

Review of speech acts

Chris Potts, Ling 130a/230a: Introduction to semantics and pragmatics, Winter 2025

1 Question 1

Connect each concept on the left with its definition on the right:

Locution	an instance of using language
Illocution	an act performed merely by saying something
Perlocution	an effect of using language

2 Question 2

Construct sentences using *hereby* with the following verbs and try to determine whether that verb can directly achieve an illocutionary effect. If there are preparatory conditions that need to be met, say what they are.

i. promise

ii. apologize

iii. marry

iv. insult

3 Question 3

Mitchell Green's summary of illocutionary act/force properties says, "the characteristic point of a promise is to commit oneself to a future course of action" and "I can only promise what is in the future and under my control." What do you make of these claims in light of the following sentences?

- i. I promise you that it is going to rain tomorrow.
- ii. I promise you that you will regret your actions.
- iii. I promise you that Stanford was founded in 1885.

4 Question 4

In Solan and Tiersma's chapter 'Consensual searches', they review the famous Bustamonte case, in which police officer James Rand asked Joe Alcala "Does the trunk open?" and Alcala replied with "Yes" and then opened the trunk. How might you characterize (i) Rand's intended illocutionary force for his utterance, and (ii) Alcala's perception of Rand's intended illocutionary force, drawing on the properties of illocutionary force given in section 4.2 of the 'Speech acts' handout?