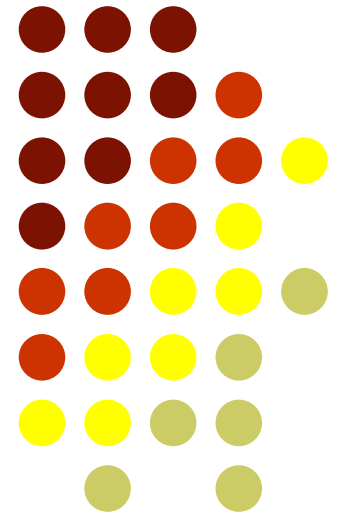
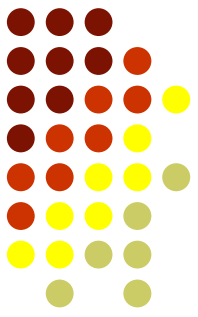


# speech acts

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politeness  
pragmatics



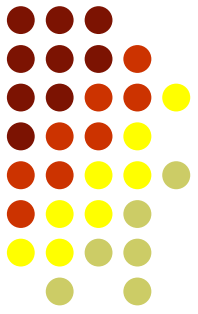


# speech acts: utterance

- A string of spoken words – you don't intend to communicate meaning
- Just plain locution



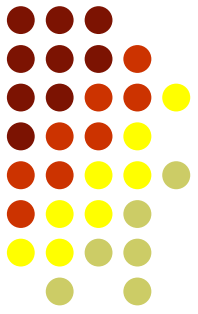
# propositional utterance



- The utterance refers to something else or describes a real or imaginary object. It identifies or specifies. Doesn't have to intend anything.



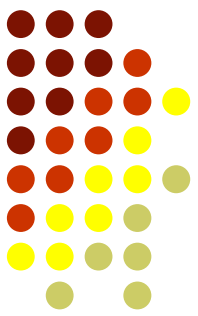
# illocutionary utterance



- Speaker intends to make contact with the listener, to interact with the receiver

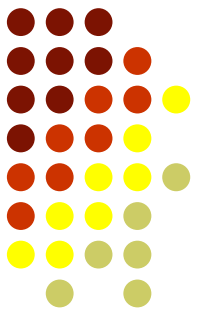


Isn't there a blue car in front of our driveway?



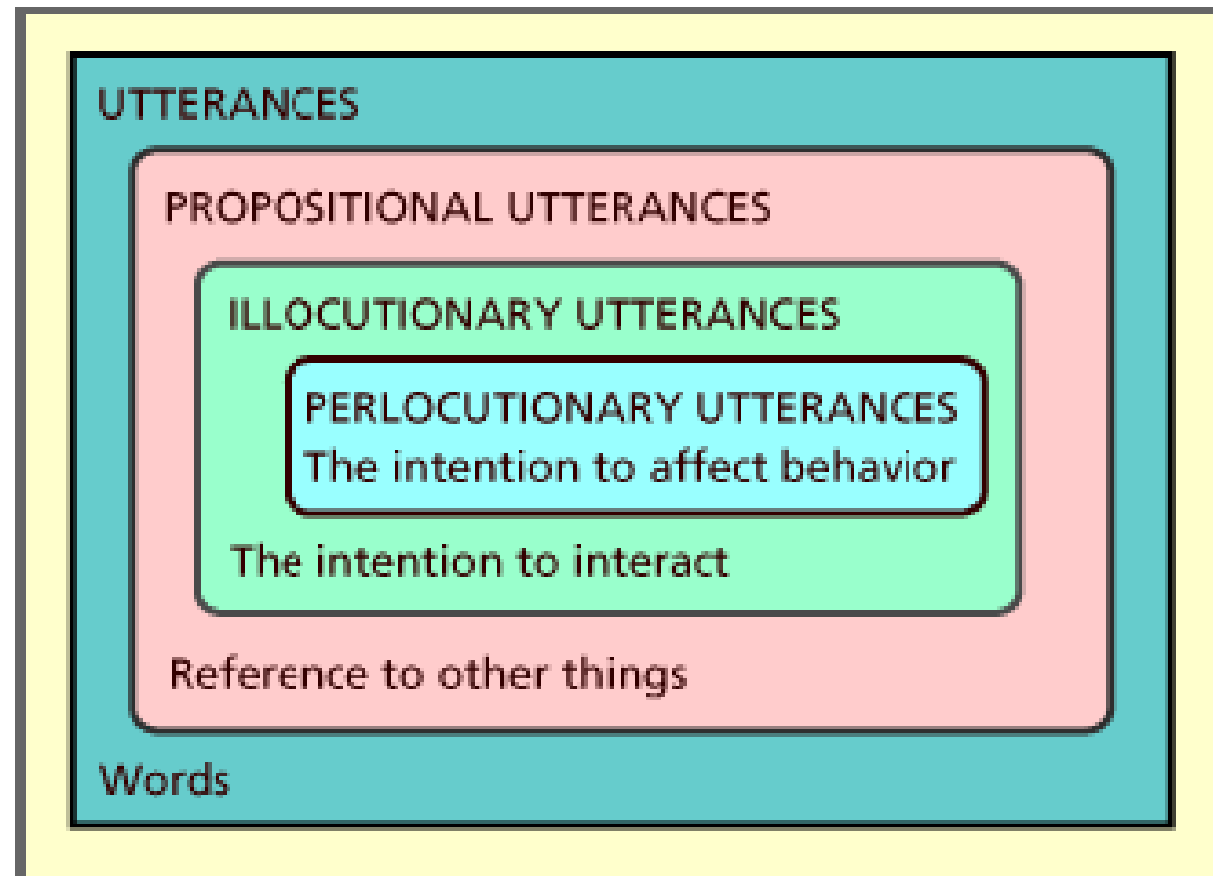
# Example: you say 'I'm tired'

CONTEXT	INTENTION	MEANING	TYPE OF ACT
A friend has just asked how I feel	To answer the question	I feel fatigued	Statement
Someone I'm trying to avoid has asked me if I'd like to go dancing tonight	To politely avoid her	I'd rather not	Statement
My husband and I are watching a football game on television	That we do something else	Could we turn this off?	Question or Request
It's late and my small children are asking if we can go to the movies	To put them to bed	No, go to bed	Command

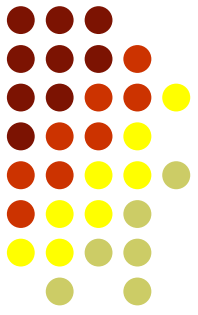


# perlocutionary utterances

- Attempts to affect behavior of the hearer: if Mary's blue car is blocking the exit, then 'Isn't there a blue car in front of the driveway?' (said to Mary) could be perlocutionary



# speech act guess-me



- 1. You say, "For class tomorrow, please read pages twenty-one through forty-seven."

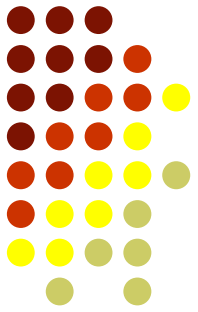
Utterance

Propositional

Illocutionary

Perlocutionary

# speech act guess-me



- 2. While talking to a group of friends, you mention that you recently went to hear your favorite band play at a local club.

Utterance

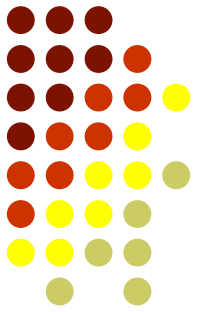
Propositional

Illocutionary

Perlocutionary



# speech act guess-me



- 3. You and a friend are talking about a television show that you both watched the night before. You say, "What did you think about Tony's reaction to Carmela's news?"

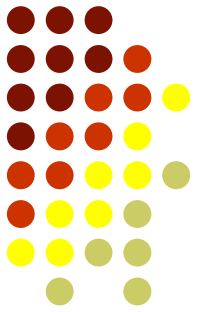
Utterance

Propositional

Illocutionary

Perlocutionary

# speech act guess-me



- 4. When you discover that the grade you got on your paper is an A, you let out a sigh of relief .

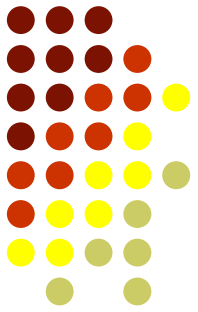
Utterance

Propositional

Illocutionary

Perlocutionary

# speech act guess-me



- 5. You are riding along with your parents as they look at houses that they might want to buy. As the car passes through a neighborhood with a house that has a "For Sale" sign out front, you exclaim, "Oh! There's a nice house."

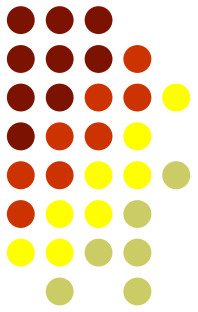
Utterance

Propositional

Illocutionary

Perlocutionary

# speech act guess-me



- 6. While sitting on a dock that sticks out into the ocean, you see a dolphin. It surfaces nearby and makes a series of high-pitched sounds: "Chweeee,chweeee, chweeee."

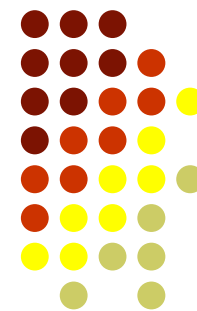
Utterance

Propositional

Illocutionary

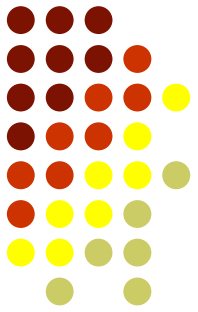
Perlocutionary

# Theoretical highlights



- **Austin**: Speech Acts (Illocutionary Acts)
- **Bourdieu** links these acts with institutions
- **Grice**: The Cooperative Principle and Conversational Maxims -- Helps explain implicature and variation
- **Goffman**: Facework -- Activities involved in the presentation of self
- **Brown and Levinson**: Politeness (positive and negative face) -- Types of strategies for interaction.  
<http://www.ekl.oulu.fi/MAILL/docs/finsse3.pdf>

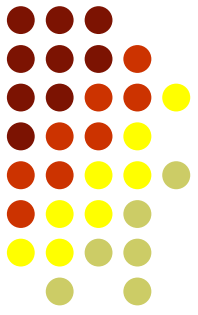
## a little about JL Austin, 1911-1960



In *How to Do Things with Words* (1961), the transcription of Austin's James lectures at Harvard, application of his method distinguishes between what we say, what we mean when we say it, and what we accomplish by saying it. Those are speech acts involving locution, illocution (or "performative utterance"), and perlocution.

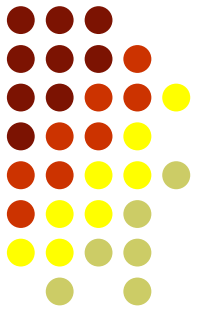
<http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/aust.htm>

# Bourdieu and the notion of cultural capital (and face)



- Bourdieu attacks the notion that having art available is all that's necessary – when in fact a person needs a lot of acquaintance with art, needs to feel comfortable in museums, and finds his/her face enhanced (instead of threatened) by an invitation to see something “high culture”
- (K. Pollitt (2002) on Bourdieu, *The Nation*)

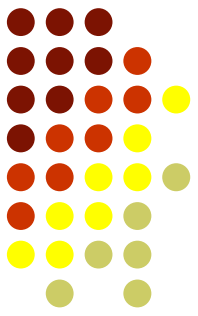
# Cultural capital (still from Pollitt about Bourdieu)



- “Bourdieu used this discouraging insight to call for more, not less, effort to make culture genuinely accessible to all: schools could help give working-class kids the **cultural capital**...that middle-class kids get from their families.... depriving working-class kids of the "frills"--art, music, trips--in the name of "the basics" is not just stingy or philistine, it's a way of maintaining class privilege”



# Bourdieu and Speech Acts: all associated with the institution



**Roles:** Speaker must be appropriate for the invocation of the act

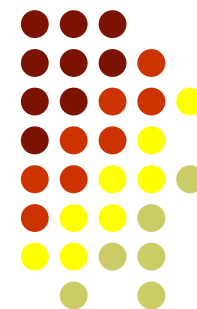
**Practices:** The speech act must be an accepted procedure, done correctly

**Sincerity:** Person must have those thoughts and feelings needed by the act later

**Consistency:** Person must act that way

- Think Donald Trump's 'You're fired'

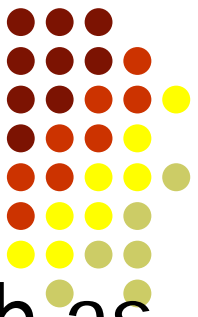
## a little bit about Grice



An Oxford professor, Grice is best known for his analysis of speaker's meaning, his conception of conversational **implicature**, and his project of intention-based semantics.

A: How is C getting on in his new job at the bank?

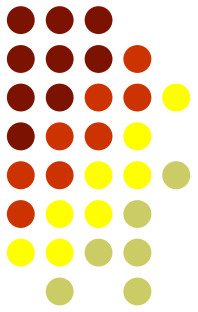
B: Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet. *implication?*



# Grice's Cooperative Principle

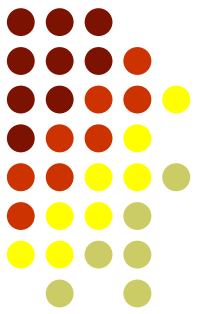
- Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.
- To do this, Grice has 4 Maxims by which successful conversations are handled
- **Cultural Differences:** What is relevant, polite, true will vary from culture to culture.

# Grice's Maxims



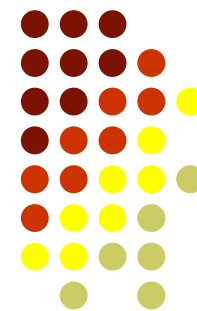
- Quantity: make contribution 1) as informative and 2) not more informative than required.
- Quality: don't say 1) what you believe to be false and 2) that for which you lack adequate evidence.
- Relation: Be relevant
- Manner: 1) avoid obscurity; 2) avoid ambiguity; 3) be brief; 4) be orderly.

# Example where no maxims are violated



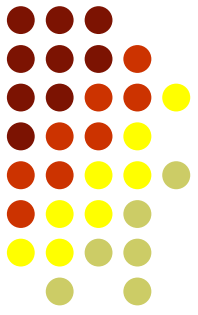
- **Buying gas**
  - A: I am out of gas.
  - B: There is a station around the corner.
  - B would be infringing the maxim of “be relevant” unless he truly thinks that A can buy gas at the station.

# Example: John's recent trips

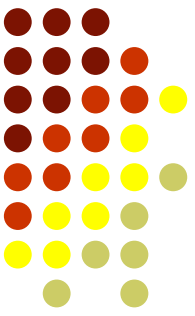


- A: John doesn't seem to have a girlfriend these days.
- B: He has been paying a lot of visits to New York lately.
- In this example the speaker implicates that which he must be assumed to believe in order to preserve the assumption that he is observing the maxim of relation.

# conflict between Maxims



- A: Where does C live? B: Somewhere in south Charlotte.
- B is being vague (violating maximum of quality by saying less) because to be more informative he would have to say something he does not know thus violating the maxim of quality.



# Flouting Maxims

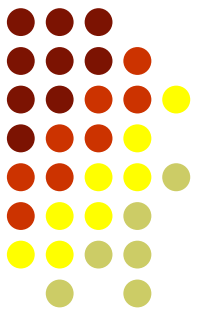
- Letter of recommendation: Dear Sir, Mr X's command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours, etc.
- President: "I never had sex with that woman."

Flouting allows one to say things through implicature without actually saying it (without directly lying).

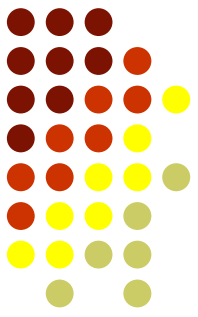
The implicature is carried by how the person says it



# The Universality of the CP and Maxims – or not



- Grice assumes the the CP and the maxims are universal – this might not be the case because of
  - Different background knowledge.
  - Different ways of resolving conflicts or flouting
  - *Do you really think I look nice in this outfit?*
- Explain breakdowns in cross-cultural communication.
- What is the utility of these maxims in ordinary conversation?

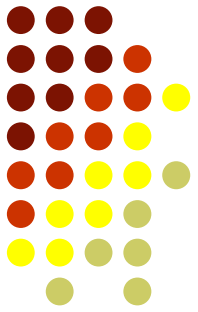


## a little about Goffman

- ....*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* uses the theatrical stage as a metaphor to explain how we "stage manage" the images we try to convey to those around us. For this impression management, Goffman coined the term "dramaturgy." (Diane Blackwood: <http://www.blackwood.org/Erving.htm>)

You might want to reference Kenneth Burke here, also Dell Hymes (S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G

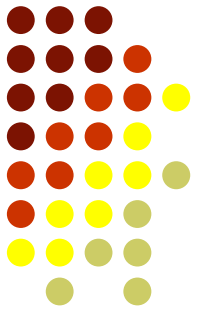
- [http://therapy.massey.ac.nz/diplomademo/175775/175\\_77\\_5\\_Dramaturgy.htm](http://therapy.massey.ac.nz/diplomademo/175775/175_77_5_Dramaturgy.htm)



## Erving Goffman: On Face-Work: An analysis of Ritual Social Interaction

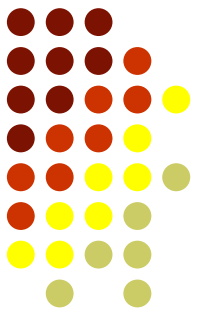
- The concept of face:
  - The presentation of the self to the other.
  - Could be in positive or negative terms.
- Basic structural feature of social interaction.
- **Rule of self respect:**
  - One is expected to maintain face

# Goffman on face, continued



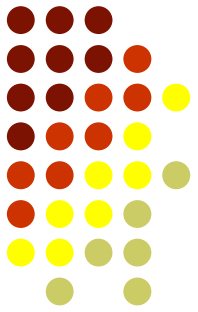
- **Rule of considerateness:**
  - A person must go to certain lengths to save the feelings and the face of others present.
- **The Face-Threatening Act.**
  - Something that does damage to one's face.
- **Face Work:**
  - Maintaining face; correcting damage

# Example: Televised apology ritual



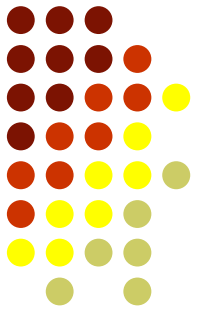
- **Acknowledgement:** of threat to hearer's face.
- **The challenge:** attention is called to the misconduct
- **The offering:** the offender is given a chance to correct the offence and re-establish order: explain what happened as a meaningless act, a joke, unintentional, a mistake, unavoidable, not acting himself, under the influence of something or somebody, etc.
- **The acceptance** (or not) of the offering
- **Gratitude** of the offender (equilibrium re-established)

# Politeness: Brown and Levinson



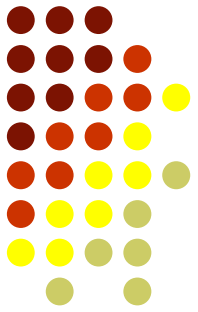
- Theory, first developed in late 1970s, is based on Goffman's concept of face
  - Face: The public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself.
  - A communication (speech act) may contain an imposition on the "face" of the Hearer.
- Instant background  
<http://www.ic.arizona.edu/~comm300/mary/interpersonal/politeness/>

# Brown and Levinson model



- **Positive Face: Honor**
  - The public self.
  - The positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) by interactants.
  - the want of every member that her wants be desirable to at least some others.

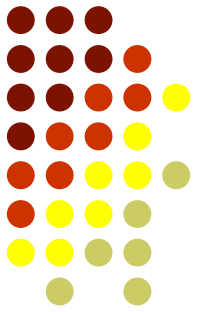
# Brown and Levinson model



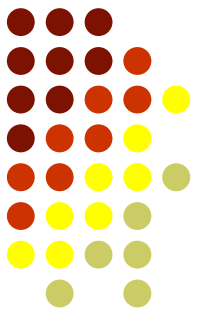
- **Negative Face: Privacy**
  - Invented by Brown and Levinson
  - The concept of the right to privacy.
  - The basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction
  - the want of every 'competent adult member' that her actions be unimpeded by others.



# Threatening the Hearer's Negative Face

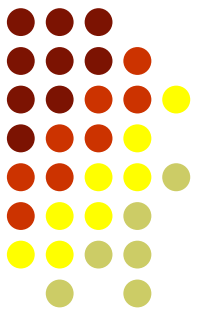


- Speech Acts that put pressure on H to act: Orders and Requests; Suggestions and Advice; Reminders; Threats; Warnings.
- Acts that put Hearer in debt (offers, promises)
- Acts that express desire or envy of Hearer's possessions which lead Hearer to think that s/he has to protect them (compliments, envy, expressions of strong emotion -hatred, anger, lust)



# Threats to Hearer's Positive face

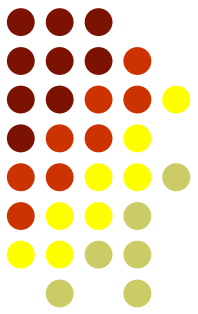
- negative evaluation: disapproval (criticism); disagreement
- indifference to Hearer's positive face: violent emotions (reason to fear Speaker); irreverence;
- bad news about Hearer (good news about Speaker);
- raising divisive topics (politics); non-cooperation; wrong terms of address



# A politeness continuum

- Bald: *Shut the door* .No politeness (maximally efficient communication)
- Positive politeness: *How about shutting the door.* Address positive face wants (slang, being inclusive)
- Negative politeness: *Could you shut the door?* Address negative face wants
- ambiguous politeness: *It's warm in here.* Multiple interpretations possible (that's not what I meant)

## Recent adaptations 'face' theory



Later, we will use frames and strategies of involvement and strategies of independence developed by Scollon & Scollon to handle cross-cultural communications.

Their approach incorporates concepts of distance, power and hierarchy, to defuse the 'negative—bad' association

.