentences to be binding orders. A detailed discussion of these two mechanisms goes beyond the scope of the present paper (but see Witek 2015c and 2016); for the present purposes, it suffices to note that their functioning presupposes the existence of speech act rules or procedures. Mechanisms of illocution involve following the rules of kinematics. Mechanisms of accommodation, by contrast, have no rules of their own (*pace* Lewis 1979); nevertheless, they operate against the background of appropriateness rules that determine what is required or presupposed by the felicitous performance of certain illocutionary acts (for a discussion of this topic, see Sbisà 2019). For instance, the felicity of an order presupposes that the speaker is endowed with an appropriate illocutionary power or credibility in virtue of her standing in a required authority relation to her audience: thorough accommodation, the felicitous performance of an act 'retroactively' creates what it requires (for a discussion of this idea, see Langton 2015; see also Witek 2015c).

In sum, credibility comes in two forms: perlocutionary and illocutionary. The dynamic of perlocutionary credibility is registered by the second-personal common ground among the interacting agents and as such can be modelled with the help of an adequate socio-psychological theory. By contrast, the dynamics of illocutionary credibility or authority is tracked by the conversational score that evolves in a rule-governed way. It is instructive to stress, however, that these two dimensions of conversational practice are distinguished by abstraction only; in real practice they interact with each other. The perlocutionary credibility of the speaker seems to play a role in the accommodating mechanism that retroactively creates her authority over her audience: it is easier for a speaker to become a leader of a group through accommodation – i.e., to establish her illocutionary power to issue biding directive acts – if the group takes her to be a credible communicator in the perlocutionary sense and falls in with what she says. A detailed discussion of this topic, however, goes beyond the scope of the present paper.

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