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Introduction to  
**Discourse  
Studies**

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 A rough definition of discourse studies

Discourse studies is the discipline devoted to the investigation of the relationship between form and function in verbal communication. This short but rough definition is the point of departure for this book. The definition prompts the following questions:

1. What is meant by the relationship between form and function?
2. Is it really necessary to have a separate discipline for the investigation of this relationship?

Answers to these two questions are given in this section. The aim and structure of this book are discussed in the next two sections.

What is meant by the relationship between form and function? Consider the following example of a fragment of verbal communication.

- (1) A: Say, there's a good movie playing tonight.  
B: Actually, I have to study.  
A: Too bad.  
B: Yes, I'm sorry.  
A: Well, I guess I don't need to ask you if you want me to pick you up.

In this example, A's first utterance is in the form of a statement that there is a good movie playing that night. The function of this statement, however, is that of an invitation to B. B knows that A's statement is meant to be an invitation. B could have responded by simply saying, "That's nice" or "I didn't know that." But B responds with a statement in turn expressing a need to study that evening. B's response counts as a refusal of the invitation. A's statement of regret shows that this interpretation is not mere conjecture.

In this fragment the form *statement* has the function of an *invitation* (first utterance of A) and a refusal thereof (first utterance of B). Below is another example: a passage from a statement concerning a newly built office complex and the same passage in a slightly different form.

- (2) a. The new office complex is situated in the old city center. The architectural firm of Wilkinson and Sons designed it.
- b. The new office complex is situated in the old city center. It was designed by the architectural firm of Wilkinson and Sons.

The active voice is used in the second sentence in (2a): “The firm designed the new office.” Whereas in (2b) a passive variant is used: “The new office was designed by the firm.” What is the difference in function between these two sentences? In the active form the accent is on the firm that provided the design. In the passive form the office complex is elaborated on. When different forms are used for getting across approximately the same content, they often lead to differences in function. The aim of discourse studies is to provide an explanatory description of the intricate relations between forms of discourse elements and their functions in communication.

The second question is more difficult to answer. Why should there be a separate discipline *discourse studies*? To many researchers the best answer is that the investigation of the relation between form and function requires contributions from different disciplines such as linguistics, literature, rhetoric, stylistics and pragmatics as well as other fields concerned with verbal communication such as communication science, psychology, sociology and philosophy. Discourse phenomena cannot be studied adequately from just one of these perspectives. Because the concepts dealing with these phenomena are taken from many disciplines, a common ground is necessary. Discourse studies is this common ground. It serves as an inter- or multidiscipline that enables different research schools to have the necessary interaction so that specific contributions can be made to research into the relationship between form and function in verbal communication.

## 1.2 Aim and structure of this book

The aim of this book is to familiarize the prospective student with the most important concepts and the major issues in the field of discourse studies. Knowledge of the basic concepts will serve as a scientific “toolkit” that the student can use in advanced courses in discourse studies. This introduction is also meant as a stepping-stone to further reading in handbooks on different discourse topics and to studying research results in scientific journals on discourse.

This book consists of fifteen chapters spread over four parts. The ordering is inspired by the metaphor of the student who is supposed to be undertaking a scientific journey. After this introductory chapter, Part I provides information about the basic characteristics of this journey through the diverse landscapes of discourse studies. Part II invites students to fill their backpacks with some essential traveling material.

In Part III the different ways of making a scientific journey are presented. In Part IV some specific domains of interest can be chosen.

In Part I, Chapters 2 and 3 provide a general orientation towards the field. The focus is on the last part of the rough definition given earlier: discourse studies is the study of verbal communication. Chapter 2, Communication as action, is the most philosophical chapter in this book. It tries to answer questions like: What is (verbal) communication? What are the principles governing the use of the instrument “language”? What are the strategies that are brought to bear when we communicate? Verbal communication is presented as the performance of acts which must have some relevance for partners involved in it. This chapter stimulates the student to think of what verbal communication is about. Chapter 3, Discourse in communication, focuses on discourse as part of the situation in which people communicate. Discourse is no discourse at all without a sender and a receiver. Therefore, discourse cannot be studied adequately without the discourse situation being taken into account. Within this framework two basic discourse questions are answered: How can discourse best be studied in a perspective in which forms are related to functions in a discourse situation? What makes a string of sentences or a couple of utterances discourse?

In Part II, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 present the basic concepts for studying discourse. Chapter 4, Discourse types, gives an overview of the variety of forms of discourse such as written (a tax form), oral (a doctor–patient conversation), electronic (an e-mail), etc. It also discusses the attempts that have been made so far in putting the main varieties into some sort of model that reflects the essential differences between them. The classic intriguing question behind this modeling is: What exactly is a discourse type? The discussion on constructing a model is followed by the question of how to study new electronic communication situations in which combinations of modes (oral, written and visual) are used. Chapter 5, Structured content, presents the approaches to discourse with respect to the structuring of the message content. How can this structure be described for the different levels of discourse? Three levels are distinguished here: the global structure (the discourse as a whole), the mesostructure (the study of topics and themes) and the local structure (the smallest meaning units). The central question in Chapter 6 is: What are the formal ties that keep the different content elements together? Descending from a global structure, an overview of different knots and links to connect content elements is given. Special attention is paid to techniques of referring back- and forward in discourse and to so-called discourse relations and their markers. Chapter 7, Contextual phenomena, deals with discourse elements from both the production and the perception side, which are directly linked to the context. Examples are the fact that the meaning of “I” depends on the person using it or the possibility of putting some information more into the back- or foreground in order to produce a special effect on readers or listeners. However, the link



not only goes from discourse to context, it goes the other way round as well. We always deal with discourse on the basis of knowledge and attitudes that we already have. We are no black boxes. Otherwise we would all give exactly the same rendering after having seen the same movie; nevertheless these renderings do differ in content.

In Chapter 8, Style, the last chapter of this first part, an overview of stylistic variation in discourse is given. After a brief discussion of classical rhetoric, the concepts of style and register are clarified. Special attention is paid to stylistic phenomena that can easily be studied by students and to stylistic research that highlights the different manifestations of seemingly the same messages. Consider, for example, the different renderings of one movie again, now focusing on the differences in formulation.

Part III deals with four central modes of communication. In everyday life we can “just talk” or make conversation intuitively without knowing the outcome, but we can also use language intentionally to give information, to tell a story or to try to convince someone. Chapter 9, Conversation analysis, gives insight into a more sociological way of discourse studies: conversation as a kind of glue between the members of a community or a society. Chapter 10, Informative discourse, focuses on the readability of information and the improvement of documents. In this chapter old methods to measure readability are dealt with, as well as the notion of discourse quality in a more contemporary view. Chapter 11, Narratives, starts with a more literary approach to discourse and illustrates how narratives are studied from three different perspectives: sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic and organizational. Chapter 12, Argumentation and persuasion, starts with approaches to analyzing the validity of reasoning in everyday language and presents a social-psychological framework for studying the way in which discourse can be persuasive. Here the emphasis is on stylistic elements.

In Part IV, Special interests, the three most important domains of discourse studies are presented. In Chapter 13, Discourse and cognition, the focus is on what goes on in our brain during the production and the perception of discourse. Cognitive psychologists have done extensive research into modeling the way we speak and listen or write and read. Several of these models and some highlights of current cognitive approaches are presented here. Chapter 14, Discourse and institution, focuses on the institutional aspects of discourse within the sociological approach. Some key publications are presented, dealing with institutions such as law, health and media. Chapter 15, Discourse and culture, presents the major topics in the study of discourse from a societal point of view. The main question is: Can discourse tell us something about the way in which the producer views the world? This is made more concrete by addressing questions such as: Can discourse analysis reveal something about power relations in society or, for example, the place of women in masculine cultures? These types of questions are of special importance in the study of intercultural communication.

### 1.3 The presentation of the material

The material in this book has been organized to serve as a first introduction to discourse studies at university level. Inherent in the interdisciplinary nature of the field of discourse studies is the fact that each phenomenon can be looked at from different viewpoints. Moreover, the danger exists of trivializing theoretical concepts, as they are taken out of their disciplinary context. Special attention will therefore be paid to the origins of key concepts in discourse studies.

Inter- or multidisciplinary discourse studies arose during the 1980s. However, it is rooted in classical rhetoric and language philosophy and in classic psychological and sociological studies from both the Anglo-American and the European traditions. It is for that reason that relatively much attention is given to classic or impressive landmarks in the field of discourse studies.

When dealing with the conceptual arsenal, examples of scientific applications are given whenever possible. The research examples chosen are not always the most recent ones. In this book attention is also paid to approaches upon which contemporary developments are based. In the bibliography almost half of the references date from before 1990 as in this introductory textbook the focus is on concepts and approaches that have proved to be soundly based and not just trendy. After studying this book the student will have most of the fundamental apparatus to do his or her job. The index at the end of this book, containing about 500 entries, is a good basis for studying the most important concepts in the field. The index entries only refer to the page on which the concept in question is most elaborately explained. This makes it a concise “guide” to the major concepts in discourse studies.

Obviously, an introductory work cannot delve deeply into discussions about definitions of key concepts or elaborate on issues. For students who wish to study more specific topics, each chapter or section is accompanied by a list of suggested readings. The main aim of this bibliographical information is to incite the reader to study the classic or key publications in the field. Books comprise about 80% of these references. The other 20% consist of what are considered seminal articles. All the references in each chapter’s bibliographical information are listed at the end of the book, with reference to the specific section they refer to.

Each chapter ends with questions and assignments. These are meant to stimulate reflection upon and discussion of seemingly unproblematic topics, which it is hoped may encourage students to initiate reasoned articulation of their own astonishment about (mis)communication. The key at the end of this book provides answers to these questions. The assignments can be seen as proposals for students to work on in the library at their own campus. The extent to which the assignments are to be worked out depends on conditions of time and curriculum and on special wishes the lecturer

may have. The number of questions and assignments may vary per section, depending, for example, on the length of the section or the nature of the subject that the section deals with.

## **Questions and assignments**

### **Questions**

- 1.1.1 Explain in your own words what discourse studies is.
- 1.1.2 Explain in terms of form and function what is going on in the following fragment of dinner conversation.  
A: Could you pass the salt?  
B: Of course. (B continues eating without passing the salt.)
- 1.1.3 Describe the differences in form and function between the following two passages:
- A general practitioner at our health center closed his practice yesterday after local demonstrations. He was suspected of molesting patients.
  - A general practitioner at our health center, who was suspected of molesting patients, closed his practice yesterday after local demonstrations.

### **Assignments**

- 1.1.1 One journal issue on discourse analysis can contain several papers that, according to their authors, all have to do with discourse. Explain how the following subjects could fit the definition of discourse studies that is given in the introductory chapter of this book. This assignment is inspired by a passage in Johnstone (2002).
- Descriptive terms used of the accused in the media coverage of a murder trial.
  - A discussion of differences between English and Japanese.
  - An analysis of expressions of identity in Athabaskan (Native American) student writing.
  - A discussion of sonnets by Shakespeare.
  - A paper about the epitaph of the spiritual master of a sect of Muslims.
  - A discussion on whether the pronoun I should appear in formal writing.
  - A study of political debate.
- 1.1.2 The bibliographical information of this chapter contains a list of the most widely known journals in the field of discourse studies. However, the notion *discourse* frequently occurs in all sorts of journals not specifically linked to discourse studies. Some examples are an article on the communication

skills of people with dementia (in the *Journal of Communication Disorder*), one on text comprehension in relation to children's narratives (in the *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*) and research into organizational changes as discourse (in the *Academy of Management Journal*). Select any issue of one of the journals mentioned in the bibliographical information of this chapter or find a journal comparable to the ones mentioned above. Look at the summary of one of the articles and try to determine whether it falls within the definition of discourse studies. Support your opinion.

## **Bibliographical information**

The article *Discourse analysis* by Zellig Harris (1952) is viewed by many as the starting point of discourse studies. Harris was the first to use the term *discourse analysis* in a scientific article. He discussed an advertisement text by analyzing the way in which sentences are linked and the way in which the text correlates with society and culture. A salient detail is the fact that in the first footnote Harris thanks his research assistant, who ended up developing the most influential theory on elements *within* a sentence: Noam Chomsky.

In the decades following the year in which Harris wrote his article, a vast quantity of books and articles on discourse studies has been published. So it is obvious that this textbook is not the only introduction to this field of research. On the contrary, one of the aims of this book is to serve as a reference guide to a qualitative selection of other handbooks and readers. In this first bibliographical overview more general works are mentioned whereas in the following chapters the references are more geared to specific aspects of discourse studies.

Several important introductions to discourse studies were published in the early 1980s. Prominent German-language publications are Kalverkämper (1981), Coseriu (1981), Sowinski (1983) and Scherner (1984). The most widely used English-language publications of that time are De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), Brown and Yule (1983), Stubbs (1983) and Cook (1989). In the past decade various new introductions were published, which underlines the vitality of the broad field of discourse studies. The most important publications of recent date include the following: Salkie (1995) is a workbook, with exercises to detect various discourse phenomena; Jaworski & Coupland (1999) give a collection of some thirty passages from key publications on discourse studies; Goatly (2000) provides a clear introduction with practical exercises for developing critical awareness of the relationship between text production and consumption; Johnstone (2002) approaches discourse not as a discipline but as a research method, connecting it with six topics that shape it, such as world, audiences, medium and purpose.

There are also introductions to specific parts of the research field and books that indirectly have this function. The most significant ones dating from the 1980s and early 1990s deal with the analysis of conversation (Edmonson, 1981; Henne and Rehbock, 1982; McLaughlin, 1984; Nofsinger, 1991) and with stylistics (McMenamin, 1993). Recent publications emphasize the socio-cultural aspects of discourse studies, for example, Gee (1999), and narratives, for example, Georgakopoulou & Goutsos

(1997) and Toolan (2001). For good publications on discourse analysis in general see Coulthard (1985), Nunan (1987), McCarthy (1991), Mann and Thompson (1992) and Hoey (2001).

In addition to books, numerous journals from various research traditions have been founded in discourse studies. Below are the most widely known titles. Periodicals considered the core journals are marked with an asterisk.

- Applied Cognitive Linguistics
- Cognition
- Cognitive Linguistics
- College Composition and Communication
- Computational Linguistics
- Discourse and Society\*
- Discourse Processes\*
- Discourse Studies\*
- Information and Document Design Journal
- Human Communication Research
- IEEE transactions on professional communication
- Information and Management
- Journal of Business Communication
- Journal of Communication
- Journal of Documentation
- Journal of Language and Social Psychology
- Journal of Pragmatics\*
- Journal of Semantics
- Journal of Sociolinguistics
- Language and Cognitive Processes
- Language and Communication
- Pragmatics
- Text
- Written Communication\*

Teun van Dijk is viewed by many as the founding father of contemporary discourse studies. He founded a number of journals, including the above-mentioned periodicals *Text*, *Discourse and Society* and *Discourse Studies*. Moreover, he is known for editing two major handbooks in discourse studies, namely *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (1985) and *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction* (1997). Two other noteworthy handbooks dating from the past decade are Schiffrin (1994) and the exhaustive work by Schiffrin, Tannen & Hamilton (2001). A new library on discourse studies should undoubtedly include these four works.

## 2 Communication as action

### 2.1 The Organon model

In the last decades, the slogan “Communication is action” has come into fashion, but in fact this view of communication is more than two thousand years old. One of the earliest works on language, Plato’s *Cratylus* (a dialogue on the origin of language written in about 390 B.C.), describes speech as a form of action and words as instruments with which actions can be performed.

The German philosopher and psychologist Karl Bühler was referring to this work when he described language as a tool, “Organon”, which people use in order to communicate with one another. Bühler’s Organon model (1934/1990) has had a major impact on the way language is dealt with in discourse studies. Bühler stated that a sound can only qualify as a linguistic sign if a three-fold relationship exists connecting the sound to a sender, a receiver, and an object that is being referred to. Parallel to this three-pronged relationship, each linguistic sign (S) has three functions simultaneously:

1. A sign functions as a symptom as it says something about a sender, for example, whether the sender is female or male or what the intention of the utterance is.
2. A sign is a symbol because it refers to objects and states of affairs.
3. A sign serves as a signal because a receiver must interpret it or react to what has been said.

This three-part division can be illustrated with any utterance. Below is an example.

- (1) Have you heard that strange story about the drunk who decided to play barber and cut off his friend’s ear?

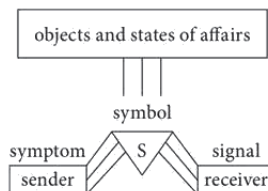


Figure 1. Bühler’s Organon model

By asking this question, the speaker indicates that he wants information from the person who is being addressed. By using the word “strange”, the speaker is also expressing an opinion. This is the *symptom* aspect. In the utterance a reference is made to a story, a real event. That is the *symbol* aspect. The question is an appeal to a listener. A listener is not expected to just answer “yes” or “no” and change the topic. Something along the line of “No, tell me about it” or “Yes” followed by the listener’s own reaction is expected. This is the *signal* aspect.

In this chapter the focus is on the basic assumptions of the Organon model, namely, that language is an instrument with which objectives can be achieved and that this instrument cannot be considered to be separate from speakers and listeners, or writers and readers, in performing communicative acts.

Language, and therefore discourse, is a two-way instrument, an instrument for a speaker and a listener or a writer and a reader. Or as the Danish linguistic philosopher Otto Jespersen wrote in the introduction to his *Philosophy of Grammar* (1924):

- (2) The essence of language is human activity – activity on the part of one individual to make himself understood by another, and activity on the part of that other to understand what was in the mind of the first.

If two parties use an instrument for an “activity”, then such an activity can only be successful if both parties adhere to general rules or principles and thereby utilize certain strategies. This can be illustrated with a non-linguistic example. If two people want to hang a painting (activity), they use a hammer, nails, and a ladder (instruments), and they have to coordinate their actions. There will have to be some form of cooperation; while one is standing on the ladder, the other can hand the tools to the first, etc. Rules concerning politeness will also have to be followed; while one person is on the ladder, the other should not try to push the first off. One general principle of collective activity is *cooperation* and an often-used strategy to achieve this is *politeness*. This is also true in the case of verbal communication. On the basis of this cooperation principle and guided by so-called politeness strategies the communicators have to perform their communicative acts. But what precisely are those communicative acts? The theory, called *speech act theory*, provides an answer to this question.

## 2.2 Speech act theory

In speech act theory, language is seen as a form of acting. This theory stems from the school of philosophy that is called *ordinary language philosophy*. The proponents of this school, which flourished in England in the middle of the last century, wanted to analyze philosophical problems by looking at ordinary language and trying to ascer-

tain what insights it could offer into reality. For example, the ethical question of why human activity is judged to be good or bad, demands that the way individuals apologize for bad behavior also be studied. An apology is an act in which a justification is given. By studying how people perform speech acts such as apologizing, promising, ordering, etc., these “philosophers of ordinary language” wished to contribute to the solution of philosophical problems.

Speech act theory has had a strong influence on the field of discourse studies as this theory focuses on the question of what people are doing when they use language. Consider the next example. There is a striking difference between the following two sentences.

- (3) It’s raining.
- (4) I promise that I will give you one hundred dollars tomorrow.

In (3) a statement is made that may or may not be true. As for (4), however, it is not possible to say that it is true or that it is not true. With verbs such as *to promise* (in the first person), not only is something being said; more importantly, something is being done. In (4) an act is being performed through an utterance. By saying “I promise ...”, a promise is made. But saying “It’s raining” does not make it rain.

The English philosopher John Austin (1976) used the terms *constative* and *performative* to describe this difference. In constatives, such as sentence (3), something is stated about reality; in performatives, such as (4), an act is performed by the utterance itself. Austin was not successful, however, in establishing criteria for describing the difference between these two concepts. It can, after all, be argued that an act is being performed in the case of constative utterances as well; a warning given or a statement being made as in the case of (3).

This led Austin to the conclusion that all expressions of language must be viewed as acts. He distinguished three kinds of action within each utterance. First, there is the *locution*, the physical act of producing an utterance. Second, there is the *illocution*, the act that is committed by producing an utterance: by uttering a promise, a promise is made; by uttering a threat, a threat is made. Third, there is the *perlocution*, the production of an effect through locution and illocution, for example, the execution of an order by the addressee.

Consider another example. In the statement “There is a draft in here”, the locution is the production of the utterance. Depending on the situation, the illocution could be a request, an order, a complaint, etc. The perlocution could be that a door or window is closed or that the addressee replies that he is not a servant. It is important to emphasize that the reaction to an illocution, the so-called *uptake* that leads to a perlocution, can differ depending on the situation. Below is an example of four different uptakes of the same utterance.



Table 1. Various uptakes of the same utterance

Locution of the speaker	Illocution	Uptake by the listener
There's a good movie tonight	Invitation	O.K. let's go
There's a good movie tonight	Advice	O.K. I will go there
There's a good movie tonight	Excuse	Never mind
There's a good movie tonight	Offer	Thank you!

In speech act theory the illocution is the focus of attention. Language philosophers have tried to give an overview of all possible illocutions, from assertives to requests, from promises to exclamations. This, however, proved to be a very difficult task, because it is by no means clear what exactly the characteristic differences between the proposed illocutions are. For example, a promise could be a threat in the locution "I promise, I'll get you!" First, the phenomenon illocution itself has to be studied.

Among the intriguing problems with illocutions, there is one that has drawn special attention, namely, the issue of successful illocutions. It is easy to see that certain minimum requirements must be met for an illocution to be successful. If anyone other than a church leader excommunicates someone, then the act of excommunication has not been executed. If in a casino someone at the roulette table suddenly calls "*Rien ne va plus!*" ("No more bets!" or "Game over!"), this cannot be construed as being the illocution *refusing* if this person is not the dealer.

The philosopher John Searle (1969) formulated four *felicity conditions* that illocutions must meet. These four conditions are illustrated below using the illocution *to promise*.

(5) Felicity conditions for *to promise* (speech act)

a. the propositional content

In the case of "promising", the act that the speaker commits himself to (the proposition) must be a future act to be carried out by the speaker himself. One cannot make a promise for someone else or promise to do something that has already been done.

b. the preparatory condition

This condition concerns those circumstances that are essential for the uptake of an illocution as the intended illocution. In the case of promising, these circumstances would require that the content of the promise is not a matter of course. Another preparatory condition is that the promise must be advantageous to the addressee; one cannot promise something that is solely disadvantageous.

- c. the sincerity condition  
The speaker must honestly be willing to fulfill the promise. Even if he is not willing, he can be held to his promise.
- d. the essential condition  
This is the condition that separates the illocution in question from other illocutions. In the case of “promising”, this means, among other things, that the speaker takes upon himself the responsibility of carrying out the act stated in the content of the promise.

Searle used these felicity conditions to show that the successful exchange of illocutions is also bound by certain rules. In terms of form and function, this means that a form can only acquire a valid function given certain conditions.

Another approach is provided by the German sociologist Jürgen Habermas (1981). According to Habermas, speakers claim that their illocutions are valid. In the case of the illocution *predicting*, for example, the speaker claims that the statement will come true in the future. In the case of *congratulating*, the claim to validity is based on an expression of emotion on the part of the speaker, namely, that the congratulations are sincere. In the case of *ordering*, the speaker bases the claim to validity on assumed authority to issue the order.

Habermas based these validity claims on Bühler’s Organon model and the three aspects that can be distinguished in language signs: symbol, symptom and signal (see Section 2.1). Through the symbol aspect of an utterance, a claim is made as to the truth of the statement as in the prediction example above. Through the symptom aspect, a claim is made regarding sincerity; see the congratulation example. Through the signal aspect, a claim is made regarding legitimacy as in the order example. In Habermas’s view, an illocution is only successful when the addressee acknowledges the claim to validity. Take the example of a teacher asking a student the following question:

- (6) Could you bring me a glass of water?

The student can refuse this request as invalid on the basis of all three aspects.

- (7) Dispute of the validity of (6)
  - a. symbol aspect: truth. (The content of the statement does not correspond to reality.) “How can you request something like that? The nearest faucet is so far away that I would never be able to make it back before the end of class.”
  - b. symptom aspect: sincerity. “No, you don’t really want any water. You’re just trying to make me look bad in front of the other students.”
  - c. signal aspect: legitimacy. “You can’t ask me to do something like that. I’m not here to fetch and carry for the teacher!”

**Table 2.** Basic illocutions according to Habermas

Aspect of the utterance	Claim to validity	Type of illocution
symbol	truth	constative
symptom	sincerity	expressive
signal	legitimacy	regulative

Using Bühler's three-way division, Habermas defines three main types of illocution: constatives (with a symbol aspect), expressives (with a symptom aspect), and regulatives (with a signal aspect).

The illocutions *claiming* and *describing* are examples of constatives; *promising* and *congratulating* of expressives; *inviting* and *requesting* of regulatives.

### 2.3 Illocutions in discourse

How does the more philosophical speech act theory in the previous section contribute to the study of discourse? First, it can provide insights into the requirements that a form (the locution) must meet to ensure that the illocution and the intended uptake take place. This illocution serves as a prerequisite for the achievement of the perlocution the speaker or writer has in mind. Second, this theory can serve as a framework for indicating what is required in order to determine the relationship between form and function, between locution, on the one hand, and illocution and perlocution, on the other hand.

There are a number of cases in which the utterance itself, the locution, provides an indication of the intended illocutions. John Searle (1969) calls these indications IFIDs, *illocutionary force indicating devices*. IFIDs include performative verbs, word order, intonation, accent, certain adverbs, and the mode of the verb. If an IFID is present, the utterance is said to have an explicit illocution; in all other cases the utterance is said to have an implicit or indirect illocution. Below are a few examples of explicit illocutions.

- (8) I request that you put out your cigarette.
- (9) He is putting out his cigarette.
- (10) Is he putting out his cigarette?
- (11) Are you going to put that cigarette out or not?
- (12) Would you please put out your cigarette?

In (8) the performative verb "to request" makes the illocutionary intent explicit. The difference in word order between (9) and (10) is indicative of the illocutionary intent,

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