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Illocution and accommodation
in the functioning of presumptions *

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HYPOTHESES:
- presumptions can be grouped into a few illocutionary act types singled out and defined by reference to how they affect the state of a conversation;
- the functioning of presumptions involves two types of mechanisms: *illocution* ($\rightarrow$ direct) and *accommodation* ($\rightarrow$ indirect).

PLAN:

1. score-keeping model of illocutionary games:

    1.1. key ideas (Witek 2013, 2015);

    1.2. critical discussion of the Lewisian account of illocutionary acts
    (Lewis 1979; Langton 2015);

    1.3. back-door speech acts, uptake, and blocking
    (Langton forthcoming a, forthcoming b; cf. Sbisà 2009).

2. the functioning of presumptions:

    2.1. individual presumptions;

    2.2. shared presumptions;

    2.3. collective presumptions.

1.1. key ideas of the score-keeping model of illocutionary games

Speech acts:

- "context-changing social actions" (Sbisà 2002: 421);
- functions "from contexts into contexts" (Gazdar 1981: 68).

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- conversational score (Lewis 1979; Kölbel 2011; Langton forthcoming b);
- conversational record (Thomason 1990; Lepore & Stone 2015).

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- conversational score (Lewis 1979; Kölbel 2011; Langton forthcoming b);
- conversational record (Thomason 1990; Lepore & Stone 2015).

Score functions:
- *interpretative/evaluative*:
  score at stage *x* = a sequence of abstract entities relative to which every move made at *x* is to be interpreted and/or evaluated;
- *kinematic/dynamic*:
  score = an abstract data structure that tracks and represents publicly recognizable contributions to the state of the conversation.

1.1. key ideas of the score-keeping model of illocutionary games

Score components:

- presuppositions shared by interlocutors ($\rightarrow$ CG),
- deontic fact (e.g. permissible/impermissible boundary, authority),
- points of reference,
- rankings of comparative salience,
- standards of precision,
- and so on …

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    → score in *illocutionary games* (Witek 2015)

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The felicity of (1) *qua* an exercitive:
- *presupposes* the speaker's authority as a Master,   → Sc_{SOURCE}
- and *consists in* producing a new norm for the Slave.   → Sc_{TARGET}

The utterance of (1) counts as *X* in context *C*.

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This is how the *mechanism of illocution* works.

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(2)   Go and pick up wood.

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In uttering (2), Jones:
- performs a directive act;
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In uttering (2), Jones:
 • performs a directive act;
 • i.e., *orders* Smith to go and pick up wood.

The felicity of (2) *qua* an order:
 • *presupposes* Jones's authority as a leader,   → Sc_{SOURCE}
 • and *consists in* putting Smith
   under an obligation to go and pick up wood.   → Sc_{TARGET}

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Normally, the functioning of (2) as a binding order involves only *illocution*.

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But on a desert island, Jones's authority can be created *by accommodation.*

1.1. key ideas of the score-keeping model of illocutionary games

Lewis (1979):

kinematics rules

→ determine how the performance of a given speech act
affects the context of its production;

rules of direct kinematics

→ determine, for any move that can
be appropriately made in the game,
what would count as its Sc_{TARGET}

$$\{Sc_{SOURCE}\} \rightarrow \{Sc_{TARGET}\}$$

"rules" of accommodation

→ govern a process whereby
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to make the move appropriate

$$\{Sc_{SOURCE}\} \rightarrow \{Sc_{ACCOMM\_SOURCE}\}$$

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MW (following Sbisà forthcoming):
- it is better to speak of *mechanisms* rather than *rules* of accommodation;
- accommodation involves no rules of its own;
- it functions against the background of kinematics
  and appropriateness rules.

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In sum:

- there are two types of mechanisms
  that underlie the functioning of illocutionary acts:

    – direct ($\rightarrow$ illocution),
    – indirect ($\rightarrow$ accommodation);

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- there are two types of mechanisms
  that underlie the functioning of illocutionary acts:

  – direct (→ illocution),
  – indirect (→ accommodation);

- the former makes use of the rules of direct kinematics
  (≈ Searle's essential rules);

- the latter has no rules of its own, but functions against
  the background of appropriateness rules (≈ Searle's preparatory rules).

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  the background of appropriateness rules (≈ Searle's preparatory rules).

The mechanism of accommodation of Austinian presuppositions:

(R) If at time t speaker S makes a binding illocution I, and if the felicity of I requires Austinian (...) presupposition p to be part of the score relative to which I is evaluated, and if p is not part of the score just before time t at which I is made, then — *ceteris paribus* and within certain limits — p becomes part of the score at t.

(Witek 2013, 2015)

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Lewis:

- the new norm is produced by following a rule of accommodation;
- in general, the functioning of exercitives *qua* exercitives involves accommodation.

If at time t something is said about permissibility by the master to the slave that requires for its truth the permissibility or impermissibility of certain courses of action, and if just before t the boundary is such as to make the master's statement false, then – ceteris paribus and within certain limits – the boundary shifts at t so as to make the master's statement true. (Lewis 1979: 341)

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Langton (2015):
- on a desert island, the functioning of (2) as a binding order, involves a two-part process of accommodation:
  – through *presupposition accommodation*
    part I creates Jones's authority;
  – through *illocutionary accommodation*
    part II brings about Smith's obligation;

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  – through *presupposition accommodation*
    part I creates Jones's authority;
  – through *illocutionary accommodation*
    part II brings about Smith's obligation;
- both *presupposition accommodation* and *illocutionary accommodation*
  can be accounted for along the Lewisian lines:
  "what is said requires and thereby creates what is required".

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(2)   Go and pick up wood!

Part I. Presupposition Accommodation of Authority

If (1. Utterance) – at time t something is said [Jones says to Smith, 'Go and pick up wood!']; and

(2. Requirement) – a score component is required to be a certain way [Jones has authority] in order for what is said to be correct play [a felicitous order]; and

(3. Novelty) – the component wasn't that way before; and

(4. Conditions) – certain conditions hold [e.g. Smith falls in, treats Jones as having authority]; then

(5. Creation) – at t the score component is that certain way [Jones has authority], enabling what is said to be correct play [a felicitous order].

(Langton 2015: 16)

1.2. critical discussion of the Lewisian account of illocutionary acts

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Part II. Illocutionary Accommodation of Permissibility

If (1. Utterance) – at time t something is said [Jones says to Smith, 'Go and pick up wood!']; and

(2. Requirement) – a score component is required to be a certain way [Smith is obliged to go and pick up wood] in order for what is said to be correct play [a felicitous order]; and

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(5. Creation) – at t the score component is that certain way [Smith is obliged to go and pick up wood], enabling what is said to be correct play [a felicitous order].

(Langton 2015: 12)

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Part II. Illocutionary Accommodation of Permissibility

(2. Requirement$_2$) – a score component is required$_2$ to be a certain way [Smith is obliged to go and pick up wood] in order for what is said to be correct play [a felicitous order];

MW:

- Langton seems to equivocate on two senses of "require" that occurs in the "requires, and thereby creates what is required" formula:
  - require$_1$ = *presuppose*,
  - require$_2$ = *consist in* or *result in*;

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MW:

- by the same token:
  - requirements$_1$ are put on prior context (→ *no* novelty), whereas
  - requirements$_2$ are put on posterior context (→ novelty).

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(2. Requirement$_2$) – a score component is required$_2$ to be a certain way [Smith is obliged to go and pick up wood] in order for what is said to be correct play [a felicitous order];

MW:

- therefore, it is better to speak of *illocution* and *accommodation* as two distinct types of mechanisms *rather than* of two types of accommodation: *illocutionary* and *presupposition*.

1.3. back-door speech acts, uptake, and blocking

Back-door speech acts (Langton forthcoming a, forthcoming b):

- the mechanism underlying their performance involves accommodation (e.g. accommodation of Austinian presuppositions);
- they work covertly, i.e., they create new norms by presenting them as being not-at-issue.

1.3. back-door speech acts, uptake, and blocking

(2)   Go and pick up wood!

(3)   a. I am your boss. *)

        b. Go and pick up wood!

*)   By analogy to: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." (Exodus 20: 1)

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According to Austin (1975: 116-117), a successful illocutionary act:
- secures uptake,
- takes effect,
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Uptake as a key element of illocution (Sbisà 2009)
and of the *back-door* mechanism (Langton forthcoming b):
  - explicit & active / implicit & active / implicit & passive.

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By way of digression:

- *illocutionary agency externalism* & *uptake externalism* (Witek 2015).

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Blocking as a response to back-door speech acts (Langton forthcoming b):

- a form of counter speech or "undoing things with words";
- *defusing* rather than *refusing*: it is directed at what is presupposed by the felicity of an act rather than on what the act directly 'illocutes'.

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(4)   Supporter: a.   Get *on* with it, Laurie, you great *girl*!
              Bystander: b.   What's wrong with a girl?
              Supporter: c.   It's got no *balls*, that's what's wrong with it!

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(4b) → 'explicitation' (Sbisà 1999)

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(5)   Professor: a. Hand in your paper on time,

b. or I will give you a failing grade in the course.

Student: c. The situation has changed: you are not my teacher.

(Budzyńska and Witek 2014: 313)

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(5b) → a threat as an aspect of *Ad Baculum*;
(5c) → *Ad Hominem* as a type of blocking.

B&W 2014: an utterance can change the score *via* the mechanisms of illocution and accommodation rather than in virtue of its inferential potential.

1.3. back-door speech acts, uptake, and blocking

$$X \text{ counts as } Y \text{ in context } C$$

retroactive move:

$$Y \rightarrow C$$

prospective move:

$$\sim C \rightarrow \sim Y$$

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- presumptions can be understood as speech acts:
  conversational moves typed by reference to their conventional effects;
- there are three types of presumptions construed of as speech acts:

  – *individual* presumptions,

  – *shared* presumptions,

  – *collective* presumptions;

  (by analogy to Tomasello 2014).

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Traditional question (e.g., see Lewiński 2017):

- what are the grounds and principles that warrant presumptive inferences?

Current question:

- what makes presumptions binding/felicitous/successful speech acts?

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> A presumption creates the obligation on the part of the addressee to give evidence or reasons for his opposition to endorse the presumption, whenever he or she does oppose it. (Corredor 2017: 583)

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- the shift can be achieved either by *illocution* or by *accommodation*;

2.1. individual presumptions

Individual presumption as a direct act (i.e. involving *illocution*).

(6)   *A*: a. Do you think it a wise idea to let *C* to manage the accounts?

       B: b. *C* has the required expertise.

            c. Besides, I presume his honesty.

       A: d. I wouldn't,

            e. remember that in his previous position as a bookkeeper disciplinary proceedings were opened against him that haven't yet been closed.

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B's act made in uttering (6c):
  • takes effect by shifting the burden of prove,
  • invites, by convention, a certain response [→ (6d) followed by (6e)].

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Note:

- the felicity of the presumption made in (6c) presupposes that *B* has a
  required „authority or authoritativeness" (Corredor 2017: 586).

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Questions:
- Can the authority to issue a felicitous presumption be accommodated?
- Is it more like expertise or, rather, like credibility?

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MW:
- It depends on the source of the authority under discussion...

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(7) *A*: a. Do you think it a wise idea to let *C* to manage the accounts?
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     A: d. You know nothing about *C*!

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        A: d. You know nothing about *C*!   → **blocking!**

2.1. individual presumptions

Individual presumption as a back-door act (i.e. involving *accommodation*).

Simple cases:

(8)   I presume that the present king of France is bald.
        \>> France has a king.

(9)   I presume that Sue regrets that she bought a ferret.
        \>> Sue bought a ferret.

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         >> Sue bought a ferret.

A more interesting case:

(10)   *A*: a.   My watch doesn't work!
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2.1. individual presumptions

Individual presumption as a back-door act (i.e. involving *accommodation*).

Simple cases:

(8)   I presume that the present king of France is bald.
        >> France has a king.

(9)   I presume that Sue regrets that she bought a ferret.
        >> Sue bought a ferret.

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(10)   *A*: a. My watch doesn't work!
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Hypothesis: the felicity of (10b) *qua* an act of advising presupposes that
                B presumes that dipping *A*'s watch into tea will help.

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A more interesting case:

(10) *A*: a. My watch doesn't work!
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       A: c. You know nothing about fixing watches.   → **blocking**

2.2. shared presumptions

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    (i.e., his endorsement of the speaker's presumption);
- its function is to contribute the endorsed proposition to the CG among the interacting *individual* agents.

2.2. shared presumptions

(6) *A*: a. Do you think it a wise idea to let *C* to manage the accounts?

  B: b. *C* has the required expertise.

  c. Besides, I presume his honesty.

  A: d. I wouldn't,

  e. remember that in his previous position as a bookkeeper disciplinary proceedings were opened against him that haven't yet been closed.

(11) *A*: a. Do you think it a wise idea to let *C* to manage the accounts?

  B: b. *C* has the required expertise.

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  A: d. OK. (Corredor 2017: 585)

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(6): successful individual presumption, but unsuccessful shared presumption;

(11): successful individual presumption and successful shared presumption.

2.2. shared presumptions

(10)   *A*: a.   My watch doesn't work!

          B: b.   Dip it into your cup of tea!

          A: c.   You know nothing about fixing watches.   → **blocking**

              c'. I think that this time it will not help.

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Collective presumptions (as speech acts):

- they are back-door speech acts, because they involve accommodation that sustains a practice to which it outsources the felicity of an act;

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Key idea:

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  is *outsourced* in Langton's (2015) sense to a social practice;
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Thank you !

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