

# PERFORMATIVES AND IMPERATIVES

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## ABSTRACT

The term “performative” is used in at least two different senses. In the first sense, performatives are generatives, i.e. expressions by the use of which one creates new deontic states of affairs on the ground of extralinguistic conventions. In the second sense, performatives are operatives, i.e. expressions which contain verbal predicates and state their own utterances. In the article, both these types of expressions are compared to the class of imperatives which are characterized as expressions of the form “Let  $x$  see to it that  $p$ ” and typically express wishes. It is claimed that (1) only these imperatives are generatives which are uttered by deontic authorities, (2) no imperative is an operative *sensu stricto*; (3) imperative operatives are used instead of “pure” imperatives in order to emphasize the force of resolution.

**Keywords:** deontic authority, deontic state of affairs, generative, imperative, operative, performative, wish

## 1. Introduction

Theorists of language rather commonly agree that there exist close connections between two categories of expressions: imperative sentences (in short: imperatives) and performative sentences<sup>1</sup> (in short: performatives). It is often claimed that imperatives are simply a subclass of performatives. My aim here is to analyze these connections. The conclusions that one may draw from the analysis undermine some current opinions in this subject.

In §§2–6, I characterize in short the analyzed classes of expressions, emphasizing the fact that the Austinian term “performative” is used in at least two different senses. Since I want to avoid ambiguity, instead of one term “performative” I match two different terms to these two senses: “generatives” and “operatives”. In §§7–8, I present an analysis of relations between imperatives and generatives and then between imperatives and operatives.

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<sup>1</sup>I emphasize that I would like to say something here about performatives as expressions-types and thus my point of departure are not performative (or any) utterances.

## 2. Preliminaries

Let us assume, by idealization, that there are some—independent from accidental communicational circumstances—analytical rules that define the senses of expressions. Let us call the sense defined by these rules the “informational sense of expressions”.<sup>2</sup> A sender of expression (scil. a speaker) utters it in a certain sense (or: equips it with a certain sense) that I would like to call “intentional sense”. If the receiver hears and understands the expression, then s/he ascribes a certain sense to it—such a sense I call “interpretative”.

Various relations are possible between the informational, intentional and interpretative senses of an expression.<sup>3</sup> If the intentional sense of the expression is identical with the informational one, the sender speaks directly. If the intentional sense of an expression is different from the informational one, the speaker either speaks indirectly or is mistaken.<sup>4</sup> If the intentional sense is identical with the interpretative one, the communication is effective; otherwise there occurs a communicational misunderstanding. Notice that the intentional and interpretative senses may be identical but at the same time different from the informative one.

Let us now notice that the informational sense of expressions has (at least) two “layers”, since one may distinguish at least two types of semiotic functions of expressions, which may be called “referential” and “communicative” functions. By the referential functions, fragments of the world (or, if somebody likes, possible interpretations or model-theoretic structures) are ascribed to expressions. By communicative functions, typically expressed experiences are ascribed to them. The idea that leads to the distinguishing of communicative functions is the following: there are thoughts (convictional, emotional or volitional ones) that are usually revealed while uttering expressions of a given kind. For instance—the referential function of (declarative) sentences is stating (states of affairs) and the communicative function of them is expressing convictions (that these states of affairs occur).<sup>5</sup> It is assumed here that both functions are “attached” to expressions

<sup>2</sup>Let me add that it may happen that analytical rules define no sense of the expression (if it is meaningless) or more than one (if it is ambiguous). I also agree with these authors who say that this intralinguistic sense may be interpreted as a kind of semantic potential.

<sup>3</sup>In particular, there are the following possibilities: (1)  $S = O = H$ ; (2)  $S = O$ ,  $O \neq H$ ,  $H \neq S$ ; (3)  $S \neq O$ ,  $O = H$ ,  $H \neq S$ ; (4)  $S \neq O$ ,  $O \neq H$ ,  $H = S$ ; (5)  $S \neq O$ ,  $O \neq H$ ,  $H \neq S$ ; where “ $S$ ” — is for intentional sense, “ $O$ ” is for informational sense, and “ $H$ ” — for interpretative sense. They are all analyzed in Brożek (2010).

<sup>4</sup>In particular—in the case of indirect way of speaking the difference is intended, and in the case of mistake not-intended.

<sup>5</sup>This distinction was introduced by Ajdukiewicz: “It is useful to distinguish what a sentence asserts from what it (indirectly) expresses. The sentence ‘Paris is in Europe’ that has just been uttered by a person  $P$  asserts an objective state of affairs, viz. the geographical location of Paris; on the other hand, it expresses  $P$ ’s belief that the state of affairs asserted in that sentences is the case” (1978, 229).

on the basis of language conventions.

These conventions may be expressed by the following dependencies: The sentence ‘*p*’ refers to the state of affairs *S* iff, every person uttering ‘*p*’ (in earnest) refers to the state of affairs *S* (referential convention). The sentence ‘*p*’ communicates the conviction *C* iff, every person by uttering ‘*p*’ (in earnest) expresses (here: reveals) the conviction *C* (communicative convention). States of affairs (*S*’s) and convictions (*C*’s) are of different ontological status. Convictions are, of course, a kind of (mental) states of affairs. However, saying that by uttering ‘*p*’ a person *P* expresses a certain conviction *C*—means here that the content of *C* is expressed by ‘*p*’, and not—*C* itself; and this content is only intentional object.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. Imperatives

By “imperative” I mean an expression of the following general form:

(1) Let *x* see to it that *p*!<sup>7</sup>

The special case of (1) is:

(2) *x*, see to it that *p*!

In natural language, expressions falling under these schemes are sentences in the imperative mood.

I assume that expressions of the form (1) are usually used to reveal the will of realizing the state of affairs to which ‘*p*’ refers—by *x*. The addition “usually” signals that the expression of the will of realizing states of affairs quite regularly accompanies the use of imperatives (despite the fact that it happens that a token of a given imperative is accompanied by other experiences). Thus, one may call expressing the will of realizing states of affairs the “communicative function of imperatives”. Analogically: declarative sentences (declaratives), as already mentioned, are normally used to express convictions and questions (interrogatives) to express the will of fulfilling a cognitive gap (however, it happens that by the utterance of a declarative one does not express a conviction and that by the utterance of a question one does not express a cognitive will).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>It is sometimes claimed that the sense of some expressions has two components: the radical and the mood—and that the radical corresponds to a given state of affairs, whereas the mood to the mental state. Such a view seems to be mistaken. If the sense of expressions has such two components, the first component is not a state of affairs but rather a (re)presentation of a state of affairs. The whole composed of a state of affairs and a mental attitude would be a very strange entity.

<sup>7</sup>As one may see, I forejudge here that arguments of imperatives are “stit sentences” (in the Belnapian sense).

<sup>8</sup>The concept of communicative functions of declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives are characterized in detail in Brożek (2011).

The communicational sense of imperatives (i.e. what is expressed with the help of a typical imperative) is called “a wish”. It may be informally characterized as a state of affairs and the will of realization of it by the agency of a certain person.

So, the expressions:

- (3) Read all papers of Austin!
- (4) Let Jones give me the book back!
- (5) Alice, do not approach the fire!

are used to express, respectively, the will that the receiver read all papers of Austin, that Jones give the sender the book back and that Alice do not approach the fire.

The (strength of) will is gradable: one may want to realize a given state of affairs more or less firmly. The strength of will that accompanies the uttering of an imperative is not reflected in the imperative itself, however, some additional words or extra-linguistic circumstances may make it more precise. Wishes differ also with respect to resolution: for instance, pleadings are relatively less resolute in comparison to demands. The resolution of wishes is also not reflected in the shape of the imperative but may be defined by additional expressions or, e.g., intonation.

Let us distinguish realization, fulfillment and execution of an imperative. The imperative (1) is realized, iff  $p$ ; is fulfilled iff  $x$  sees to it that  $p$ ; is executed iff  $x$  sees to it that  $p$ , motivated by the received imperative (1). States of affairs that are realizations, fulfillments or executions of an imperative may be taken into consideration as possible referential correlates of imperatives.<sup>9</sup>

#### 4. Two senses of “performative”

One should strictly distinguish two related categories of expressions, not strictly enough defined by Austin, who introduced the problem of performatives into the philosophical workshop.

In the first sense, performatives are expressions such that their utterance, in appropriate circumstances and on the basis of the suitable extra-linguistic convention, causes the occurrence of some extra-linguistic state of affairs.

In the second sense, performatives are expressions composed of the performative predicate and its arguments where the predicate, from grammatical point of view, is a verb in the 1<sup>st</sup> person and present tense.<sup>10</sup> (This category is often called “explicit performatives”).

<sup>9</sup>Optatives, i.e. expressions which expresses wishes which are not directed to anybody, may be only realized and not executed. I owe this remark to Berislav Žarnić.

<sup>10</sup>Let me pass over (as not important here) the fact that Austin and his followers took into consideration another “canonical” form of performatives (passive form).

Notice that performatives in the first sense are characterized by their “causal” function and performatives in the second sense are described mainly syntactically. It seems that Austin thought that performatives in the second sense are the canonical form of performatives in the first sense and thus these two different classes are mixed in the conceptions of his followers. However, overlooking the differences between these two concepts leads to many misunderstandings. In this article, I shall analyze these two concepts and propose some explications. As a consequence, I shall distinguish these two kinds of expressions by the use of two different terms and I shall speak of generatives in the first case and of operatives in the second. Generatives and operatives such explicated are relative to their “models” in Austinian theory but are not identical with them.<sup>11</sup>

Let us look at these two categories more closely.

## 5. Generatives

Consider the following expressions:

- (6) The accused will work in the labor camp for 10 years.
- (7) The picture *Lady with an ermine* is sold for \$5 million to the lady with the red hat.
- (8) I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Let us notice that:

If (6) is uttered by the judge at the end of a trial, then just after this utterance the accused has to work for 10 years in a labor camp. If (7) is uttered by the person who conducts the auction, then just after this utterance the lady with the red hat is the owner of the picture and is obliged to pay \$5 million for it. If (8) is uttered by a priest at the baptism ceremony, then just after the utterance the person to whom the priest addresses his words becomes a member of Christian society.

States of affairs that consist of when somebody has to do something, is the owner of something or a member of something, are not, let us agree, physical states of affairs. Among not-physical states of affairs, a special role is played by deontic

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<sup>11</sup>Let me emphasise that duality of the concept of performative was noticed and analyzed by many authors. For instance, the postulate of distinguishing generatives as a separate class of expressions may be found by Warnock (1972). Generatives such characterized are also an object of the analyses of Frändberg (1973), recently developed by Åqvist (2003). The phenomenon of generativity is also the object of analyses by Searle (1995) and his commentators. The analysis of generatives was proposed by Grodziński, who called them “performatives in the legal or quasi-legal sense”; his results are developed by Jadacki (2002). Moreover, my concept of generatives corresponds, to some degree, to the concept of conventional act which was introduced (and distinguished from the concept of intentional act) by Strawson (1946) and then i.a. by Bach and Harnish (1979).

states of affairs, i.e. states of being obliged or having right to do something. Let us emphasize that deontic states of affairs are also not simple psychological states of affairs, scil. they are not mental states (however some mental states are a part of their genesis).<sup>12</sup>

Let us notice that the aforementioned states of affairs occur just because some words are pronounced in certain definite circumstances (sc. by appropriate persons in appropriate place and moments). One may say that these expressions generate states of affairs. Expressions that fulfill such a generative function are generatives.<sup>13</sup>

It is obvious that not every utterance of a generative (not every utterance of (6)–(8), in particular) causes the occurrence of a new deontic state of affairs. The circumstances in which the utterance of them causes the deontic states of affairs are codified in conventions (resp. in constitutive rules, as Searle calls them).<sup>14</sup> These conventions are very diversified. In our examples these conventions are legal or statutory. Though it happens that the usage of generatives is governed only by customary and never clearly codified conventions.

I am inclined to claim that Austin had in mind exactly this class of expressions, called here “generatives”, when he wrote:

- (9) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances (Austin 1962, 26).

Let us consider the question of the definition of “generative”. Åqvist (2003, 115) proposes the following definition (using the term “performative”):

- (10) The sentence *S* is a generative relative to the sentence *T* in the context *K*, iff by addressing *S* to suitable receivers in *K* the sender of *S* causes that *T* becomes true in *K*.

This definition has the following defects. Firstly, the generated state of affairs is characterized meta-linguistically. In accordance to the spirit of this definition, there are some sentences which may “change” their logical value with respect to

<sup>12</sup>In the literature, generated states of affairs are sometimes called “institutional facts” (Searle); by the term used by myself, I would like to stress that all such states of affairs have deontic character. Bach and Harnish classify the utterances of generatives into “effectives” and “verdicts”, and only the second class is characterized deontically. However, let us notice that the institutional state of a given person, which is by Bach and Harnish the result of an effective, is also composed of obligations and rights.

<sup>13</sup>Let us notice that Searle, in his *How to Derive ‘Ought’ from ‘Is’* (1964) states that the fact that utterance causes the occurrence of a deontic state of affairs is a sui generis “pass” from *is* to *ought*.

<sup>14</sup>Let us remember that constitutive rules, in Searle’s “*X* counts as *Y* in the context *C*”. In particular: the occurrence of *W* ... counts as generating the state of affairs *S* in the context *C*.

context (here: the sentence  $T$  “becomes” true in the context  $K$ ). However, I am inclined to think that sentences simply are true or false and do not “become” true from time to time. Secondly, the definition seems to be too broad if we do not make the reservation that (a) the new state of affairs is caused by the utterance of a generative by convention and that (b) it is not simply a linguistic convention. Notice that the utterance of an expression, being a certain event, causes many physical state of affairs, such as movement of the air, changes in the hearer’s ears and brain etc. Moreover, the utterance of an expression causes some changes of mental states of the hearer—scil. it evokes some cognitive, emotional or volitional states in him. Some of these evoked states may be treated, to some degree, as based on language conventions. For instance, if the speaker utters the expression  $E$ , whose communicational function is to express the mental state  $S$ , then this utterance (in normal circumstances) evokes the hearer’s conviction that the speaker is in the state  $S$ . Although some physical or mental states are effects of utterances of expressions, neither physical nor mental states are generated by these expressions.

However, the Åqvist’s definition has a certain important advantage. He rightly points to the fact that the concept of generating is a relational one: for Åqvist, generating is a relation between an expression, a state of affairs and a context.

The following definition seems to reconcile the intuitions of Austin and Åqvist:

- (12) An expression-type  $E$  is a generative with respect to a state of affairs  $S$ , iff: there is such an extralinguistic convention  $K$  and such circumstances  $C$  that:<sup>15</sup>  $K$  is obligatory and says that: if one utters a token of an expression-type  $E$  in circumstances  $C$ , then the state of affairs  $S$  occurs.

According to this definition, and in harmony with Austin’s intuitions, the respective convention decides what is the procedure of utterance of generatives and only when conditions defined by conventions are fulfilled does the state of affairs occur. Moreover, in harmony with Åqvist’s intuition, the concept of generative is relative—in particular, the relation of generating is binary and its arguments are an expression and a state of affairs.

The concept thus explicated requires some comments.

Firstly, generatives are defined as expressions-types, just as Frändberg (1973) does. In accordance with this definition, generating is a relationship between an expression-type and state-of-affair-type: the utterance of a token of generative causes the occurrence of the state-of-affairs token. For instance, (8) is a

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<sup>15</sup>In other words: consuetude, norm, rule. It is worth stressing that the convention gives usually only a scheme of a performative, defines its shape only generally. This scheme has to be filled, inter alia, by the names of people taking part in performative acts, etc.

certain expression-type whose counterpart is somebody's-becoming-a-member-of-the-Christian-community.

Secondly, one should once again emphasize that generated states of affairs are of deontic character (one may not generate a physical state of affairs). I have not the space here to characterize such states of affairs in detail, however, let me stress that they should be strictly distinguished from emotional and epistemic states of affairs (and that is why generating should be strictly distinguished from evoking and expressing). It is however important to stress that the source of these deontic states of affairs that are generated by generatives lies in people's minds (their convictions and volitional states, in particular).<sup>16</sup>

Thirdly, the definition appeals to the concept of the being obligatory of the convention. The fact that a given convention is obligatory is also a deontic state of affairs that is often generated by another generative. Generatives that establish a convention concerning the use of other generatives may be called "metageneratives".<sup>17</sup>

Fourthly, circumstances mentioned in (12) may concern: (a) properties of persons uttering generatives (senders), (b) properties of receivers of performatives, (c) properties of time and place in which generatives are to be uttered. Some conventions regulate all of these circumstances, others only part of them.

Fifthly, the convention mentioned in (12) does not always define the shape of generative precisely: sometimes it shapes only a scheme or a category of a generative. For instance: court regulations do not define all possible shapes of verdicts—only the general shape.

## 6. Operatives

Generatives have various grammatical forms; moreover, the generative function is also fulfilled by some extra-linguistic signs. The situation is different with another category identified by Austin, which is characterized by a special grammatical structure.

Let us consider some examples of operatives:

- (13) I promise never to cheat you again.
- (14) I state that the Sejm rejected the amendment.
- (15) I command you to read all works of Austin.

<sup>16</sup>According to Searle, every constitutive rule is sustained by people, their consciousness and their intentional acts. For instance: "If everybody stopped believing that it is money, then it would stop functioning as money and stop being money, in the end" (Searle 1995, 32).

<sup>17</sup>I omit the question of the so-called fertility of the utterance (I analyse it in Brożek and Kasprzyk (2007)).



Let us notice that expressions similar to (13) are used in order to promise something, expressions of the form (14) in order to state something, and expressions of the form (15) in order to command something.

As I already mentioned, expressions such as (13)–(15) are often considered as a canonical form of generatives. However, my strong impression is that almost everything what can be said about the so-called explicit performatives may be said about all members of the broader class of expressions which I call here “operatives”.<sup>18</sup> Promising, stating and commanding are actions that require the use of words. Let us call all predicates that refer to such actions “verbal predicates”. Let us call the remaining predicates “extra-verbal” ones. Promising, stating and commanding are verbal actions, however, hammering, jogging and ironing are not.

I propose the following definition of “operative”:

- (16) An operative is an expression in which a verbal predicate occurs in the first person and present (not-habitual) tense.

This simple definition does not make use of any complicated concept of the theory of speech acts.<sup>19</sup> It is because, in my opinion, the only common feature of predicates that are given as examples of explicit performatives is that they all are verbal ones.<sup>20</sup> Thus, I am inclined replace the “mysterious” concept of explicit performative by the concept of operative (in my opinion, much more clear).

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<sup>18</sup>In fact—everything except of that they are all generatives. One of motivations of introducing the concept of operatives is to make the theory adequate in Petražcki’s sense: The theory  $T$  of the class of objects  $S$  is adequate if there is no overset  $S'$  of  $S$  such that  $T$  is true in  $S'$ .

<sup>19</sup>Harnish (1979) proposed the following definition of “operative” (using the term “performative”, of course):  $e$  is a prototypical performative iff

- (i)  $e$  is of the form: I (hereby) VP [...] (VP is present tense or progressive aspect);
- (ii) VP denotes an illocutionary act;
- (iii) If  $S$  utters  $e$  in the appropriate circumstances, then  $S$  VP-s.

My definition does not refer to the concept of illocutionary act, which, in my opinion, is not necessary to explicate Austinian intuitions. It also seems to me that (iii) makes clear that predicates occurring in performatives are verbal.

<sup>20</sup>I am aware that my definition of “operatives” includes in this class some expressions which are usually not considered as performatives, e.g.: “I convince you that Åqvist has offered a viable solution”. However, it is not a problem in my conceptual scheme, since I do not claim that operatives are a subclass of generatives: only some operatives are generatives and vice versa. It seems to me that Searle’s declarations are exactly intersections of these two sets: “There is a fascinating class of speech acts that combine the word-to-world  $\downarrow$  and the world-to-word  $\uparrow$  direction of fit, which have both directions of fit simultaneously in a single speech act  $\Downarrow$ . These are cases where we change reality to match the propositional content of the speech act and thus achieve world-to-word direction of fit. But, and this is the amazing part, we succeed in so doing because we represent the reality as being so changed. More than three decades ago, I baptized these as “Declarations.” They change the world by declaring that a state of affairs exists and thus bringing that state of affairs into existence” (Searle 2010, 12).

Let us recall that Austin identifies some special features of operatives:

- (17) [An utterance of an operative] “is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not normally be described as saying something” (Austin 1962, 5).

Austin probably had in mind the fact that utterances of (13)–(15) are spontaneously described as promising, stating or commanding. This is what he wrote on the grammatical form of operatives:

- (18) Thus what we should feel tempted to say is that any utterance, which is in fact a performative, should be reducible, or expandable, or analysable into a form with a verb in the first person singular present indicative active (grammatical) (Austin 1962, 61–62).

He describes predicates that occur in such expressions as follows:

- (19) If I utter the words “I bet. . .”, I do not state that I utter the words “I bet”, or any other words, but I perform the act of betting [. . .]. But if I utter the words “he bets”, I only state that he utters (or rather has uttered) the words “I bet”: I do not perform his act of betting, which only he can perform [. . .]. Now this sort of asymmetry does not arise at all in general with verbs that are not used as explicit performatives. For example, there is no such asymmetry between “I run” and “He runs” (Austin 1962, 63).

The most “mysterious” feature of operatives is the fact that their referential correlates are their own utterances. If we promise (inter alia) by uttering (13), then (13) refers to the utterance of (13). This strange “behavior” of operatives is connected to the problem of their logical value. It is a very well known fact that Austin definitely claimed that operatives do not have logical value. However, recently some theorists of speech acts express another opinion and defend the view that performatives are true or false and provoke discussions with supporters of Austin’s primary intuitions.<sup>21</sup>

Let us add some arguments to this discussion.

We have to agree that operatives have the logical value, i.e. are true or false, if we accept an appropriate set of assumptions. Among these assumptions, there have to be: a definition of truth and falsehood, definitions of verbal activities, and a conception of indexical expressions.

Let us first consider the following definitions of “truthfulness” and “falsity”:

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<sup>21</sup>The philosophers who claim that operatives possess logical value are: Bach and Harnish (1979), (1992), Harnish (2002), (2004), (2007) and Searle (1989); among opponents let me mention Jary (2007).

(20) If the sentence  $S$  states that  $p$ , then  $S$  is true, iff  $p$ .

(21) If the sentence  $S$  states that  $p$ , then  $S$  is false, if not- $p$ .

In order to estimate whether a given operative is true or false, firstly we have to identify the state of affairs to which it refers (if refers) and then estimate whether this state of affairs occurs.

Consider to which state of affairs the expression (13) refers. Let us agree that promising is a verbal act. This act may be prosecuted by an utterance of a sentence falling under the following scheme:

(22) I promise [to you] that  $p$ .

However, let us notice that one may promise not only by uttering an expression falling under (22) but also, e.g., some sentences in the future tense. Instead of (13) one may say solemnly:

(23) I will never cheat you again.

Moreover, it seems that it is not enough for promising to utter such-and-such words; one should also be in an appropriate mental state or some convention-determined circumstances should be appropriate. Let us call this state ‘ $S$ ’ and these circumstances ‘ $C$ ’ (not analyzing, now, what they consist of), and let us agree that the following semantic dependency holds:

(24) If  $x$  in circumstances  $C$  utters to  $y$  an expression falling under the scheme “I promise you that  $p$ ” and  $x$  is in the state  $S$  then  $x$  promises  $y$  that  $p$ .

On the basis of the convention (24):

(25) If  $x$  utters to  $y$  the expression falling under the scheme (22) in circumstances  $C$  being in the state  $S$ , then the expression uttered by  $x$  is true.

It seems that expressions of the form (22) refer (at least among others) to utterances of expressions of the form (22). If so, every utterance of operative (in appropriate mental state and in appropriate circumstances) makes this operative true. The state of affairs that is stated in (22) is utterance of (22).

Let us now notice that (22), and every operative in general, contains at least one indexical expression (usually more than one).<sup>22</sup> It is also usually claimed that the logical value of a sentence may be defined only after removing indexicals (sc. deindexicalization).

One of the ways of deindexicalization of (22) transforms it into a sentence:

(26) A certain  $x$  in a certain time promises to a certain  $y$  that  $p$ .

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<sup>22</sup>The fact of indexical character of explicit performatives is analyzed in Welsh and Chametzky (1983).

In fact, also the following sentence is deindexicalized to the form of (26):

(27) He promises  $y$  that  $p$ .

Removal of indexicals removes the difference between the 3<sup>rd</sup> person and 1<sup>st</sup> person form of verbal predicates. But still the utterance of (22) makes deindexicalized (18) true, since:

(28) If somebody somewhere utters the sentence (22), then the sentence (22) is true.

Another kind of deindexicalization of (22) takes into consideration the fact that the reference of indexicals such as “I” is defined in a given context. So, if (22) is uttered by John to Alice, then “I” in (22) refers to John and “you” to Alice. As a consequence, (22) has the same reference as:

(29) John promises Alice that  $p$ .

On the basis of the convention (25), the utterance of (22) by John to Alice, makes (22), as well as (29), true.<sup>23</sup>

One of arguments against the logical values of imperatives is that imperative they are usually not uttered as assertions. Although I agree that operatives are usually not uttered in order to express convictions (and in this sense are not typical declarative sentences), I do not think that it is sufficient reason to deny that they have logical value. In other words—in order to attribute a logical value to an expression, it is enough to define what is its referential correlate. The problem of whether tokens of this sentence serve as assertions, as declarations or as indications does not matter to the question of their logical value.

## 7. Imperatives as generatives

Surely, at least the following thesis is true:

(30) Some imperatives are generatives.

There are imperatives such that there are conventions, which say that these imperatives, uttered in appropriate circumstances, generate states of affairs—obligations, in particular. For instance, the utterance of:

(31) Present arms!

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<sup>23</sup>I am aware of the fact (and only do not develop the idea here) that operatives contain some other, hidden indexicals, such as “now” or “here”. Let me only emphasize that, in my opinion, (22) is not ambiguous just because it may refer to one act of promising as well as to repeated acts. The expression (22) is simply ellipsis: if it is used as a promise, the default completion is “now”; if the (22) is, e.g. the answer to the question “What do you do every morning?”, the default completion is “Every morning”.

by an army sergeant-major during drill obligates every soldier in this army to present arms. The utterance of an imperative:

(32) Please, write an essay on performatives for the 5<sup>th</sup> of January.

by the lecturer of philosophy to his course participants obligates them to write an essay in the appropriate term.

The convention that is responsible for generativity of (31) is army law and the convention responsible for generative character of (32) is an academic custom. These conventions indicate deontic authority. In the case of (31) this role is played by the drill-sergeant and in the case of (32)—the lecturer. Let us notice that these conventions do not indicate the shape of the imperative precisely, they indicate only their category (in the case of army commands concerning behavior of soldiers in the service, in the case of university—the behavior of students as participants of a given course).

It is worth considering the question whether:

(33) Every imperative is a generative.

Usually, conventions define only some range of being in force of deontic authority. The truthfulness of (33) would be settled by the fact of existence of absolute deontic authority (in every field).<sup>24</sup>

It is worthwhile explicating one more question. It is not the case that imperatives generate their own realizations, fulfillments or executions. These two questions are mixed, it seems, by Recanati (2004, 71), who included imperatives into performatives, because the utterance of imperative:

(34) Come here!

is, according to him, to “cause” or “be presented as causing” of coming-to-the-hearer. In fact, the receiving of the imperative may become for the receiver a motive (so, a part of a cause) of action but it does not belong to the range of generating function.

## 8. Imperatives as operatives

When one analyses both proposed definitions of “imperatives” and “operatives” it becomes clear that:

(35) No imperative is an operative.

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<sup>24</sup>Let us agree that  $y$  is an absolute deontic authority with respect to  $x$ , when (e.g.) the following convention holds: for any ' $p$ ', if  $y$  utters to  $x$  the expression of the form 'Let  $x$  see to it that  $p$ !', then  $x$  is obliged to see to it that  $p$ .

These expressions have simply different grammatical structures.

However, the answer to the question what is the relation between operative and imperatives is not so simple, especially if we take into consideration that in Austinian tradition explicit performatives are contrasted to performatives *sensu largo*. It is claimed that every performative *sensu largo* may be “reduced” to an explicit performative or “has the same sense” as an explicit performative. In order to estimate this thesis one should of course, define what it means that one expression may be “reduced” to another or “has the same sense” as another one.

Imperatives are often taken as examples of operatives (performatives) *sensu largo*. For instance, it is claimed that:

(36) Let *A* see to it that *p*!

corresponds to the following operatives (explicit performatives):

(37) I ask you, *A*, to see to it that *p*.

(38) I command you, *A*, to see to it that *p*.

(39) I order you, *A*, to see to it that *p*.

This very example shows that one imperative may possess many “operative” counterparts.

Let us look at analogical examples of declarative sentences and three “corresponding” operatives:

(40) I will do *A*.

(41) I promise to do *A*.

(42) I announce that I will do *A*.

(43) I warn that I will do *A*.

Notice that there are analogical structural relations between, respectively, (36) and (37)–(39) and between (40) and (41)–(43). Expressions (37)–(39) contain (36) and (41)–(43) contain (40) as an embedded part. I am a supporter of the view that embedded declarative sentences as well as imperatives are nominalized (sc. fulfill functions typical for names). Let us, further, agree that embedded sentences designate situations or judgments (propositions), and embedded imperatives—situations or wishes (where judgments and wishes are some compound psychological phenomena).

Let us now consider in what sense expressions (36) and (40) are to correspond to, respectively, (37)–(39) and (41)–(43).

Assume that two expressions have the same meaning if and only if they refer to the same situation. If (36) refers to anything, it refers to the situation that *p* (simpliciter) or the situation in which that *p* is a fact as an effect of *A*’s action.

Consider (37) now. It refers to a situation whose elements are: asking, sender, receiver and—the situation to which (36) refers. In other words: the semantic correlate of (37) is only a part of a semantic correlate of (34). It is similar, of course, in the cases of (38) and (39). So—imperatives do not have the same meaning as the corresponding operatives.

The situation is similar in the case of (40) and “corresponding” to it (41)–(43). The semantic correlate of (40) is only a part of the semantic correlates of (41)–(43). The impression that it is different comes from the fact that by the use of the imperative—e.g., by the use of (36) one *expresses* requests or expectations and in expressions (37)–(40) one states what is expressed in various tokens of (36). It is analogously so in the case of (40).

The correspondence between imperatives and performatives may consist in, as it is often said in Austinian tradition, having the same illocutionary force (or Harnish: “having the same illocutionary potential”). It is in fact surprising that the utterance of (37) functions similarly to the utterance of (36), i.e. that the receiver of (37) interprets it as a request and not an assertion. This problem was the object of analysis of many authors (Harnish presents a typology of conceptions explaining this fact).<sup>25</sup> In the conceptual scheme sketched at the beginning one should explain this phenomenon as follows (I limit myself here to imperative operatives, sc. operatives which are uttered instead of imperatives). From a referential point of view, operatives are declarative sentences whose “truthmakers” are, inter alia, their own utterances (tokens). It happens that tokens of operatives express convictions. But it happens more often that their intentional sense is indirect: that they are used to express volitional experiences that can be directly expressed with the help of imperatives. Their communicational success (in particular, the fact that we often choose them instead of imperatives) comes from the fact that they indicate the level of firmness and resolution (i.e. they indicate whether the utterance is a request or a command). It seems that this solution is very similar to that of Bach and Harnish.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>This is his typology (Harnish (1988)): (1) Performatives are used to say (locutionary) things and to do (illocutionary) other things. (2) Performatives are used to constate (illocutionary) one thing and to do, by standardized indirection, something else (illocutionary). (3) Performatives are used to constate one thing and by implicature to do (illocutionary) another. (4) Performatives are used to declare (locutionary) one thing and to do (illocutionary) another. (5) Performatives are ambiguous as between performative and non-performative readings. (6) Performatives are true or false but are not used to constate anything. (7) Performatives are used to constate one thing and to do that thing directly.

<sup>26</sup>Austin notices this fact and writes: “Explicitness, in our sense, makes clearer the force of the utterances [...]. The explicit performative formula, moreover, is only the last most successful of numerous speech devices which have always been used with greater or less success to perform the same function” (Austin 1962, 72).

Let me add one more comment. It happens that instead of (37)–(39) one says:

- (44) *A*, see to it that *p*. I ask you for it.
- (45) *A*, see to it that *p*. It is a command.
- (46) *A*, see to it that *p*. I order you to do it.

In these examples, simple imperatives are supplemented by declarative which indicate the force of their resolution. In my opinion, (37)–(39) may be interpreted as shortenings of (44)–(46), chosen because of the general linguistic tendency to economize the way of expressing thoughts.<sup>27</sup>

## 9. Resumé

Let me summarize the main results of the paper.

- (a) The strict distinction of two senses of the term “performative” makes the analysis of relations between the class of performatives and the class of imperatives easier. The classes of imperatives and generatives intersect. Some (but not all) generatives are imperatives. Some (but not all, unless there exists a universal authority) imperatives are generatives. No imperative is an explicit operative. Operatives state what is expressed by different tokens of imperatives. Imperative operatives are uttered instead of imperatives, since they define the force and resolution of the expressed will.
- (b) If one compares theories of imperatives, it seems that some theorists explicate their content as expressing the will, other emphasize above all their obligating power. Here, an imperative has the obligating power only if it is a generative, i.e. if there is convention that indicates the deontic authority such that her/his utterance of this imperative generates the obligation.

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<sup>27</sup>Strawson (1964, 451) expresses the idea that such expressions as “I am only making a suggestion” or “I am only warning you” are comments concerning other acts; he claims that there is only a “short step” from such double acts to one, single act expressed in explicite performatives, “to make explicit the type of communication intention with which the speaker speaks, the type of force which the utterance has”.



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