



Illocution and Cognition: A Constructional Approach

Lorena Pérez Hernández



UNIVERSIDAD
DE LA RIOJA

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*To my family,
Aurora, Luciano, and Mila,
with love*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations of Corpus Sources

AH	Annie Hall
AI	Aliens
AII	Aliens 2
BNC	British National Corpus
BV	Blue Velvet
CA	Consenting Adults
CT	Crimson Tide
DH	Die Hard
DM	Dangerous Minds
DOA	Death on Arrival
FS	Film Script
GAS	Guilty as Sin
GF	Go Fish
JVV	Joe versus the Volcano
PF	Pulp Fiction
PW	Pretty Woman
R	Ramson
RA	Raising Arizona
SI	Singles
TBC	The Breakfast Club
TV	Terminal Velocity
WAH	Wild at Heart
WG	Working Girl

Abbreviations of Linguistic Terms

A	Addressee
C	Linguistic community
DECL	Declarative
e	Sentence

EXCL	Exclamative
F	Illocutionary force
FG	Functional Grammar
FTA	Face threatening act
H	Hearer
ICM	Idealized cognitive model
ifid	Illocutionary force indicating device
IIA	Illocution-as-interpreted by A
III	Illocution-as-coded-in-the-expression
IIIS	Illocution-as-intended-by-S
IMP	Imperative
INT	Interrogative
ISA	Indirect speech act
KWIC	Key word in context
P	Illocution
p	Proposition
P'	Some ulterior illocutionary value
pr	Promise
S	Speaker
T	Sentence
XKWIC	Concordance software for searching the BNC

1. INTRODUCTION*

Ever since Austin (1962) made us aware of the fact that language can be used not only to describe reality but also to perform actions, the study of illocutionary phenomena has deserved the attention of a significant number of researchers working within the most diverse linguistic fields (e.g. pragmatics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, etc.) and frameworks (e.g. generativism, functionalism, conversationalism, cognitivism, etc.). The vast number of books, periodicals, and special issues in international journals devoted to this subject reveals the interest which arises from this specific aspect of language. A closer look at the available literature on speech acts, however, shows that there is still room for further research.

To begin with, we still lack a conclusive explanation on the relative weight of the opposing linguistic resources of *codification* and *inference* on the processes of illocutionary production and understanding. Some theories such as Searle's (1969) convention rules, the systemic-functional approach (Halliday 1994[1985]), and to a lesser extent Dik's (1989, 1997) functional account emphasize the role of codification. Others (e.g. Bach and Harnish, 1979; Leech, 1983; Recanati, 1987) give pride of place to inference. Nevertheless, psycholinguistic experiments carried out from the seventies onwards have been unable to determine the pre-eminence of either of these resources in illocutionary performance (see section 3.2). Second, those theories based on the so-called Literal Force Hypothesis make a distinction between *conventional indirect speech acts* and mere *hints*, but they account for both types of indirect speech acts (henceforth ISAs) in inferential terms. As a consequence of this, they do not do justice to the higher cognitive economy and speed of processing of conventional ISAs. Third, illocutionary categories have been traditionally understood as having clear-cut boundaries and all-or-nothing membership. Likewise, some notions used in the explanation of illocutionary phenomena (e.g. codification, inference, conventional ISAs) have been conceptualized in a similarly discrete fashion. This is not in accordance

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with some of the most recent findings on the nature of human categorization such as the notions of *prototype*, *cognitive continuum*, or *scalarity*, which have been empirically shown to lie at the basis of categorization processes. Such notions should also be considered in relation to the way we conceptualize illocutionary types and illocutionary performance in order to endow their analysis with cognitive adequacy.¹ Finally, little has been done to study in a systematic way the possible functional motivation of the form of illocutionary acts.

The present study attempts to offer some plausible solutions to the above shortcomings of traditional theories of speech acts. In brief, the following are some of the proposals with which this book is concerned. First of all, some arguments will be provided in favour of a model of illocutionary description in which both codification and inference are taken into account. Furthermore, it will be postulated that these two linguistic resources do not constitute discrete options, but are rather the two extremes of a continuum along which different degrees of codification can be distinguished. Second, the notion of conventional ISAs will be redefined in terms of their higher degree of codification in comparison to mere hints, which will make it possible to explain the fact that the former are more readily and effortlessly understood. Third, in connection to the lack of cognitive adequacy of illocutionary categories, it will be hypothesized that the internal structure of speech act categories is of a prototypical nature. Each illocutionary type is liable to a description in terms of a prototype or best example of its group, on the one hand, and a periphery consisting of less clear members, on the other. Category membership will be defined in relation to a number of necessary (but not sufficient) attributes following the proposals in Santibáñez (1999). Finally, I also endeavour to offer an analysis of the plausible motivating factors for many linguistic realizations of speech acts. The meaning conditions underlying the use of the different linguistic elements will be captured in the form of propositional ICMs, like those proposed by Lakoff (1987), which will consist of a number of attributes, plus several conventions associated with each speech act type.

1.1. Scope and Content of the Present Study

The approach to the study of illocutions which I advocate takes a semantic stance in the lifelong controversy about to which component of language, either semantics or pragmatics, the study of speech acts should be assigned. Because of the strong dependence of illocutionary performance on extralinguistic and contextual factors (i.e. speaker-related and social issues), the study of speech acts was originally added to the list of matters that made

1. The term 'cognitive' is used here as defined by Lakoff (1987) and Johnson (1987). See the introduction to chapter 3 for a brief explanation of what these authors understand by 'cognitivism'.

up the object of pragmatics together with deictics, figurative meaning, and the like. The non-literal meaning of indirect speech acts, above all, appeared to be beyond the scope of the truth-conditional semantics in vogue at the time of the inception of speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). The intentional non-conventional meaning of indirect speech acts made it necessary to take into consideration both the speaker and the context in their explanation, thus departing from what was considered the proper object of semantics. Nevertheless, the ascription of speech acts to pragmatics has not been a constant in the history of linguistics. It is not unusual to find discussions of illocutionary phenomena in semantics handbooks (see Leech, 1981 [1974]; Lyons, 1977; Saeed, 1997; Kleidler, 1998) and even within the work of one of the founding fathers of speech act theory -Searle (1969, 1979)- it is possible to find some hesitation as to the correct nature, whether pragmatic or semantic, of speech act analyses (see section 2.2.1).

The less restricted understanding of semantics stemming from work carried out within cognitive linguistics sheds some light on the issue of the ascription of illocutionary phenomena either to the semantics or to the pragmatics of a language. Within this new trend, semantics is not only concerned with the truth conditions of sentences, but is extended to include systems of knowledge organization like Fillmore's *frames* or Lakoff's *idealized cognitive models* or *ICMs* (see section 3.4). From this perspective, pragmatic principles, in general, and speech act categories, in particular, can be regarded as the object of semantics, because the user and context-related information associated with them is also subject to the general principles of organization which structure non-interactive knowledge. The hypothesis that a subpart of semantics should be concerned with interactive and pragmatic meaning is already implicit in Sweetser's (1987) description of the social concept of *helpfulness* in terms of a propositional ICM. Widdowson (1984: 102), focusing on Halliday's (1970) distinction between the ideational and the interpersonal functions of language, has proposed the existence of *interpersonal schemas*, which would capture the knowledge of how language serves to perform social actions. Pragmatic principles are not, however, included within Widdowson's schemas. Grice's maxims, for instance, are regarded as *procedural principles*, which are still part of the pragmatics of language. In a similar vein, Wierzbicka (1991: 19) claims that "attitudinal meanings can be treated in the same descriptive framework as any other kinds of meaning. They can therefore be regarded as belonging to semantics [... which] doesn't mean that anything that has ever been called 'pragmatics' could, or should, be swallowed by semantics." Nevertheless, Wierzbicka does not go any further into determining the exact delimitation of tasks between pragmatics and semantics. A further step in the transference of traditional pragmatic issues to the semantic component and an explicit proposal on the nature of the resulting boundary between pragmatics and semantics is found in Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal (1994: 114-115). These authors postulate that our knowledge of social roles

and conventions is organized in terms of *interpersonal knowledge schemas* (translation mine), as opposed to *ideational knowledge schemas* (translation mine), which would include propositional information about conceptual objects, processes, and states. By way of illustration, our knowledge about the concept of *restaurant* would include both ideational information about the physical space and the pieces of furniture that are part of a restaurant, and also an interpersonal subschema consisting of the knowledge of the conventions of social behaviour associated with this place. In Ruiz de Mendoza and Ota's account, therefore, principles of social interaction, like Grice's and Leech's maxims, would be part of the conventional knowledge liable to be captured by interpersonal knowledge schemas. Pragmatics, on the contrary, would be concerned with the set of general strategies which guide the speakers' use of the linguistic resources available for communication.

Taking these facts into consideration, and working within the tradition of cognitive linguistics, the study of speech acts offered in this book consists of (1) an exhaustive description of the meaning conditions of illocutionary categories in the form of *propositional ICMs* and (2) the pairing of those meaning conditions with the realization procedures (i.e. linguistic means) that can be used to activate them. In other words, I shall describe some of the most relevant *constructions* of directive and commissive speech acts in English. It should be highlighted that the illocutionary constructions put forward in this study do not pair full illocutionary ICMs with linguistic forms, but rather individual meaning conditions included in those ICMs with their corresponding formal realization procedures. As shall be shown in detail in chapter 3, this type of illocutionary constructions is supple enough to make it possible to account for one of the most characteristic features of illocutionary meaning, namely, its ability to impose different degrees of inferential load on its understanding. Thus, I hypothesize that the higher the number of meaning conditions of a particular illocutionary cognitive model which are activated through explicit linguistic means (i.e. realization procedures), the smaller the inferential load required in its interpretation, and vice versa.

This study of directive and commissive illocutionary acts is restricted to English language data. As has been argued by Wierzbicka (1985a, 1985b, 1991: chapters two and five), different languages not only categorize speech acts in different ways, but also show differences regarding the surface forms used by speakers to implement a given speech act type (e.g. Israelies' use of directness in the performance of directive illocutions clashes with the Anglo-saxon preference for indirect resources). Therefore, while the notions of ICM and realization procedure can be universally applied to the study of the most diverse languages, their precise content and formulation in connection with a certain speech act category will differ greatly from language to language. Further typological validation and cross-cultural comparison would certainly be interesting and productive. However, this task is beyond the scope of this research.

The speech act categories chosen for this analysis are those of ordering, requesting, advising, warning, begging, suggesting, threatening, inviting, offering, and promising. They are all basic-level categories which fulfil the two conditions which, according to Rosch (1975: 197), differentiate them from superordinate and/or subordinate categories: they maximize the number of attributes shared by members of the category and minimize the number of attributes shared with members of other categories. This level of categorization has been chosen because, being the one at which most of our conceptualization of the world takes place, it is the most logical and attractive starting point for a study of any concept, including speech acts. Moreover, the higher frequency of occurrence of basic-level categories has also facilitated the building of the corpus on which this study is based. This analysis has been limited to those basic-level speech acts for which it has been possible to gather a reasonable number of examples. Some speech act types for which the corpus sources have proved little productive (e.g. encouraging, permitting) have been left out of the research.

The contents of this book have been organized as follows. Chapter two introduces the concept of 'indirect speech act' and includes a critical survey of the main approaches to their study. Chapter three begins with a discussion of the problems and shortcomings that arise from the lack of a cognitive approach to the study of indirect speech acts. In section 3.1, the flaws of orthodox taxonomies of illocutionary acts (e.g. Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979) are considered and some recent proposals which are more consistent with our cognitive requirements (e.g. Verschueren, 1985; Vanparys, 1996) are presented. In section 3.2, the long-standing controversy on the role of codification and inference in illocutionary performance is dealt with. In section 3.3, the concepts of *literalness* and *indirect speech act* are revisited. Finally, as a logical consequence of the discussions carried out in chapter 2 and in the first three sections of chapter 3, this chapter ends with an outline of an alternative cognitive treatment of illocutionary acts based on illocutionary constructions, propositional ICMs, and realization procedures. Chapters four to thirteen contain the description and exemplification of the propositional ICMs and realization procedures of the ten illocutionary types under consideration. Each of these chapters has been divided into two macro-sections. The first of them contains the description of the meaning conditions and conventions associated with the corresponding speech act category, as well as evidence of the prototypical nature of illocutionary categories. In the second part of each chapter I present the realization procedures which are found to instantiate the meaning conditions previously described in the first part of the chapter. These realization procedures have been grouped according to the sentence type involved (i.e. declarative, imperative, or interrogative). Finally, the last chapter gives a summary of the main conclusions that can be drawn from this work, and provides the reader with an outline of possible lines of future research.

1.2. Corpus and Data

Up to date, most studies on illocutionary acts have been based on introspection and on the analysis of artificial examples. Large computerized corpora, with all their wealth of data, have been rarely used in the study of this subject matter. In part, this is probably due to the problem envisaged by Myers (1991) regarding the fact that pragmatic analyses rely on context, whereas corpora strip much of the context of utterances: they tend to take smaller samples of texts rather than entire texts and these samples are, moreover, removed from their social and textual contexts. In the field of speech act analysis, this general problem is added to the more specific one concerning the difficulty of extracting instances of speech acts from corpora by means of concordance programs. This is mainly a consequence of the fact that most of the illocutionary acts that people perform in their everyday lives lack a fixed linguistic form which could be the object of a concordance query. These difficulties, however, are not insurmountable, and the unquestionable benefits of a corpus-based study of speech acts have already prompted some timid attempts in this direction. An example of this is Aijmer's (1988, 1996) analysis of requests based on the London-Lund corpus of Spoken English. Following this lead, my description of illocutionary ICMs and illocutionary realization procedures in chapters four to thirteen is the outcome of the analysis of a multi-source corpus of over one thousand and five hundred instances of directive and commissive speech acts in English.

This multi-source corpus has been drawn from three different kinds of material: film scripts, magazines, and a computerised corpus (The British National Corpus-henceforth BNC).² The choice of the BNC out of all the computerised macro-corpora currently available (e.g. Bank of English, London-Lund, TRAINS, etc.) is twofold. First, unlike the London-Lund corpus, the BNC includes both written and spoken material. Second, if compared to the TRAINS corpus, the BNC is not restricted to just one kind of interactional situation (i.e. problem solving dialogues), but simply contains real chunks of real language. Finally, although its nature is similar to that of the Bank of English, the concordance software available for the BNC permits more refined searches and offers larger contexts than the former.

2. The BNC includes extracts from 4124 modern English texts of all kinds, both spoken and written. Each text is segmented into orthographic sentence units, and each word is automatically assigned a part of speech code. There are six and a quarter million sentences, and over 100 million words. In order to search for speech acts in the BNC, I have made use of a specific software called XKWIC. This program produces data in the form of *KWIC or key word in context* concordances. The key word (the performative verb in this case) appears in the centre of a context which, in this investigation, is about five lines above and below the key word. This context length is necessary in order to extract the basic pieces of information about the kind of transactions and interactions that take place in the production of indirect directive and commissive speech acts.

The main advantages of working with a multi-source corpus like the one used in this study is that it helps to overcome the problems that result from the exclusive use of only one of them. Unlike scripts or magazines, the BNC makes it possible to carry out interactive and dynamic searches. This feature has proved particularly profitable in the process of discovering what realization procedures are used to perform each illocutionary category. After identifying a possible realization procedure in the initial corpus, I have used the XKWIC concordance software to search the BNC for other instances of that particular linguistic form and then see how many of them confirm the existence of the realization procedure under consideration. The use of a computerized corpus like the BNC has the added advantage of guaranteeing a fair degree of objectivity in the extraction of examples. The illocutionary acts taken from this source consist of a direct act between inverted commas whose illocutionary force is specified by either the speaker himself or the narrator by means of a performative verb (e.g. “Come here right now!” he ordered). Since the object of our concordance program is this performative verb, the categorization of the speech act under consideration is actually carried out by real users of the language different from the linguist doing the research. In this way, it is possible to avoid one of the disadvantages of previous corpus-based accounts of speech acts, such as those which make use of the London-Lund corpus. This is a collection of data built exclusively on spoken material and, therefore, speech acts extracted from it will necessarily have to be categorized by the linguist himself. Unfortunately, the data extracted from the BNC is only partially useful for my purposes since, in spite of offering a considerably large context, it cannot always be guaranteed that the necessary information concerning the transactional and interactional features of illocutionary production will be spelled out in that section of the text which has been selected by the concordance program. In view of this, I have completed the initial corpus with other instances of illocutions taken from film scripts and magazines, which are not subject to such limitations. A total of thirty six magazines, which correspond to a full annual subscription to three different publications,³ and twenty one film scripts have been explored,⁴ from which four hundred and sixty three indirect illocutions have been obtained. In both

3. The magazines chosen are the following: *Company magazine* (a publication directed to young professional women which includes articles about varied themes of current interest, as well as sections of advice on health, beauty, and relationships), *Housekeeping magazine* (a text aimed at middle to upper-middle aged women which contains sections on decoration, cooking, health, and other articles on subjects of interest to them), and *Photo Answers magazine* (a publication of a more specialised nature which addresses topics of interest to both professional and amateur photographers. It includes many sections in which the reader is advised on how to take good photographs and on related issues).

4. The scripts, selected on availability grounds, have been taken from the Internet or from video collections on sale. The full list of films is included in a specific section of the bibliographical references at the end of the book.

cases, in order to avoid imposing my own interpretation on the determination of the illocutionary force of the examples, I have chosen those films and sections of the magazines which, due to the nature of their topics, are expected to display a high frequency of occurrences of a given speech act. Most of the scripts correspond to action films which abound with directives like ordering, threatening, begging, and the like. As regards the magazines, I have focused on those sections to which readers can write in search of pieces of advice on the most varied matters. These sections are rich in easily identifiable speech acts of the suggesting, warning, and advising categories. Working with film scripts and magazines has proved extremely useful since, unlike the BNC, they make relevant contextual aspects and basic speaker-related features (i.e. sex, age, relative social status, etc.) fully available for study. All this information will be particularly useful in the formulation of the cognitive models of the ten directive and commissive speech act types under scrutiny.

The three sources described above have returned a total of over a thousand and five hundred instances of directive and commissive speech acts. To get a more manageable and productive sample, I have made a hand-sorted selection of over a hundred examples for each of the speech act categories under scrutiny, which yields a final collection of one thousand three hundred and forty instances of indirect speech acts. This selection had as its main goal the elimination of repetitions, especially in the case of those instances drawn from the BNC corpus (e.g. when the same order by a politician was reported in several of the newspapers that are included as corpus material). I have also excluded those occurrences in which the key word functioned as a sheer performative and not as an introductory verb announcing the performance of a speech act (e.g. *I promise to take you to the zoo*). Finally, quasi-performatives (i.e. constructions with nouns that make explicit the illocutionary force of a sentence) have also been removed from our final corpus (e.g. *I'll come to see you and this is a promise*).

Finally, a word of caution is needed in relation to the expectations that this corpus-based study of speech acts may arouse. The nature of a corpus and of the results that may stem from its study is determined by its sources. The present corpus consists mainly of written records. Moreover, the spoken section contained in the BNC, and from which some examples have also been extracted, is not annotated either for suprasegmental features like intonation, emphasis, stress, etc., or for kinesic factors like gestures, body movement, etc. Therefore, the wealth of data coming from suprasegmental and nonverbal interaction is necessarily absent from our study.⁵

5. For a study of speech acts in relation to suprasegmental features, I refer the interested reader to Diamond's (1996) work. This author proves that asymmetries in power correlate with the presence of hesitations, pauses, drawn-out words, and low volume; while social closeness and power symmetry pairs with just the opposite features: high volume, no pauses, lack of hesitations, etc. Recent research on gestures as illocutionary makers has been carried out by Kendon (1995) in relation to Southern Italian conversation.

2. TRADITIONAL ACCOUNTS OF INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS REVISITED

This chapter seeks to offer a critical survey of some of the most relevant literature on ISAs. Given the pioneering and influential role played by J.R. Searle's account of ISAs, I devote a considerable part of the present chapter to its presentation and discussion. For the same reasons, Searle's theory is often the landmark in relation to which other accounts of ISAs are introduced. After a brief section which introduces and defines the concept under consideration, I present a critical review of the various treatments of ISAs carried out within several approaches to the study of language, including research on pragmatics and conversation analysis, on the one hand, and functional and formal orientations to linguistic description. For the purposes of the present study, the different approaches are grouped into two categories: those studies in which it is argued that the production and interpretation of indirect speech acts is fully dependent on inferential processes (i.e. Radical Inferentialists), and those in which it is claimed that, together with inference, convention also plays some role in indirect speech act understanding (i.e. Moderate Inferentialists).

2.1. The Problem

The notion of ISA can only be understood if there is a previous acceptance of the concept of *literalness* or *direct meaning*, that is to say, of the fact that a sentence form always has a direct illocutionary force built into it in any of the following ways:

a) By means of an explicit performative which has the force named by the performative verb in the main clause.

b) By using one of the three major sentence types in English: imperative, interrogative, or declarative, each of which has the force traditionally associated with it, namely, ordering, questioning, and stating respectively.

Given this concept of *literalness*,⁶ any sentence which has a force different from the one associated with it, either by virtue of a performative verb or by means of its sentence type, can be regarded as an ISA. By way of illustration, consider the oft-quoted example

(1) Can you pass the salt?

which in spite of its interrogative sentence type -or as Searle would alternatively put it, by means of it- manages to convey a request. Thus, sentence (1) would have both the literal force of a question and, in addition, the indirect force of a request (Searle, 1975: 62). This is confirmed, he argues, by the fact that responses to ISAs like (1) can refer to both the literal and the indirect force:

A: Can you pass the salt?

B: Sure, I can; Here you are.

In summary, Searle (1969: 64) claims that, for different reasons, -and he points to politeness requirements as one of them-, there are utterances such as the one illustrated by the previous example, for which the hypothesis of the existence of a direct meaning seems to make the wrong prediction about their illocutionary force. Those authors who subscribe to that hypothesis find themselves in need of accounting for the way in which the indirect force of the utterance is derived from a sentence which already has a different literal force traditionally associated with it.

2.2. Some Solutions

Ever since a number of scholars (Sadock 1970, 1972; Gordon and Lakoff, 1975; Green, 1975; and Searle, 1975) noted the existence of ISAs, a number of different theories have been formulated to account for them. One of the most fruitful lines of research in this field is the one represented by inferential theories carried out by pragmatists.

Within the group of inferential theories on speech acts, there is still room for a further sub-classification on the basis of the strength of their claims in support of the role played by inference in the performance of ISAs. In this fashion, we can distinguish between *moderate inferentialist* accounts (e.g. Searle, 1975; Morgan, 1978; some functional approaches, such as Halliday's

6. The concept of literalness has received different terminological treatments in the literature. To give just a few examples: Searle (1975: 62) has referred to the literal meaning of a sentence as its secondary force, while keeping the label of primary force for the actual illocutionary act; Levinson (1983: 263-4) speaks of the literal force hypothesis; Dik (1989: 256) refers to the literal meaning of a sentence as the illocution-as-coded-in-the-expression or ILLE .

(1978, 1994), Dik's (1989, 1997), and Givón's (1989, 1990)) and *extreme inferentialist* accounts (e.g. Bach and Harnish, 1979; Recanati, 1987; Leech, 1983; conversational accounts). Theories belonging to the first group still accept the hypothesis of literalness (i.e. the existence of three basic speech act types literally conveyed by means of the three universally-recognised sentence types). On the contrary, those accounts belonging to the second category reject the hypothesis of literalness altogether and are based on the assumption that even performatives and direct speech acts are subject to inferential processes of interpretation. Let us see each group in turn.

2.2.1. Moderate Inferentialist Approaches to ISAs

As pointed out by Levinson (1983: 270), all attempts to give an explanation of ISAs in inferential terms which accept the hypothesis of literalness share the following beliefs:

-ISAs have the literal force traditionally associated with their sentence type and in addition, an indirect force which is derived from the former via an inferential process which takes contextual conditions into account.

-In the interpretation of ISAs there is always an inference-trigger involved. That is to say, there must be some indication that the literal force of the utterance is inadequate in the current conversational context. This creates the need of *repairing* it through some inference.

-The last step in any inferential theory of ISAs consists in the formulation of specific principles or rules of inference which will derive the primary indirect force of the utterance from their literal meaning and the context.

The correctness of Levinson's observation will be made evident in the next pages, in which several well-known *moderate inferentialist* proposals on the nature of ISAs will be reviewed: Searle's classical account, Morgan's short-circuiting implicatures, and three functional accounts (Halliday's, 1978, 1994; Dik's, 1989, 1997; and Givón's, 1989, 1990).

Searle's Classical Account of ISAs

Searle's views on ISAs are in two parts: his 1969 and his 1975 proposals, the latter being a further development of the former which seemed incomplete to its author. In chapter three of *Speech Acts* (1969), Searle suggested that ISAs could be explained by the fact that they indicate the satisfaction of the essential condition by means of asserting or questioning one of the other conditions. In order to perform an indirect promise, for instance, the following two conditions need to be fulfilled:

1. The speaker has either to assert or question one of the satisfaction conditions of promises. E.g. *I'll do it for you* (assertion of the propositional content condition).

2. The context of the utterance has to be such that it is compatible with the essential condition for a promise. That is to say, the context has to be such that it is obvious that in saying *I'll do it for you* the speaker is accepting (or undertaking) an obligation.

There seem to be at least two problems with Searle's initial account of ISAs. First, he does not explain anywhere how questioning or asserting any of the conditions is a way of fulfilling the essential condition of a given speech act. Second, if it is necessary to make use of the context in order to see whether a given utterance can qualify as a certain speech act, then it should be questioned the need of setting up a theory of illocutions in terms of satisfaction conditions. Those rules and conditions seem pointless if the ultimate interpretation of an utterance depends on its context.

In his paper "Indirect Speech Acts" (1975), Searle decides to modify his former account of ISAs and develop an inferential theory which he presents as the correct alternative to other accounts of ISAs in terms of conversational postulates (Gordon and Lakoff, 1975) or implicit deep structures (Ross, 1970; Sadock, 1974), which had been proposed in the meantime.⁷ His new theory of ISAs hypothesizes that the apparatus necessary to account for these phenomena includes: first, mutual background knowledge, both linguistic and non-linguistic; second, a theory of speech acts in terms of systems of constitutive rules which determine the conditions of satisfaction of speech acts; third, certain general principles of cooperative conversation of the Gricean sort,⁸ and finally, general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer. According to the common structure of all moderate inferentialist

7. Ross's (1970) Performative Hypothesis and Sadock's (1974) Idiom Theory of ISAs are based on certain assumptions of the Chomskyan framework about language. They both share the premise that every sentence has as its highest clause in deep or underlying structure a clause with an explicit performative, whether or not it is overtly expressed in surface structure. So called ISAs are, therefore, ambiguous sentences which have two different deep structures. Moreover, since the illocutionary force of any sentence is always explicit in its deep structure, it is postulated that there is no need for a special theory of illocutionary force and that speech acts are assimilable into standard theories of syntax and truth-conditional semantics. Other Chomskyan accounts of ISAs, like Gordon and Lakoff's (1975) accept the assumption of the existence of a performative matrix, but at the same time they also consider the role of inference in the workings of ISAs. On the whole, these proposals have gradually been abandoned due to the decline of the paradigm within which they were developed, as well as to an accumulation of evidence against them. For some relevant criticisms see Green (1975), Searle (1975), Leech (1983), and Levinson (1983).

8. According to Grice (1975: 41-58), there are four sets of maxims of conversation which enable the efficient cooperative use of language: Maxims of Quality, Maxims of Quantity; Maxim of Relevance, and Maxims of Manner. Together, these maxims give rise to a general Cooperative Principle: *Make your 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.*

theories, the steps that lead the hearer to understand the primary illocution in terms of the secondary illocution involve two crucial features:

1. *An inference trigger.* A strategy which makes the hearer realise that the speaker means more than he says, that is to say, that there is an ulterior illocutionary force beyond the one contained in the meaning of the sentence. According to Searle (1975: 74), this strategy is established by the principles of conversation operating on the information of the hearer and the speaker.

2. *Principles that derive the primary illocutionary force from the literal force.* Once we have inferred by virtue of some principles of conversation that there is an ulterior illocutionary force, a device is needed for finding out what this primary illocution is. In Searle's theory, such a device consists of a theory of speech acts, some mutually shared background information, and the general power of rationality and inference of the hearer.

This pattern of analysis can be applied to both conventional and calculated ISAs. In order to see how it can be implemented in the analysis of a given speech act, I offer a simplified version of its application to requests as described by Searle (1975: 73-4). The reconstruction of the steps necessary in order to interpret the utterance of a sentence like *Can you pass the salt?* as a request are the following.⁹

Step 1: The speaker (henceforth S) asks a question about the hearer's (henceforth H) ability to pass the salt.

Step 2: H assumes that S is being cooperative.

Step 3: S's question is not relevant in the context of utterance.

Step 4: Therefore, S's utterance is probably not just a question. It must have an ulterior illocutionary point.

Step 5: The ability of H to perform the act predicated in the proposition is one of the preparatory conditions for any directive illocutionary act.

Step 6: We are now at dinner and people usually use salt at dinner; They pass it back and forth, etc.

9. Searle (1975: 73) is careful to note that in practice it is not necessary to go through any conscious process of inference to derive the conclusion that the utterance of *Can you pass the salt?* is a request to pass the salt. We simply hear it as a request. At this point, there seems to be a slight contradiction. Searle proposes a theory of ISAs, only to conclude that his theory does not represent the way in which people interpret ISAs in practice. In other words, Searle himself acknowledges that his theory is not psychologically adequate. In my analysis of ISAs, I shall favour a cognitively adequate approach which takes into account contemporary theories on how our mind works (see chapter three).

Step 7: Therefore, in the absence of any other plausible illocutionary point, he is probably requesting me to pass him the salt.

Step 3 refers to information derived from the immediate context. Step 6 refers to long-term background information. Step 2 assumes Grice's (1975: 45-46) Cooperative Principle to the effect that participants in a conversation are expected to "make their contribution such as is required at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which they are engaged." Step 5 is derived from the set of conditions of satisfaction that the theory of speech acts describes for the performance of a non-defective request.¹⁰ Finally, steps 4 and 7 represent inferences that our human rational capacities allow us to draw from previous steps.

Searle explicitly acknowledges some of the problems for which his theory is unable to find an explanation. To begin with, if the mechanisms by which ISAs are meant and understood are so general (principles of conversation, shared background information, a theory of speech acts, etc.) and not tied to any particular syntactical structure, then Searle asks himself why is it that some syntactic forms work better than others? For instance, why does the utterance of a sentence of the *Can you VP?* form have a higher ISA potential than the utterance of a sentence of the *Are you able to VP?* form? Why is the first more readily and automatically understood as a request than the second? Regarding these facts, Searle notes that first, in order to be able to function as an ISA, an utterance has to be idiomatic, and second that, within the class of idiomatic utterances, some forms tend to become conventional devices for the performance of a given speech act. On the one hand, the requirement that ISAs have to be idiomatic rules out the possibility that instances such as *Is it the case that you at present have the ability to reach that book on the top shelf?* could function as conventional ways of conveying a request. On the other hand, the fact that certain forms of speech acts tend to become conventionally accepted as standard ways of performing those speech acts explains, according to Searle (1975: 76), that sentences such as *Can you VP?*, *Would you VP?*, or *I want you to VP*, among others, have a higher indirect illocutionary act potential than sentences such as *Are you able to VP?*

Searle's answer to this problem is not without difficulties. In order to explain why certain instances of ISAs are more frequently and effectively used in order to perform the desired act, he ultimately refers to their conventional

10. According to Searle (1969: 67), the rules of satisfaction for requests are the following: *Propositional content condition* (Future act A of the hearer); *Preparatory conditions*: (1) The hearer is able to do A and the speaker believes that the hearer is able to do A, (2) It is not obvious to both the speaker and the hearer that the hearer will do A in the normal course of events of his own accord; *Sincerity condition* (The speaker wants the hearer to do A); *Essential condition* (The utterance counts as an attempt to get the hearer to do A).

nature, and in order to describe what a conventional ISA is, he refers to its higher indirect illocutionary act potential, that is to say, to the fact that they are standard ways of performing a given speech act. We seem to be at the start of a recess of some kind. Searle does not ultimately offer an explanation of the possible motivations of conventional ISAs. Leaving this problem aside, another criticism to which Searle's account is liable is the fact that having established an initial distinction between those ISAs which need to be calculated and those which are conventional (Searle, 1975), he then offers a unique explanation for how both types function in terms of inferential processes. In this way his theory fails to capture the fact that the inferential load in the understanding of conventional ISAs is much less important.

Another problem envisaged by Searle concerns the use of questions containing the conditional forms *would* and *could* as requests. Searle is unable to find an explanation for occurrences of this kind:

It is not easy to analyse these forms and to describe exactly how they differ from *Will you pass the salt?* and *Can you hand me that book?* (...) The difficulty with these forms seems to be an instance of the general difficulty about the nature of the subjunctive and does not necessarily indicate that there is any imperative meaning. (1975: 78-9)

However, as shown in Taylor (1995: 149-154) and Pérez (1996: 189-208), there is an explanation for the use of these forms as requests in cognitive terms. Taylor's account of these forms can be briefly summarized as follows. He analyses the past tense as a family resemblance category where the various meanings of the tense are related to one another.¹¹ Among the meanings of this tense, Taylor refers to its use as a conventional pragmatic mitigator and explains the origin of such use as a complex cognitive process that seems to involve a double metaphorization. There is first of all a metaphoric mapping which structures the time domain in terms of space, as is reflected in expressions such as *distant past* or *near future*. Then, there is a further metaphor which projects the schema of distance and proximity onto the domain of social involvement (cf. *close friend*). By virtue of these two conceptual metaphors, the use of a past modal reflects the speaker's wish to distance himself from the speech act he is performing. Hence the greater tact and politeness of these forms and hence also their straightforward interpretation as requests. To Taylor's account, Pérez (1996) adds the observation that the distance needed to obtain the mitigating effect, which motivates a request reading, has to be established both between the addressee and his speech act, and also between the intended speech act and the actual

11. The concept of family resemblance was introduced by Wittgenstein (1978: 31-3) in order to refer to those categories whose members do not share a set of common properties, but which are structured by a criss-crossing network of similarities.

speech act. By using the past conditional we manage to maximize the inferential path connecting the speaker's illocutionary act to his illocutionary goal via increasing the indirectness of the utterance. In so doing, the speaker offers the addressee a greater degree of optionality to comply with his request (i.e. the addressee could argue that he had understood the past modal in its literal meaning, and yet not grasp its indirect force of a request). Optionality, in turn, increases the politeness of the speech act and, therefore, motivates its straightforward reading as a request.

This brief discussion of the *would/could you VP* forms is a first indication of the strength of a cognitive explanation of ISAs. To the issue of the lack of cognitive commitment of Searle's and other traditional theories of ISAs I shall return in chapter three. But let us first consider some other general flaws of Searle's account of ISAs.

Geis (1995: 120) observes that Searle's theory is too general, accounting only for the transaction involved in the speech act (e.g. what the speaker should do in order to get the hearer to do something for him, that is, in order to successfully perform a request), without attempting to explain subtle differences due to interactional factors like the distinction between *will/can you VP?* and *would/could you VP?* realizations. Had he attempted to account for these differences, he would have found that the past forms have a higher degree of indirection than their counterparts in the present and that this is motivated by the interactional need of being polite. In this sense, the question could be raised of whether the interactional effects of speech acts should be part of a speech act theory or part of some independent sociolinguistic theory of communication. In this connection, Geis (1995: 120) puts forward two reasonable arguments in favour of the idea that interactional features are a part of speech act theory:

1. On the one hand, Geis notes that different speech acts have different face-consequences. That is to say, they may have positive or negative consequences on social relationships. Thus, a request belongs to the second group by imposing on the recipient's freedom of action, while an invitation has positive interactional consequences by virtue of referring to something which is beneficial for the recipient.

2. On the other hand, it is possible that the speaker chooses to initiate an act not to achieve its transactional effect, but its interactional one. Geis illustrates this in the following way:

It is possible for someone in a position of authority (...) to issue an order for her subordinates to march around the barracks less because she wants them to march (...), but to reinforce her superior social position. (1995: 120)

To Geis's arguments, I should add the observation that unless interactional aspects (e.g. politeness, social dimensions that influence interaction, etc.) are taken into account, a speech act theory is unable to account for the existence

of different forms of ISAs. E.g. *would/could you VP?* forms vs. *will/can you VP?* forms; speaker-oriented forms (e.g. *I want you to do VP*) vs. hearer-oriented forms (e.g. *You could shut up*), and for the subtle differences between them.

Another drawback of Searle's theory has its origin in the assumption that speech acts are essentially linguistic and his failure to realize that they are actually social acts. Several arguments can be put forward in support of the view that communicative actions (e.g. warning, advising, etc.) are social as opposed to speech (linguistic) actions (see Marcondes, 1984; Geis, 1995). The first is that many such acts can be performed non-verbally (i.e. by gestures) such as when one asks someone else to pass the salt by pointing to the salt cellar. The second is that none of the criteria proposed by Searle in order to distinguish different types of communicative actions is truly linguistic. Rather, they include social relationships between participants, psychological states, differences in force, purpose of the action, relationship with the world, etc., all of them of a non-linguistic nature. Finally, there are social features of context that play a critical role in the differentiation of communicative actions. In order to illustrate this final point, Geis gives the following example:

I might say 'It is going to rain today' by way of making a complaint if the fact that it is going to rain presents a problem for me (I have planned a picnic), or I might say this to you by way of issuing a warning to you if the fact that it is going to rain presents a problem to you (You have planned a picnic), but if I were a TV weather announcer, I might say this simply to convey information to people about the sort of weather they will have. (1995: 20)

The fact that Searle sees speech acts as linguistic acts strongly influences his theory and explains two of its most important weaknesses:

1. In spite of his conception of language as part of a theory of action (Searle, 1969: 17), and in spite of his initial commitment to carrying out a pragmatic account of speech acts, as can be observed in his attempt to establish the felicity conditions of speech acts, his actual theory of illocutions does not live up to the expectations that those theoretical decisions raise. On the one hand, the conditions of satisfaction of speech acts are a mixture of linguistic (e.g. input-output condition, propositional content condition) and extra-linguistic elements (e.g. preparatory and sincerity conditions). And on the other hand, these conditions of use are just a necessary step which enables the discovery of a number of semantic rules for the use of illocutionary force indicating devices, whose formulation is, in fact, the ultimate goal of Searle's theory. These rules associate speech acts with the use of particular linguistic expressions thus instantiating the principle of expressibility.

2. As can be observed from the above discussion, Searle's pre-theoretic characterization of the phenomenon of communicative social acts as linguistic acts, influences his posterior analysis of the matter and what, in principle, was a pragmatic account of language as part of a theory of action turns eventually into a semantic account which associates certain expressions (illocutionary

force indicating devices) with certain forces. To such an extent is this so that, in Searle's account, the boundaries between pragmatics and semantics become a matter of mere convenience:

The study of the meanings of sentences and the study of speech acts are not two independent studies but one study from two points of view. (1969: 16)

And, as a matter of fact, his account of speech acts may be ranked as a hybrid one which, in one way, defines the meanings of illocutionary force indicating devices in terms of the conditions of use of the speech acts to which they are associated, and in another way, includes the illocutionary force of the utterance into the syntactic characterization of a sentence, and therefore accounts for illocutionary forces in semantic terms.

In brief, both the mixture of linguistic and non-linguistic elements in the conditions of satisfaction of speech acts and the hybrid nature of the account (pragmatic-semantic), which have been presented by many authors (Burkhardt 1990a: 99; Katz, 1990: 230; Rolf, 1990: 149; Escandell, 1993; Holdcroft, 1994) as the main flaws of Searle's theory of speech acts, originate in the aforementioned initial assumption that speech acts are essentially linguistic instead of social actions. Otherwise Searle may not have been so strongly inclined to associate them with the use of particular linguistic constructions. Needless to say that the statement that acts like warning or advising, for instance, are social acts is not at odds with the fact that they are most frequently performed by means of language. However, taking into account their essentially social nature leads to a different, more realistic approach to their study which would consist in defining those acts in language-independent terms (by means of describing the idealised cognitive models of social interaction that underlie them) and then looking at the different resources that language makes available to express them.

Finally, another major problem with Searle's theory of speech acts is that in order to account for both literal, non-literal, direct, and ISAs, it needs to be complemented with a second inferential theory. Thus, in a first stage, Searle attempts to account for speech acts as conventional phenomena by means of stating sets of constitutive rules which determine the conventions which need to be fulfilled so that a certain expression can count as a given speech act. Then, it is realized that conventional rules are only able to explain a very small subset of speech acts (i.e. direct literal speech acts), while it leaves those instances of non-literal, metaphorical, or ISAs unexplained. As a result, in a second stage, Searle is forced to propose an inferential theory in order to account for acts like the latter. The first theory of speech acts in terms of constitutive rules is saved by postulating that it is one of the elements, together with conversational principles and shared background knowledge, that enables the hearer to infer the intended speech act.

Moreover, Searle (1975) distinguishes between two types of ISAs (i.e. conventional and calculated ISAs). However, he accounts for both kinds by means of an inferential theory. There seem to be no point in distinguishing those two types if that difference is not reflected in the way people have access to their interpretations. Searle (1975) does point to the existence of conventions of use, but he does not go any further into explaining how they work or what their origin is. In any case, the very fact that he postulates an inference pattern to account for them is not in harmony with the remark that conventional ISAs may be understood automatically. As will be shown below, Morgan's elaboration of Searle's theory of ISAs comes to its rescue by suggesting the notion of short-circuiting implicature and by offering a possible pattern of the diachronic evolution of expressions from conventions of use to conventions of language.

Morgan's Short-Circuiting Implicatures

Morgan's (1978: 261) proposals on ISAs are an elaboration of Searle's contribution to the matter. Following Searle's insight, Morgan (1978: 267-8) distinguishes two types of conventions in language:

-Conventions of language: those which are responsible for the literal meaning of sentences. That is to say, those that account for the arbitrary relation between a linguistic form and its literal meaning and which are, therefore, part of the knowledge of a certain language.

-Conventions of usage: those that govern the use of sentences, with a certain literal force, for the performance of a certain ISA in a certain culture. In order to illustrate the notion of the conventions of usage of a language, Morgan refers to the fact that while in our western culture it is conventional to greet someone by inquiring about the other person's health, in other cultures it is conventional to do so by asking about the other person's gastronomic welfare (i.e. by saying something like *Have you eaten well?*). It is clear that these idiosyncrasies are cultural conventions about the use of language and not language conventions as such.

Morgan goes beyond Searle, however, in several respects. First, he actually takes into account the above distinction in order to explain the workings of ISAs. Second, unlike Searle's, Morgan's theory of ISAs is more compatible with an account in cognitive terms since it considers the existence of a "range of possibilities for conventions intermediate between naturalness and conventions of the language" (1975: 269). That is to say, his account is capable of accommodating the possibility of the existence of a continuum from conventions of language to inference going through an intermediate stage of conventions of usage, which explains the occurrence of speech acts with varying degrees of conventionalization. And finally, he constructs a plausible picture of at least one way in which expressions can change their status

diachronically, so that an expression which at a given point in time was only a language use convention can become a convention of language. Let us describe Morgan's approach a little further in order to see how it manages to offer some interesting insights into the process of conventionalization of ISAs.

According to Morgan (1978: 269), conventions of usage consist of three kinds of elements: occasion, purpose, and means. The process of conventionalization of a given speech act takes the following form:

As the statement of means becomes more and more specific, the convention approaches a convention of the language, a statement about literal meaning. As the connections between purpose and means become obscured, the relation between them is ripe for reinterpretation as entirely arbitrary, at which point the convention of usage is reinterpreted as a convention of the language. (1978: 269)

As an illustration, he refers to the conventions concerning departure salutations, and describes the diachronic steps that can be observed in the transformation of an initial cultural convention about the correct behaviour in a departure situation into a convention of language (i.e. a codified expression for saying goodbye). For the sake of brevity, I shall offer a simplified version of Morgan's example:

Step 1: Upon parting (occasion), one expresses one's regards for the other person (purpose) by expressing a concern for the welfare of the other person (means).

Step 2: Upon parting, one expresses one's regards for the other person by uttering any of the following sentences:

- a. Take care.
- b. Don't work too hard.
- c. Let me know if you are happy over there.
- d. Drive carefully.

Step 3: Upon departing, one expresses one's regards for the other person, by saying the English sentence *Take care*.

In contrast to Searle's account of ISAs, who took pains to explain why such expressions as those based on the *Can you VP?* form of requests had a higher indirect illocutionary act potential than others such as the *Are you able to VP?* forms, Morgan's explanation of these phenomena makes it possible to see these two expressions as two different steps in a process of conventionalization, the former having reached a higher degree of specialization which brings it closer to becoming a convention of language. Morgan concludes that, regarding conventional ISAs of the *Can you VP?* form, speakers know not only that they have a certain literal meaning (i.e. convention of language), but also that such expressions are standard ways of

indirectly making a request (i.e. conventions of usage). In this way, his account is capable of explaining the paradox of ISAs having both a literal meaning and a different indirect force without resorting to plain inference. As long as the expression has not become a convention of language, and the connection between its use and its purpose has not become completely obscured, speakers are still able to see why that expression has the implicature of a certain speech act via the reconstruction of the natural connective chain from the most general means of performing that act (purpose) to the most specific means of doing so as represented by the conventional speech act in question. However, even though conventional ISAs can be calculated in this fashion, Morgan, like others before him (Searle, 1975; Gordon and Lakoff, 1975; Green, 1975), acknowledges that participants in a conversation do not actually calculate them in that way. On the contrary, they seem to straightforwardly grasp the conventional indirect force without further ado. In order to account for this intuition, he puts forward the notion of *short-circuited* implicature. This means that, although we know (or would be able to reconstruct) the links between purpose and means, we do not actually need to reconstruct them because, out of habit, we know that a certain expression has become a conventional way of performing a given speech act. In summary, conventions of usage short-circuit the implicatures that would otherwise be needed in order to arrive at the correct interpretation of a given ISA.

Morgan's theory of ISAs displays certain advantages over Searle's. As has already been pointed out, it provides an explanation of the different relative positions of several instances of ISAs in a continuum of conventionalization. In relation to this, it displays a higher degree of cognitive adequacy, since it is capable of accounting for as many intermediate and fuzzy instances of a certain speech act as necessary (see chapter three). Most importantly, his account is not merely based on inference, given that, in the case of conventional ISAs, our knowledge of conventions of usage enables us to short-circuit the implicature and reach the correct interpretation without having to reconstruct all the inferential steps that have led to the final use of that expression as a conventional instance of a given speech act.

There are, however, certain aspects in which Morgan's account of ISAs is still incomplete. Like Searle, Morgan does not take into account the motivation for ISAs. More specifically, he does not take into account politeness requirements that play such an important role in the functioning of these phenomena, especially on those ISAs of a directive kind such as the *Can you VP?* instance which he uses as his main example. This results in a uni-dimensional account of speech acts along one unique conventionalization axis. Morgan's theoretical apparatus can explain the difference between two acts such as *Can you VP?* and *Are you able to VP?* in terms of the higher degree of conventionalization of the former. But it is unable to explain the difference between the *can/will* and the *could/would* forms which are on a same level of

conventionalization and whose main point of divergence resides in the higher degree of politeness of the latter. More importantly, even though his notion of conventions of usage is, as shown above, extremely useful in accounting for conventional ISAs, unfortunately, Morgan does not go very far in his elaboration of the concept. As a matter of fact, he does not go beyond saying that conventions of usage are culturally based, nor beyond describing a diachronic model of how they can derive into conventions of language. He does not explain the possible origins of conventions of usage, nor does he offer a description of the factors that can lead us to associate a certain means to a certain purpose. No matter how general our purpose and means are, there is still the need of explicitly stating the reasons why they can be associated, that is to say, the need of explaining why a certain means is adequate to a certain end, and why we establish a link between them in the first place.

Functionalist Approaches to ISAs: Halliday's Overgrammaticalization, Dik's Illocutionary Operators, and Givón's Cognitive Commitment.

The school of systemic-functional grammar (Halliday, 1978, 1994 [1985]; Martin, 1992) tries to incorporate illocutionary phenomena within the stratum of grammar. Such a view has been criticized for *overgrammaticalizing* phenomena which could be better accommodated within the domain of pragmatics.¹² The systemic-functional approach departs from a rejection of the hypothesis of literalness, according to which the three basic sentence types (i.e. declarative, interrogative, and imperative) correspond to the three basic speech acts (i.e. asserting, questioning, and commanding). The main consequence of the acceptance of the hypothesis of literalness is that those speech act types (e.g. advising, warning, promising, etc.) for which there is no corresponding sentence type in the language are excluded from the study of grammar and become the object of pragmatics. In contrast to this position, the systemic functionalists (Halliday, 1985: 69) take a shift in perspective and reinterpret the mood system in functional semantic, rather than formal, terms and in relation to two basic semantic oppositions: information vs. good-and-services and giving vs. demanding. This gives rise to the following four functional semantic categories or speech act functions: offers (giving goods-and-services), commands (demanding goods-and-services), statements (giving information), and questions (demanding information).

Such a classification of speech acts points to an asymmetry within the grammatical system (or sentence types) found in most languages: unlike

12. See Leech (1983: 56-8), and Butler (1988: 66) for criticisms in this direction.

commands, propositions, and questions, offers have no corresponding sentence type of their own. However, as pointed out by Thibault and Leeuwen (1996), systemic-functionalism is capable of overcoming this problem due to its particular view of grammar as a network of systemic (paradigmatic) options. Grammar is not limited to syntagmatic criteria such as the existence of a certain group of universal sentence types, but is understood rather as system of options with a certain meaning potential that are made available to the speaker of a given language. Such a system includes choices not only in sentence type, but also in more subtle lexicogrammatical (person, type of modality, definiteness, adverbs like *please*, etc.), prosodic, and kinesic aspects. A copatterning of selections within the system will enable the production of a particular speech act. By way of illustration, the choice of ability modality, a second person singular subject and a definite second argument, makes it possible to use a sentence like *Can you pass the salt?* as a request. Specific studies of speech acts in this systemic-functional vein have been carried out by Fawcett (1980) as regards directives, and by Hasan (1988a, 1988b), in relation to *yes/no* questions and offers.

One of the basic advantages of the systemic-functional approach to illocution seems to be that it takes back into the realm of grammar a great deal of illocutionary distinctions which have been relegated to pragmatics in other functionalist models like Dik's Functional Grammar, as shall be shown below. This position has significant consequences from a cognitive point of view. If the systemic-functional proposals are correct, then most of our illocutionary activity would be linguistically coded by means of delicate copatternings of selections on the lexicogrammatical system, which would result in a higher level of explication and, therefore, in an important economy of effort in cognitive processing.

Nevertheless, the emphasis placed within the systemic-functional approach on the grammatical side of language results in a directly proportional lack of consideration of the role of inference in the performance and interpretation of speech acts. For the reasons that will become apparent in chapter three, I would rather take the stance that both grammatical and inferential resources are relevant to human communication. Somewhere along the line of illocutionary performance, codification becomes so light that it blurs into inference and the production and interpretation of speech acts becomes a matter of pragmatics. I shall go back to this issue in chapter three. My view will be in accordance with more recent theories of cognition to the effect that the division of labour between grammar and pragmatics is no longer rigid and clear-cut, but rather a matter of degree.

Unlike the systemic-functional proposals, Dik's (1989, 1997) Functional Grammar (henceforth FG) recognizes the following four basic illocutionary

types which are captured by the following operators and are, therefore, accounted for within the grammar of a language (Dik, 1997: 239):¹³

-*Declarative* (DECL): S wishes A to add the content of the linguistic expression to his pragmatic information.

-*Interrogative* (INT): S wishes A to provide him with the verbal information as requested in the linguistic expression.

-*Imperative* (IMP): S wishes A to perform the controlled state of affairs (SoA) as specified in the linguistic expression.¹⁴

Many languages also possess a special Exclamative construction:

-*Exclamative* (EXCL): S wishes A to know that the content of the linguistic expression impresses S as surprising, unexpected, or otherwise worthy of notice.

There have also been various proposals within FG in order to account for more than the basic illocutions. I shall briefly refer to the canonical proposals in Dik (1989, 1997).¹⁵ According to this author, through grammatical illocutionary conversions an expression with the basic illocution Ill_E can be turned into an expression with the derived illocution Ill_E^* . Dik (1997: 243-244) puts forward a catalogue of grammatical conversions which include the following:¹⁶

a. Declarative > Interrogative. E.g. She is a nice girl, *isn't she?*

Declarative > Request. E.g. *Please* Johnny, I hate this music!

13. Dik grounds his insight in the fact that it is only natural that "those speech act types which are functionally most important have been codified by distinct grammatical means (sentence types) in the grammar of a language" (1997: 237). This kind of typological evidence is confirmed by studies like those carried out by Sadock and Zwicky (1985) and those reviewed in Croft (1994).

14. The terms declarative, interrogative, and imperative have been traditionally used for syntactic categories (i.e. basic sentence-types). They are conventionally distinguished from corresponding semantic or speech-act categories which are referred to by such terms as assertion, question, and command. Dik uses the terms declarative, interrogative, and imperative both to refer to basic illocutions and to basic sentence-types.

15. For alternative proposals, see De Jong (1980), Moutaouakil (1986), Hengeveld (1988, 1990), and Vet (1990). And for a review of both these and the canonical account, the reader is referred to Risselada (1990), and Siewierska (1991).

16. The concept of grammatical conversion itself has been criticised on the basis of its reminiscences of the transformational explanations in classical generative grammar (see Togeby, 1994: 187). However, as pointed out by Ruiz de Mendoza (1999: 127), the type of grammatical conversion proposed by Dik takes place within one level of description rather than between different levels as was the case in generative grammar.

- b. Interrogative > Request. E.g. *Please*, can you pass me the salt?
 Interrogative > Rhetorical question. E.g. What *DIF*ference does it make?
 Interrogative > Exclamation. E.g. Has she *GROWN!*
- c. Imperative > Request. E.g. *Please* give me the scalpel.
 Imperative > Exclamation. E.g. Look who's *THERE!*

The number of resulting derived illocutions is therefore seven. These, together with the four basic illocutionary types, make up a total of eleven codified illocutionary forces. A vast number of other illocutionary acts, which are frequently used in conversation, would lie beyond the scope of the grammar and would have to be explained by a wider theory of interaction.¹⁷ In other words, FG would account exclusively for fully codified illocutions and, what is most important, it does not make a distinction between partially codified or conventional speech acts and mere hints. All speech act instances which are not linguistically coded are considered the object of pragmatics and their interpretation is regarded as the result of inferential processes in a strict sense. This methodological decision as such cannot, in principle, be argued against. However, such a clear-cut separation between the realms of grammar and pragmatics is found to be unsound and unrealistic from a cognitive perspective, which would point to the existence of a continuum between these domains instead. To begin with, it fails to account for the fact that fully or partially codified speech acts are cognitively easier and faster to retrieve than mere hints.¹⁸ Moreover, given that one of the three criteria of adequacy formulated for the FG model is precisely that of psychological plausibility, it is possible to point to a slight contradiction in the methodological foundations of the theory. The positing of a level of cognitive adequacy is not compatible with an strict objectivist separation of two domains (i.e. grammar and pragmatics) which blatantly conflicts with what is known about the nature of human cognition. Although this issue will be specifically addressed in chapter three, it is necessary to emphasize now how uneconomical, in cognitive terms, a language which followed this scheme would be. As Dik (1997: 231) himself remarks, the production and interpretation of illocutions based on pragmatic,

17. Moutaouakil (1986) argues for the possibility that both the literal and the contextually inferred illocutionary forces of an utterance should be captured by predication operators. However, this solution does not seem to be entirely in keeping with the principles of FG. Within this framework, operators capture the grammatical means through which a derived illocutionary value arises from a basic illocution. Contextually inferred illocutions are not represented at the clause level by the expression rules; therefore, they cannot be represented in the underlying structure by operators.

18. This issue is dealt with in depth in chapter three, where psychological evidence is presented in support of these claims.

as opposed to grammatical or lexical means, is more costly and difficult. So, if his own line of reasoning is followed, it should be concluded that (1) either natural languages are in fact uneconomical from a psychological perspective (i.e. they actually make a wide use of costly inferential pragmatic processes in the performance of speech acts), or (2) Dik's account of the illocutionary layer should be elaborated so that it may become capable of accounting for the cognitive economy of everyday life linguistic interactions. Given the speed and relative ease with which speakers of natural languages generally communicate, the second view is more plausible. Moreover, it should be noted that, in so doing, we are just adhering to Dik's own view of codification as a more cognitively economical device for linguistic performance than pragmatic inference.

In this connection, cognitive considerations which are lacking in both Halliday's and Dik's accounts of ISAs are given pride of place within Givón's (1989, 1990) Functional-Typological Grammar. Givón recognizes three basic illocutionary distinctions which correspond to Dik's declarative, imperative, and interrogative illocutions. He goes beyond Dik, however, in regarding these three basic illocutionary categories as non-discrete, non-absolute concepts, but rather as prototypical categories which are organized around three *speech act prototypes* and which gradually blur into one another. The non-discreteness of illocutionary concepts does not end in the three basic speech act categories. On the contrary, it is postulated that, within each of these, other illocutionary sub-categories also appear as prototypical and non-discrete due to the scalar nature of their defining parameters (e.g. depending on the degree of manipulative strength of an imperative speech act, a continuum arises between the extreme imperative categories of orders and requests).

The most relevant asset of Givón's account is, therefore, that it puts into effect the cognitive commitment which had to the best of our knowledge never been seriously implemented before in the realm of speech act studies.¹⁹ In this sense, Givón's analysis represents a long-awaited cognitively adequate incursion into the nature of illocutions. However, although this represents a sound departure in the study of speech acts, it is unfortunately only a convenient start, and Givón's account is still far from offering a solution to the assortment of problems which haunt this object of study. As a matter of fact it only constitutes a cognitive view of illocutionary categories in prototypical terms. It does not make any proposals on the possible sources of the prototypical effects displayed by speech act categories. Apart from redefining

19. Dik's FG postulates a level of psychological adequacy according to which a grammar of a language should be consistent with what is known about the human mind and cognition. Nevertheless, his account of speech act categories as discrete, well-defined concepts is not consistent with current cognitive theories on the workings of the human mind like prototype theory (Rosch, 1977).

ISAs as the intermediate points in the continuum spanned by the three basic illocutionary peaks, it does not explicitly attempt to devise a plausible theory on how to deal with these specific types of illocutionary force. Moreover, it does not make a distinction between conventional ISAs and mere hints, thus becoming impaired in accounting for their different functioning in terms of cognitive processing and economy. Finally, it does not go very far in the description, both quantitatively and qualitatively, of those scalar parameters which underlie the sub-classification of the three basic speech act types into other more specific illocutionary categories (e.g. requesting, advising, threatening, etc. in the case of imperatives). Once more, the shortcomings of this theory of illocution point to the need of a more comprehensive framework for the analysis of this subject matter. In chapter three below I shall describe the necessary traits that, in my opinion, should characterize such a framework as a preliminary step to my analysis of directive and commissive speech acts.

2.2.2. Extreme Inferentialist Approaches to ISAs

Those accounts of speech acts which do not accept the hypothesis of literalness claim that, –leaving aside those basic conventions of language as a system of arbitrary signs–, conventionality does not play a significant role in the production and interpretation of illocutionary acts. So much so, that even direct speech acts are thought to be dependent on inferential processes for their understanding. Several such approaches are considered below: the classical inference-based account by Bach and Harnish (1979), Leech’s (1983) politeness-related theory of ISAs, Sperber and Wilson’s (1986) higher level explicatures, and some proposals stemming from the school of conversational analysis (Levinson, 1983; Geis, 1995).

Bach and Harnish’s Speech Act Schemas

Bach and Harnish’s theory of linguistic communication essentially involves “the speaker’s having a special sort of intention (an intention that the hearer make a certain sort of inference) and the hearer’s actually making that inference” (1979: xvii).²⁰ As can be expected from this general view of linguistic communication, their theory of ISAs is also inferential in nature. In this sense, it shares with the moderate inferentialist theories of ISAs the same beliefs in the existence of both an inference-trigger that points to the inadequacy of the

20. Bach and Harnish have consistently continued to work in the task of building arguments in favour of the inferential nature of human communication and related issues (e.g. loose talk, semantic underdetermination, etc.). Although for our purposes it will suffice to consider their classical theory (i.e. Bach and Harnish, 1979), the interested reader is directed to Bach (1987, 1994) and Harnish (1983, 1994).

literal force of an utterance and a set of rules or principles that guide the hearer's search for the adequate ultimate indirect force that is being conveyed by that utterance. However, Bach and Harnish's account of speech acts differs considerably from those described above in mainly two respects: (1) their view of speech acts as non-conventional phenomena, and (2) the scope of the inferential processes involved in the interpretation of the force or forces of an utterance. As regards the first of these points of divergence, Bach and Harnish's intention-and-inference approach contrasts sharply with Austin's (1962) view of illocutionary acts as conventional and Searle's development of this idea into his controversial notion of constitutive rules. Bach and Harnish believe instead that only two kinds of speech act involve convention rather than intention and inference (i.e. effectives and verdictives such as christening, acquitting, etc.).²¹ These speech acts are not, according to these authors, essentially communicative. Moreover, they depend on extra-linguistic institutions for their successful performance. Hence, their conventional nature. On the other hand, communicative speech acts, which would comprise the rest of the categories in Austin's (1962: 151) taxonomy (i.e. exercitives, commissives, behabitives, expositives) are not conventional except in the irrelevant way of being performed through conventional means, that is, linguistically.

On the contrary, Searle (1969) maintained that speech acts are on the whole conventional and that they can be accounted for in terms of sets of constitutive rules which determine the conventional use of certain illocutionary force indicating devices. This view of the nature of speech acts encountered an insurmountable problem in the shape of ISAs, for which Searle is forced to put forward a separate explanation in inferential terms. Bach and Harnish reject such a two-part account and, starting from the assumption of the non-conventional nature of speech acts, propose an approach which will deal with both direct and indirect speech acts in terms of inferential processes.

This directly leads us to the second point of divergence with traditional speech act theory. Unlike other authors, Bach and Harnish believe that even the interpretation of the direct force of an utterance depends ultimately on inference. In this way, as early as 1979, Bach and Harnish proposed a theory of speech acts which has served as the basis for more recent views such as those defended by Dobrovie-Sorin (1985), Dascal (1983), Recanati (1987, 1994), and Bertolet (1994), among others. This line of research, which I have labelled *extreme inferentialism*, holds that the only conventions involved in the performance of a given speech act are those that have to do with the knowledge of the language, that is, those which Morgan referred to as conventions of language. By positing that both direct and indirect speech acts are inferred by the hearer without the aid of any convention other than

21. Bach and Harnish's (1979) effective and verdictive speech acts correspond roughly to Searle's declaratives.

linguistic conventions proper, Bach and Harnish are able to give a unified account of these phenomena. However, for the same reason, they are bound to encounter a problem in explaining those linguistic expressions which are particularly suited for the performance of certain types of illocutionary act and which have thus gained the traditional label of *conventional ISAs*. Before this problem is dealt with in detail, let us first outline Bach and Harnish's proposal.

Bach and Harnish's (1979) speech act schema states that the hearer identifies the speaker's intention partly on the basis of what is said and partly through inference. This inference is carried out on the basis of the following presumptions:

-*Linguistic Presumption*: All members of the linguistic community share the same language.

-*Communicative Presumption*: There is a mutual belief that whenever S says something to H, he is doing so with some recognizable illocutionary intent.

-*Mutual Contextual Beliefs Presumption*: Both S and H share some mutual contextual beliefs.

-*Presumption of Literalness*: It is mutually believed that whenever S utters a sentence to H, if S could (under the circumstances) be speaking literally, then he is speaking literally.

-*Conversational Presumption*: There is a shared conception of the nature, stage, and direction of the talk exchange.

Having these presumptions in mind, the inference schema of a literal direct speech act such as the statement *The grass is overgrown* would be the following:

- 1) H infers that S is uttering e on the basis of hearing S utter e.
- 2) H infers that S means ... by e on the basis of 1), the linguistic presumption, and some mutual contextual beliefs.
- 3) H infers that S is saying that on the basis of 2), the linguistic presumption, and some mutual contextual beliefs.
- 4) H infers that S, if speaking literally, is stating that P on the basis of 3), the conversational presumption, and some mutual contextual beliefs.

By inferring from the locutionary act performed in 3) the communicative presumption that the speaker is saying the sentence with some intent and some mutual contextual beliefs, the hearer is capable of interpreting *The grass is overgrown* as a statement.

As regards ISAs, the previous schema needs only to be extended in the following way:

5) H infers that S could not merely be stating that P on the basis of 4) and some mutual contextual beliefs (these function as the inference trigger).

6) H infers that there is some illocutionary act that P' connected in a way identifiable under the circumstances to the statement that P, such that by stating that P, S could also be performing the illocutionary act of P', on the basis of 5) and some conversational presumptions.

7) H infers that S is stating that P and thereby also performing the ISA of P', on the basis of 6) and some mutual contextual beliefs.

These last three steps would explain that the utterance of the statement *The grass is overgrown* can be understood as an indirect request for the hearer to mow the grass. In this fashion, Bach and Harnish are capable of accounting for both direct and indirect speech acts in a unified way without needing to postulate a set of constitutive rules or any similar construct which besides could only account for a subset of the whole family of speech acts (direct speech acts), and not even so, since non-literal direct speech acts (*Her eyes opened very wide vs. Her eyes opened like saucers*) would fall outside the explanatory power of Searle's account.

Nevertheless, Bach and Harnish's (1979) theory is still somewhat incomplete as some relevant aspects of language are not captured by their unified account in terms of inference. First of all, they fail to explain why most languages have developed three major sentence types (i.e. declarative, imperative, and interrogative) if there is really no systematic relation between those and the three basic illocutions (i.e. statements, commands, and questions). Second, they would have to account for the fact that some ISAs are actually standardly used in the performance of certain acts, and intuitively, without any or very little inferential effort underlying such use. As regards the first of these issues, Bach and Harnish (1979: 173) straightforwardly deny that there is any systematic relationship between the three major sentence types and the three basic illocutions since, not even in case of explicit performatives do these authors acknowledge a conventional reading, thus fully rejecting the literal force hypothesis on the nature of language (Bach and Harnish, 1979: 132). Regarding the problem of the conventional use of certain ISAs, Bach and Harnish offer an explanation along the lines of Morgan's short-circuited implicatures, which they summarize as follows:

In the standardisation thesis, the requestive use of certain interrogative forms short-circuits the speech act schema, the hearer identifying the speaker's requestive illocutionary intent without having to identify the literal intent of questioning. He does this by relying on the precedent for the form's being used requestively. (1979: 198)

Unlike Searle (1975) and Morgan, who posited that such short-circuiting of the inferential interpretation of an ISAs resulted from the fact that certain expressions had become conventional means of performing those acts, Bach

and Harnish believe that what is conventional is not the ISA itself, but certain mutual beliefs which bring about the short-circuiting.

It is possible to formulate a concept of illocutionary standardisation that does not require illocutionary conventions, even though it does involve mutual beliefs that short-circuit the speech act schema. (1979: 192)

Such mutual beliefs state that “generally when a member of C utters T in a context in which it would violate the conversational presumption to utter T with (merely) its literally determined force his illocutionary intent is to F” (1979: 195). Apparently, by shifting the conventions involved from the result to the means, Bach and Harnish are able to reject the conventionality thesis on ISAs while accounting for the fact that certain forms of sentences are standardly used for performing certain acts. However, they would still have to explain how the hearer knows that the speaker’s illocutionary intent is to F and not to K, for instance. In other words, there must exist some principles which regulate these processes. Mutual knowledge and inferential abilities are just not enough, because they may lead to many different interpretations by different hearers (see chapter three for my own view on these issues).

Leech’s Politeness-Motivated ISAs

Within the group of extreme inferentialist theories of ISAs, Leech’s (1983) stands out as an original approach due to its consideration of politeness aspects in the interpretation and understanding of these phenomena. Nevertheless, Leech is not the first author to take into account the aforementioned considerations in the study of speech acts: Brown and Levinson (1987) had already done so. Let us briefly compare both approaches before concentrating on Leech’s, which will be preferred for the reasons stated below. Brown and Levinson’s (1987) account of ISAs is similar to Leech’s in two respects. Firstly, it accounts for ISAs in terms of inference. Secondly, like Leech, Brown and Levinson believe that the motivation for ISAs lies in politeness requirements. The main difference between Leech’s and Brown and Levinson’s theories has to do with the way in which each of them determines the degree of politeness of a given speech act. While Leech makes use of the *cost-benefit* scale, Brown and Levinson use the concept of *face*. According to the latter, *face* consists of two related aspects: (1) *Negative face*: the want of every person that his actions be unimpeded by others, and (2) *Positive face*: the want of every person that his wants be desirable to at least some others. Moreover, given that face consists of a set of wants satisfiable only by the actions of others, it is in general to the mutual interest of the speakers to maintain each other’s face. Unfortunately, on some occasions we are forced to perform acts which threaten the addressee’s face (i.e. face threatening acts; henceforth FTAs). On these occasions, the speaker has to determine to what

extent he wishes to minimize the FTA, and afterwards he also has to choose the linguistic strategy which may help him to minimize the threat of the act.

While Leech's scale of cost-benefit made it possible to distinguish different degrees of politeness, Brown and Levinson's concept of *face* only permits a binary classification of speech acts into two categories; one of them includes those speech acts which threaten the face of the addressee (i.e. FTA) and the other consists of those speech acts which do not threaten the face of the addressee.

Moreover, it is also worthwhile considering Brown and Levinson's model of *politeness* in relation to Haverkate's (1994) distinction between the *transactional* and *interactional* dimensions of people's actions. Given that within their account the term *face* is metaphorically used to refer to the public image of people within the society to which they belong, Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness seems to be geared to the interactional dimension of this phenomenon. The transactional side of most of the interactions in which people get involved daily is thus obscured. Politeness is mainly viewed as a way of smoothing social interaction and avoiding conflict between people. The fact that politeness can also be used as a means of achieving objectives -such as when we praise someone to have him on our side-, if not completely ignored, is relegated to a secondary position.

Going back to Leech's account of illocutionary acts, the following quotation reflects his view on the matter of conventionalization versus inference in speech acts:

There are important issues which cannot be pursued here, particularly the question of how far the relation of questions and mands to the illocutions they typically perform (viz. askings and impositives) is conventional, rather than determined by Interpersonal Rhetoric. Kempson (1975: 147) opts for a conventional mapping of one on to the other set of categories, whereas I prefer to go the whole pragmatic hog, and attempt an explanation entirely in terms of Interpersonal Rhetoric. (Leech, 1983: 117)

Like Bach and Harnish, Leech maintains that even the interpretation of direct speech acts and explicit performatives is subject to inferential patterns as a result of considering the illocutionary verb as part of the propositional content of the utterance. According to Leech (1983: 153), the illocutionary force of an utterance is defined by a set of conversational implicatures. Such implicatures are inferred from (i) the sense of the utterance, (ii) the assumption that the speaker is observing the principles and maxims of the Interpersonal Rhetoric, and (iii) contextual knowledge.

The originality of Leech's theory lies in the second point above, that is, in his description of the principles and maxims of the Interpersonal Rhetoric involved in the understanding of ISAs. Following Grice (1975), Leech believes that the gap between sense and force can be bridged by means of principles

of interactive behaviour, of which the Cooperative Principle (Grice 1975) is just one instance. Leech refers to at least two other principles of Interpersonal Rhetoric in detail: the Politeness Principle and the Irony Principle. Due to the important role that the first of these principles plays in the interpretation of ISAs, I shall devote some time to its description:

The Politeness Principle is formulated in the following fashion (Leech, 1983: 81):

- Minimize the expression of impolite beliefs.
- Maximize the expression of polite beliefs.

It consists of a number of maxims: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. Of them, I have only focused on the first two, which, according to Leech (1983: 132-133), are the ones which are relevant to the functioning of directive and commissive acts.

Tact Maxim:

- Minimize cost to other.
- Maximize benefit to other.

Generosity Maxim:

- Minimize benefit to self.
- Maximize cost to self.

These maxims are observed “up to a certain point.” They are not rigid rules. Moreover, as can be observed, they are based on what Leech refers to as the “pragmatic scale of cost-benefit.” This scale helps to determine the degree of politeness of a given speech act. For example, consider the following scale proposed by Leech (1983: 107):

Peel these potatoes	Cost to hearer	Less Polite
Hand the newspaper	-	-
Sit down	-	-
Look at that	-	-
Enjoy your holidays	-	-
Have another sandwich	Benefit to hearer	More Polite

The scale of cost-benefit is also useful in distinguishing speech act types. For instance, a suggestion involves a benefit to the hearer and no cost to the

speaker, whereas a request involves a cost to the hearer and a benefit to the speaker. Together with the cost-benefit scale and the degree of tact, the politeness of a given speech act depends on four further scales which Leech describes in the following way (Leech, 1983: 123-127):

-*Optionality Scale*, on which illocutions are ordered according to the amount of freedom which the speaker gives the hearer to decide upon his following course of action; cf. *Open the door* vs. *Will you open the door?*

-*Indirectness Scale*, on which, from the speaker's point of view, illocutions are ordered with respect to the length of the path connecting the illocutionary act to its illocutionary goal; e.g. *Would you open the door?* vs. *Will you open the door?*

-*Authority Scale*, which refers to the relative power of the speaker and the hearer; e.g. Orders generally involve a speaker who has more power than the hearer.

-*Social Distance Scale*, which refers to the degree of familiarity that exists between a speaker and a hearer. For example, the same utterance, *Pass me the book*, can be interpreted as either an order or a request depending on the relative social distance that exists between the speaker and the hearer.

Some of these scales are not only useful in distinguishing degrees of politeness, but, as shall be shown in chapter three, they are also central to the description of directive and commissive speech act categories.

Sperber and Wilson's Higher Order Explicatures

Within the group of theories which hold some relation to the Chomskyan framework, one of the latest proposals is the one presented in Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1987) and Wilson and Sperber (1991, 1993). Their theory accepts, in principle, two of Chomsky's central assumptions on the nature of language and cognition like the autonomy of syntax and the modularity of mind. They depart from the Chomskyan framework, however, in rejecting the idea of the existence of a pragmatic module. Accepting Fodor's (1983) distinction between central cognitive systems and purpose-specific modules, Sperber and Wilson (1987: 5) suggest that most of what constitutes the subject matter of pragmatics, including speech act theory, pertains to "the study of the general cognitive principles and abilities involved in utterance interpretation..."²² This view on the

22. In this respect Sperber and Wilson differ from other offspring of Chomskyan linguistics. Within this divergent line of research, Asa Kasher's (1994: 312) modular pragmatics research programme attempts to "apply to the field of pragmatics the general modular approach to the study of language and cognition, which in turn is a part of the general cognitive approach to the study of the human mind." Kasher (1991a, 1991b, 1994) accepts the existence of

nature of pragmatics leads Sperber and Wilson to reject traditional speech act theories and their assumption that every utterance is assigned to a particular speech-act type and that this is part of what is being communicated, hence playing an important role in the understanding of such an utterance. Their argument goes as follows.

They distinguish three kinds of speech act according to whether or not they are institutional and/or communicated. First, there are those speech acts which do need to be communicated as such in order to be performed. These are institutional speech acts like bidding or promising. Second, there is a vast group of speech acts which, according to Sperber and Wilson, need not be communicated. On the contrary, they are “successfully performed without being identified as such either by the speaker or by the hearer” (1986: 245). Among this category we find acts of predicting, warning, advising, etc. Finally, they recognize a small group of speech acts (i.e. saying, telling, and asking) which are universal and which do need to be communicated. Moreover, there exists a systematic correlation between them and the three basic sentence-types (i.e. declarative, imperative, and interrogative). Saying, telling, and asking are, according to Sperber and Wilson, *higher-level explicatures*, and they are defined in very broad terms. Telling, for instance, indicates that some thought describes a potential and desirable state of affairs. The recognition of such higher-level explicatures (i.e. assumptions which are explicitly communicated) is essential to communication. In order to understand a sentence like *Leave the room*, for instance, one needs to decide that it is an instance of telling to, that is to say, one needs to understand it as describing a desirable and potential state of affairs. Further speech act distinctions (e.g. orders, requests, etc.) are understood depending on whether the state of affairs is desirable from the speaker’s or the hearer’s point of view. If it is desirable from the hearer’s point of view, it will be understood as a permission or a piece of advice. If it is desirable from the speaker’s point of view, it will be interpreted as an order or a request. This and other contextual assumptions regarding the social relationship between speaker and hearer, the degree of desirability of the speech act, etc., which are brought to bear on the interpretation process, help to further distinguish the different directive types. It should be stressed, however, that according to Sperber and Wilson (1986), in none of these cases is it necessary for the hearer to produce a speech-act description of the speaker’s intentions. That is to say, he need not recognize

a purpose-specific pragmatic module, parallel to the autonomous module of syntax postulated by Chomsky, which represents the system of human knowledge on how to perform speech acts in appropriate contexts. This module is concerned with all speech acts other than the basic ones of assertion, question, and command (i.e. those which are identifiable by syntactic or intonational features of the relevant sentences). For a comparison of Kasher’s and Sperber and Wilson’s approaches to illocution, see Sinclair (1995).

that a request, an order, or whatever speech act is being intended by the speaker. Sperber and Wilson's claims are based and defended by means of an analogy with the game of tennis to the effect that tennis players need not classify strokes as *volleys*, *lobs*, etc., in order to play tennis properly. Nevertheless, as observed by Bird (1994: 295), such an argument is weak and misleading. As a matter of fact, Sperber and Wilson offer no definite justification for their statement that some speech acts (i.e. telling, saying, and asking) are part of a linguistic theory (i.e. they need to be communicated) while others (e.g. requests, warnings, etc.) are not. The only evidence presented in support of their claim is of a typological nature (i.e. all languages contain the three types of sentence which correspond to the three basic types of speech act). Even accepting the typological argument upon which Sperber and Wilson's proposal is founded, this would only establish that telling, asking, and saying are the basic universal categories of speech acts, from which it does not necessarily follow that a linguistic theory of speech acts has to be restricted to just these types. Mood or sentence type, though important, is just one aspect of language.

Sperber and Wilson's claim that the hearer does not need to carry out an illocutionary categorization in order to understand the speaker's communicative intention runs against two further arguments. The first of which arises from misunderstanding phenomena like the one observed in the following attested conversation:

A: I am not too fond of reggae music.

B turns the radio off.

A: Why do you turn it off?

B: Oh, I thought you were *asking* me to do it.

A: Oh no, it was just a spoken reflection. I thought you'll like to get to know the musical tastes of the person you are going to live with for the next year and a half.

B's reply reveals the fact that he had actually performed a categorization of A's first utterance as an act of asking or requesting. A's final remark indicates that the correct categorization would have been that of an act of telling or informing. The fact that we are continually categorising utterances as specific speech act types is also supported by conversations like the following which was overheard by the author of this book in a theatre:

A: There are still several empty seats in the first rows.

B: Are you *suggesting* that we move over there?

A: No, I was just *telling* you. Don't you think it is weird they are empty? They are the best. Maybe they have been reserved for someone famous. Wouldn't it be exciting to see one of the leading actors in the flesh?

Once more, the addressee seems to have problems interpreting the speaker's intention, and these problems involve the fact that he is not sure about what the correct categorization of the speaker's utterance should be.

The second type of evidence supporting the need of speech act categorization comes from language acquisition phenomena. It is not uncommon to find adults telling children the kind of speech act that is required in a given situation. Let us consider the following possible instance of conversation between a father and his child:

Father: Now, go up to that lady over there, the one you have just pushed, and *apologize* to her, say: "I'm sorry, madam."

Child: I don't want to.

The father is not only telling the child what he should say to the lady in order to repair his naughty action, but he is categorizing the speech act by means of the performative in italics. In other words, he is teaching his child that the utterance of certain words (i.e. *I'm sorry*) counts as a certain social act which is known as apologizing. The relevance of the categorization of speech acts in the adult's attempt to teach his child a correct pattern of behaviour is evident.

Finally, it may also be pointed out that Sperber and Wilson's attempt to account for speech acts in terms of a unique principle of relevance leaves out of their explanation certain aspects of illocutionary force, such as politeness-related issues, which are central, as has already been pointed out, to its correct understanding.

Turning to the positive contributions of the relevance-theoretic approach to the study of illocutions, one of the unquestionable advantages of Sperber and Wilson's theory is that, unlike traditional speech act theories, it is capable of accounting for literal and non-literal instances (metaphorical, ironic, indirect, etc.) of speech acts by means of a single principle of relevance. In other words, it is stated that ISAs are interpreted in the same way as strictly literal speech acts (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 104). The alleged advantages of a unified account of both literal and non-literal or indirect speech acts have also been questioned in relation to the fact that the Principle of Relevance, on which the former account hinges, is too general and subsumes too many psychological factors (e.g. rationality, expertise, alertness, etc.). In Bird's (1994: 309) words, it stands the danger of "collapsing into emptiness" due to its genericity. Moreover, as pointed out by Ruiz de Mendoza (1999: 109), the extreme emphasis placed by relevance-theoretic linguists on the inferential

side of communication overlooks the reality of grammaticalization processes which operate on the language and which originate ready-made constructions, with different degrees of codification, for the expression of illocutionary acts.

To end this discussion on Sperber and Wilson's account of illocutions I would like to adhere to Bird's final conclusions:

A theory like Searle's provides a formal structure for characterising speech acts, but it offers no further explanation of the psychological processes which determine the application of that structure. It is that gap which Relevance theory seems designed to fill. (1994: 302)

There is room for a psychological supplement to speech act theory, but it is doubtful that Relevance Theory provides it. (1994: 310)

Chapter three below explores the possibility of carrying out an alternative psychologically plausible analysis of ISAs within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics.

The Discourse and Conversational Approaches to ISAs²³

Both conversational analysis and discourse analysis are concerned with language use as it emerges in naturally occurring conversations. Probably due to this fact, the terms *discourse* and *conversation* are often used as synonyms. However, these two traditions represent two different approaches to the study of language usage in linguistic research and, what is of main interest to us here, to the analysis of speech acts. Discourse analysis applies traditional methods and theoretical principles of formal linguistics (e.g. rules) to suprasentential units.²⁴ They take speech act categories as discourse units and define a coherent discourse as that which consists of well-formed ruled-based sequences of these basic units. On the contrary, conversational analysis emerges as an approach to linguistic interaction which avoids the restricted formalism that constricts the discourse analysis tradition.²⁵ Conversational

23. Although they fall beyond the scope of our present concerns, speech act theory has also claimed some contributions to the analysis of text and conversation. See the papers in Searle et al. (1992), Van Rees (1992), and chapter three in Schiffrin (1994). Nevertheless, conversational analysis has pointed to the incapacity of traditional speech act theory to account for conversation and discourse organization due to its focusing on the sentence level. Works representative of this line of criticism of speech act theory include Levinson (1979, 1981, 1983), Schegloff (1980, 1984, and especially 1988) and more recently Schiffrin (1994: chapter three).

24. A now classical work on discourse analysis is Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). For a more up-to-date view on this and other approaches to discourse, see Schiffrin (1994). Finally, for a comprehensive review which relates speech act theory to discourse analysis, we refer the reader to Butler (1982).

25. Classical works on conversational analysis include Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1978), Schegloff (1979), and more recently Thompson and Ochs (1996).

analysis is an empirical approach, rooted in ethnomethodology, which has shown how speakers can, to a greater or lesser degree, pre-determine their interlocutors' contribution in certain ways which have been described as *pre-sequencing* and *adjacency pairs*. While in discourse analysis the course of action is globally managed by means of the constituting rules of a well-formed discourse, in conversational analysis linguistic interactions are locally managed by the participants by means of adjacency pairs, *turn-taking strategies*, etc. In contrast to a globally managed system, turn-taking conventions organize only the transition from one speaker to the next. There is no pre-determined order in which the turns should be issued.

Both discourse analysis and conversational analysis, with their interest in full texts and conversations, help to overcome the limitations of single-utterance-based pragmatic and speech act theory analyses of illocution. In the remainder of this section, however, I focus exclusively on conversational analysis approaches to speech acts given that their absence of premature formalization and, especially, their impressive and rigorous empirical observation of interactional facts represent further assets to those displayed by discourse analysis.

A timid attempt to approach the study of ISAs from a conversational point of view is found in Levinson (1983: 361), who argues that sentences like *Do you have Marlboros?* come to be recognized as requests by a process that drops out the second and third turns of four-turn request sequences like the following:

A: Do you have Marlboros? (T1)

B: Yeah, hard or soft? (T2)

A: Soft, please.(T3)

B: Okay. (T4)

Levinson's proposals are based on a previous study of pre-request sequences by Schegloff (1979) which explains the motivation of such pre-requests as attempts to prevent socially undesirable rejections and to avoid the performance of this kind of socially conflictive acts altogether. The production of a pre-request makes it possible for the addressee to provide an offer of action in turn. In other words, these pre-request sequences are designed to trigger the addressee's compliance without the explicit performance of a request. Unfortunately, this kind of elision theory is in fact only able to explain a very small subset of indirect request forms. It cannot, for instance, handle the classical example of *Can you pass the salt?*, because it is not able to show that in such a case there is a canonical pattern of four-turn request sequences in which utterances of the *Can you VP?* form function as first turns. Moreover,

as is argued by Panther and Thornburg (1998: 768), the illocutionary point of the so-called pre-request sequences is usually understood straightaway thanks to contextual clues without the need of a second turn. In the above example, B's question (*bard or soft?*) is based on a previous interpretation of A's utterance as a request. To this, Mey (1993: 299) adds that some utterances which appear as pre-sequences are actually intended by the speaker as requests. Hence the astonishment of the tourist in the following example when his question is not straightforwardly interpreted as a request by the addressee:

Tourist: Is there a toilet around here?

Attendant: You want to use?

Tourist (somewhat astonished): Sure I do.

Attendant: Go down the steps.

The attendant's question is aimed at disambiguating the tourist's utterance as a pre-sequence either to a question about toilets, or to a request to be directed or taken to the toilet. However, as Mey (1993: 299) aptly notes, the tourist's astonishment reveals that he expected his initial interrogative sentence to have been interpreted straightaway as a clear instance of request in the context under consideration.

Let us now turn to a more general flaw of conversational analysis approaches to the realm of illocution. Conversational accounts of speech acts have a limited predictive power in the sense that they cannot explain why one conversational turn filler should be preferred above another. By way of illustration, conversational analysis cannot explain why a subordinate, faced with a certain claim which is opposed to his views, will back down rather than violate the norms (of politeness) of an institution. When the same claim is addressed to someone who does not perceive himself as a subordinate, it may well be *thrown back* at the speaker. This lack of predictive and explanatory power stems from the fact that little attention is paid within conversational analysis to the context of utterance and, more specifically, to relevant sociological variables such as power, social distance, and formality, among others. On the contrary, the emphasis is mainly on the data and their recurrent structural patterns. Even though it is assumed that utterances always have contextual relevance to one another, not all contextual aspects are taken into consideration. The transcripts of talk used as empirical data for conversational analyses of speech acts hardly reflect on social relations and social context in general. As Schiffrin (1994: 236) aptly remarks, "in conversational analysis the relevance of context is grounded in text." As a result, they cannot explain some discourse phenomena like the fact that some turn fillers are preferred upon others in certain contexts, that some requests are more indirect than others,

that some are mitigated, or that an order may be used instead of a request when certain social relations between participants hold.

However, in spite of its shortcomings, conversational analysis has made two major contributions to the improvement of the study of illocution. In the first place, its emphasis on the analysis of large corpora of empirical data represents a strong antidote to the speaker's-intuitions-approach which has almost invariably characterized traditional speech act accounts. In the second place and in contrast to orthodox speech act theory, its commitment to the explanation of ISAs in relation to chunks of language larger than the isolated sentence paves the way to a more realistic and global study of illocutions. In this sense, it has left the door open to more refined accounts of ISAs from a conversational point of view such as the one recently proposed by Geis (1995).

In his (1995) *Dynamic Speech Act Theory*, this author starts off from the assumption that a theory of speech acts needs to be embedded within a general theory of conversational competence: only by studying speech acts in naturally occurring conversations can we offer a comprehensive account of these phenomena in terms of both their transactional and their interactional features. His theory can be seen as a synthesis of traditional speech act theory, conversation analysis, and artificial intelligence research into natural language processing. It accounts for conventionalized speech acts as the result of a mapping of semantic, pragmatic, and politeness features. Furthermore, he puts forward the idea that we store specific interaction structures such as the action-requests (i.e. ride-request), or others like thing-requests, invitations, etc., which explain why short-circuiting processes are possible. I largely agree with Geis's observation of the advantages which may be derived from stored knowledge for the carrying out of quick economical communication. However, the storage of specific interaction structures (e.g. ride-requests) which he puts forward is still uneconomical if compared with more recent proposals like the one in Thornburg and Panther (1997), and Panther and Thornburg (1998). According to these authors, the felicity conditions of speech acts are best described as action scenarios which are of a more generic nature and, therefore, preferable to Geis's specific interaction structures. Nevertheless, as shall be argued in chapter three, Lakoff's (1987) *propositional ICMs* are even more appropriate tools than scenarios or other types of knowledge organising constructs (e.g. frames, scripts, etc.) for the description of illocutionary categories. As will be evidenced in chapter three, my own account of ISAs agrees to a large extent with Geis's fundamental claims, such as the need of a cognitive treatment of speech acts, the inclusion of their interactional aspects, and the need of a device (*pragmatic stratum*) which combines the different resources provided by language (semantic, syntactic) in order to develop a number of strategies which can account for ISAs in general and conventional ISAs in particular. Nevertheless, there is one fundamental difference with Geis's approach. This author believes that it is the storage of specific interaction structures that explains the short-circuiting processes in which conventional speech acts

originate. On the contrary, I shall attempt to prove that what makes a quick understanding of ISAs possible is the interaction between the illocutionary knowledge stored in the form of propositional ICMs and those realization procedures (i.e. linguistic cues) which either point to or make explicit the meaning conditions included in the aforementioned ICMs.²⁶

26. See chapter three for the definition of the concepts of ICM and realization procedure.

3. A COGNITIVE APPROACH TO ISAs

The flaws of traditional theories of speech acts revealed in chapter two point to the need of an integrated framework for the analysis of this multi-sided object of enquiry. In spite of their many positive advantages, none of the approaches (i.e. pragmatic, formal, conversational, or functional) reviewed there could, on its own, provide a fully-fledged account of the functioning of illocutionary acts.

Pragmatic, formal and functional views fail in lacking consideration of the fact, pointed out by conversational proposals, that speech acts often take chunks of language larger than the isolated sentence for their performance. Formal positions largely ignore the motivation and constraints placed by function on the linguistic realization of illocutions. Functional stances were shown to be somehow programmatic, in general, and suffering from an important bias either towards the overgrammaticalization of speech act phenomena (e.g. systemic-functionalism) or towards the opposite position of assigning most illocutionary phenomena to the realm of pragmatics (e.g. Dik's FG). Finally, pragmatic accounts debate over the acceptance (i.e. moderate inferentialism) or the rejection (i.e. extreme inferentialism) of the hypothesis of literalness, yielding two contradictory and incomplete views on the phenomenon of illocution as either a conventional or a purely inferential matter. Most of the illocutionary theories reviewed in the previous chapter also lack consideration of social issues which affect the workings of illocutionary activity (e.g. social variables like power, or distance; politeness matters; etc.). And nearly all of them, with the exception of Givón's and Geis's proposals, fail to take into consideration recent psycholinguistic findings on the nature and functioning of the human mind.

Several of the benefits that can be drawn from the integration of proposals belonging to different theoretical frameworks for the task of carrying out a comprehensive analysis of illocutions have already been advanced in chapter two: the need to break free from the limitations imposed by single-sentence

speech acts, the necessity of taking into account social variables and politeness matters, the need to motivate, both semantically and functionally, our syntactic analyses of illocutions, etc. In this chapter I would like to focus on one of the most generalized lacks of previous speech act accounts: their absence of compliance with cognitive theories on human cognition. In the following sections, traditional speech act theories will be reviewed under the light of Cognitive Linguistics.

As defined in the works of Lakoff (1987), Johnson (1987), and Lakoff and Johnson (1999), Cognitive Linguistics appears as a reaction against a whole philosophical paradigm (i.e. objectivism) based on the assumptions that (1) reality is structured independently of human understanding, and (2) our conceptualization of the world rests upon a theory of categorization according to which all entities that share a given property or sets of necessary and sufficient properties belong to the same category (i.e. classical theory of categorization). In contrast to objectivism, the cognitive approach has *embodiment* as a central concept. It is argued that both our knowledge of reality and our language are primarily construed upon our preconceptual bodily experiences. These are structured in terms of *basic-level categories* and kinesthetic *image-schemas*, both of which are directly meaningful to us due to their repeated presence in our physical interaction with the surrounding environment. Furthermore, within Cognitive Linguistics it is claimed that those abstract concepts which are not directly grounded in our physical experience are understood via a *metaphorical projection* from the domain of the physical to abstract domains. Finally, unlike objectivism, which is founded upon the classical theory of categorization, cognitivism is characterized by its adherence to *Prototype Theory*, which, as postulated by Rosch (1978), maintains that members of a given category, far from having equal status, show different degrees of membership: some category members have a special cognitive salience that makes them stand out as better examples of their category than others. Such asymmetries are known as *prototype effects* and the best example of a given category as its *prototype*. As a consequence of the existence of prototype effects, it is not always possible to draw a clear dividing line between categories. In contrast to the classical views of categorization, categories in prototype theory have fuzzy boundaries and it is not easy to see where one ends and the next begins. Rosch herself (1978: 40-41) was careful to stress the fact that prototype effects in themselves do not constitute a theory of mental representation. On the contrary, prototypicality should be understood as a mere by-product of the actual structures that are involved in the organization of our knowledge about the world. A classical attempt to outline such a theory of mental representation is the one put forward by Lakoff (1987: chapters four to six), who identifies four possible sources of prototype effects according to the *propositional*, *image-schematic*, *metonymic*, and *metaphoric* structuring principles involved. Lakoff's (1987: 68) main thesis is that we organize our knowledge by means of these structuring principles

which he refers to as *idealized cognitive models* (or *ICMs*). Given their central role in this analysis of ISAs, I shall deal with propositional ICMs in detail in section 3.4.2.

In sum, this chapter is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problems that the lack of consideration of these cognitive issues (i.e. prototypicality, cognitive continuums, knowledge organization structures, etc.) has caused in previous proposals on illocutions. I address specific matters such as the problem of speech act taxonomies and the related issue of the non-discrete prototypical nature of speech act categories (section 3.1), the codification-inference controversy on the performance of speech acts (section 3.2), and the problem of literalness and of the existence of ISAs (section 3.3). This revision leads to the consideration of a different cognitively adequate approach to speech acts in terms of illocutionary constructions and propositional ICMs (see section 3.4).

3.1. A Cognitive Revision of Traditional Taxonomies of Speech Acts and of the Nature of Illocutionary Categories

In this section, two classical taxonomies of speech acts (Austin's, 1962, and Searle's, 1979) are analysed under the light of cognitivism. I attempt to pinpoint their weaknesses and to suggest some possible solutions. In order to do so, I shall take advantage of some proposals by three authors working within the cognitive framework (i.e. Verschueren, 1985; Risselada, 1993; and Vanparys, 1996).

Austin's and Searle's Taxonomies of Speech Acts

In the last chapter of *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin (1962: 148-164) provided a general preliminary classification of illocutions on the assumption that a list of performative verbs would amount to a list of speech acts. He distinguished five speech act categories (i.e. verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabities, and expositives). Austin advanced these five categories of speech acts very tentatively: "I am not putting any of this forward as in the very least definitive" (1962: 152). His own disciple, Searle (1979), carried out a revision of Austin's taxonomy and pointed out what, according to him, were its main inadequacies. To begin with, Searle criticises Austin's taxonomy for being a classification of English illocutionary verbs, not of illocutionary acts. According to Searle, there is no reason to assume that a classification of illocutionary verbs stands for a classification of illocutionary acts. On the contrary, he refers to the universal nature of speech acts versus the language-specific nature of illocutionary verbs as an argument against attempts to equate the two domains.²⁷ Moreover, Austin's taxonomy lacks

27. As will be argued below, there are reasons to believe that Searle's view on this issue is not fully justified.

classification criteria. In Searle's (1979: 10) words: "There is no clear or consistent principle or set of principles on the basis of which the taxonomy is constructed." Two direct consequences of the lack of clear classification criteria are the overlapping of categories and the wide heterogeneity within each of them.

Searle's (1979) alternative taxonomy is based on a large number of explicit criteria of which he highlights three as the most relevant: (i) the illocutionary point of the speech act, (ii) the direction of fit between the words and the world, and (iii) the psychological state expressed by the illocution. The resulting classification of speech acts consists of five categories (i.e. assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations). Searle's classification of speech acts has been so influential that, as pointed out by Vanparys (1996: 39), most other proposals of semantic classifications of speech acts can be seen as "variations on a single theme."²⁸

However, there has also been an alternative line of research, carried out by linguists working within a cognitive paradigm, which has been more critical of Searle's taxonomy. Work within this paradigm has focused on pinpointing the inadequacies of mainstream taxonomies and on presenting alternative criteria of classification which are more in accordance with what is now known about the human ability to categorize. In the following I shall closely follow the contributions of three authors, Verschueren (1985), Risselada (1993), and Vanparys (1996), whose work is fully representative of this new approach to the categorization of speech acts.

Problems with Traditional Classifications of Speech Acts

It has been amply shown (Verschueren, 1985; Vanparys, 1996; Pérez, 1997a, 1997b, 1998a, 1998b) that traditional taxonomies of speech acts are embedded in an objectivist philosophical paradigm (as described in Johnson, 1987, and Lakoff, 1987), which is the origin of some of their inadequacies. Searle's taxonomy of speech acts, for instance, conforms to the objectivist theory of categorization in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. Studies carried out by linguists and cognitive scientists like Rosch (1978) have since proved that such a theory of categorization does not account for empirical facts like the existence of prototype effects or the fuzzy nature of category

28. Most of them merely replicate the outline of Searle's proposal (Green, 1977), add one or more extra classes to the basic five (Fraser, 1974; Leech, 1983), or refine the classification with subcategories (Bach and Harnish, 1979; Allan, 1986). For an exhaustive discussion of alternatives to Searle's taxonomy, see Vanparys (1996: 39-82). In an attempt to break free from the Searleian influence, some recent contributions put forward classifications of speech acts drawn from a typologically and cognitively adequate perspective, see Sadock (1994) and Croft (1994).

boundaries. Searle (1969: 55), though acknowledging that “one of the most important insights of recent work in the philosophy of language is that most non-technical concepts in ordinary language lack absolutely strict rules,” only pays lip service to the possibility of carrying out an empirical categorization of speech acts, which could account for borderline cases as well as for central instances, and restricts his analysis to the latter. Such a methodological decision enables him to formulate neat sets of all-or-nothing conditions of satisfaction for membership in a given speech act category. But this only allows him to account for a very small subset of speech acts (i.e. literal direct speech acts). Since the vast majority of our illocutions are non-literal or indirect, Searle is then forced to complement his initial theory with a further inference pattern for the interpretation of the latter. The objectivist nature of Searle’s theory is also to blame for its lack of coverage of those cases of intermediate mixed instances of speech acts which we often encounter in our everyday life interactions and which cannot be assigned to a certain illocutionary category without hesitation. For the same reason, some speech act types which have been presented as discrete categories within Searle’s taxonomy (e.g. invitations, threats) are seen as mixed categories if observed from a cognitive perspective. Invitations and threats, for instance, are at the same time directive and commissive. These inconveniences would not have arisen had he not followed the classical model of categorization. An alternative model of categorization and the one in which the present analysis will be embedded is found in prototype theory. As pointed out by Vanparys (1996: 87), within this new theory of conceptualization, the inconsistencies found in Searle’s taxonomy are predictable rather than problematic:

Illocutions cannot be pigeonholed into homogeneous neatly bounded, mutually exclusive classes. Any valid classification necessarily consists of overlapping categories with varying degrees of membership and fuzzy boundaries. (1996: 87)

Moreover, as pointed out above, prototype effects do not represent conceptual structure in themselves but are rather mere by-products of the organizing principles of the mind. Speech act categories, like any other type of concept, are bound to make use of the four structuring principles suggested by Lakoff outlined in the introduction to this chapter, one of which (i.e. propositional ICMs) will be dealt with in detail in chapters four to thirteen in relation to the directive and commissive speech acts which will be the object of our enquiry. Again, this type of consideration about the existence of prototype effects within illocutionary categories and about their origins in the corresponding ICMs are absent in traditional theories of speech acts like Searle’s.

From a cognitive viewpoint, there is one more aspect of Searle’s classification of speech acts which is debatable, namely, his rejection of a taxonomy of speech acts based on lexical verb distinctions. It is a basic claim of cognitive linguistics (Lakoff, 1987; Johnson, 1987) that although conceptualization does not lend itself to direct observation, it can be studied

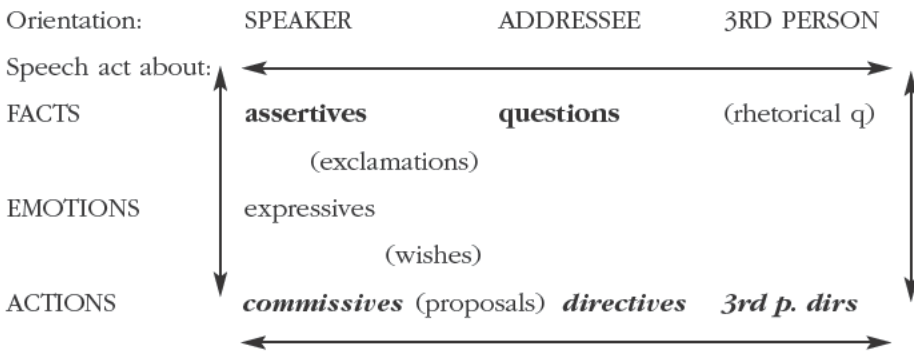
indirectly, via language. From a cognitive perspective, concepts are embodied, that is to say, they are no longer mere correspondences between words and the world, but they depend on human perception and categorization. In this connection, we tend to lexicalize in our language those concepts that are deemed important in our community or which have a higher degree of cognitive salience. It goes without saying that classifications built on the lexical verb distinctions of a given language do not attain typological adequacy. This does not mean, however, that a lexical approach to speech act classification is unable to provide us with a universal taxonomy. As pointed out by Verschueren (1985: 22), it only needs to be complemented with a comparative perspective. The enterprise which lies ahead of such a comparative-lexical approach is necessarily vast, but it is, in my opinion, sounder and more empirical than a classification of speech acts based on *ad-hoc* criteria such as those found in Searle's account. To sum up, given the close relationship between conceptual and linguistic structure, our lexicons can be said to reflect the way we conceptualize reality. As regards speech acts, the study of illocutionary verbs is, therefore, a good starting point for the delimitation of the illocutionary act types of a given language.²⁹

Some Cognitive Alternatives to Traditional Classifications of Speech Acts

Two classifications of speech acts which comply with the requirements of a cognitively adequate theory of categorization (i.e. prototype theory) are those carried out by Verschueren (1985) and Risselada (1993). For this reason I have chosen them as those from which to select the ten illocutionary types which are the object of this study. Although both classifications share the same theoretical premises, Verschueren's taxonomy is more limited in scope since it is restricted to directive speech acts; on the other hand, Risselada's classification takes into consideration the whole illocutionary spectrum. Nevertheless, Verschueren offers some interesting insights into the nature of the parameters that define illocutionary types which cannot be ignored. Therefore, I have decided to take both proposals into account for my research. While Risselada's work will simply be used as the source of a general, cognitively adequate taxonomy from which to extract the ten illocutionary types which will be the object of this study, Verschueren's more thorough discussion of directives will guide some of my decisions regarding the parameters needed in the description of the propositional ICMs for the speech acts under consideration.

29. This view is not new and has been defended by authors like Leech (1983: 198), Verschueren (1985), Wierzbicka (1987: 492), and Burkhardt (1990a: 108).

Risselada (1993: 33-36) puts forward a *prototype typology* of illocutions in which the degree of prototypicality of a given illocution can be determined on the basis of the optimality with which it instantiates the relevant criteria of classification. These criteria -of a scalar nature which also allows for different degrees of prototypicality- can be of three different kinds: (1) speaker-related, such as psychological state, intentions, or aims in performing the speech act involved, (2) addressee-related, like the perlocutionary effect of the speech act, or the nature of the addressee's reaction, and (3) speech act-related, including what the speech act is about: facts, emotions, or actions. On the basis of these criteria, Risselada presents the following typology of speech acts:³⁰



The present study will focus on those speech act types which are in italics, including commissives, directives, and borderline cases between these two categories. Risselada's *third person directives* (e.g. *Let John telephone me when he comes home*), however, do not display enough distinguishing characteristics to be considered a distinct speech act type. It is true that they involve the realization of an action by a third person different from the speaker and the addressee. But it is also true that they also involve an action by the addressee just like other directives. Because of this I would rather consider third person directives just a peripheral type of directive than a separate illocutionary category.

The criteria of classification used by Risselada are of a scalar nature. The use of scalar variables in the description of illocutionary categories had been anticipated by Verschueren. In his work on directive speech acts, this author considers five dimensions (cf. Searle's binary features) along which directive

30. The main speech act types are printed in bold; those speech acts in brackets represent borderline cases.

categories can be defined.³¹ As a result, he is able to accommodate both prototypical, central cases of directing (those which rate higher at the defining dimensions) and less clear non-central instances of directive speech acts (those which rate lower).³² The five semantic dimensions are the following:

1. *Degree of Directivity*, which depends mainly on the strength of the wish or wanting expressed by the speaker in his attempt to influence the hearer's subsequent course of action. Verbs such as *command* or *beg* would be at the top of this scale, while others, like *acquiesce* or *permit*, would display the smallest degree of directivity.

2. *Social Setting*. This dimension deals with the different frames of action with which linguistic acts of directing are prototypically associated. It is concluded that directives are usually performed in official settings of diverse kinds: legal, religious, commercial, military, political, educational, etc.

3. *Goals of Directing*. Verschueren (1985: 164) distinguishes three prototypical goals of directives: directing the hearer to an act of responding, directing the hearer towards an act of coming or going, and directing him towards an act of giving or granting something.

4. *Directionality*. With respect to this dimension, verbs of directing can be placed along a scale at the two extremes of which there are those speech acts displaying either positive directionality (i.e. attempts to make the hearer do something) or negative directionality (i.e. attempts to make the hearer *not* do something). Examples of each extreme would be *to invite* and *to ban* respectively.

5. *Authority*. Verschueren's description of the authority dimension and its implications for the study of directive speech acts deserves some detailed attention. As Verschueren himself (1985: 180) remarks, in spite of the relevance of authority-related issues for an understanding of directives, this matter has always been shallowly dealt with in the literature. Searle, for instance, limits his discussion of authority to stating that it provides a basis for the distinction

31. Scalar parameters of this kind will be adopted in my description of directive and commissive ICMs. The full description of the nature and exact number of parameters shall be considered in section 3.4.2.

32. The cognitive view of speech-act categories having fuzzy boundaries is in accordance with contemporary pragmatic theories like that of Leech (1983: 22-3, 115), who also acknowledges the "non-categorical nature of illocutionary force." Leech rejects the classical definition of speech acts in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions (e.g. Searle's rules), and stresses the fact that clear-cut instances of a given illocution occur in very few cases. As a matter of fact, he remarks, most utterances are difficult to classify as to their illocutionary force because they are aimed at fulfilling a multiplicity of functions.

between a command and a request. The former implies authority on the part of the speaker while the latter lacks that implication.

Verschueren's (1985: 180) contributions are twofold. First, he states that authority is not either present or absent as Searle seemed to suggest. On the contrary, it is a matter of degree. For example, both ordering and telling imply authority, but the second implies an authority of a somewhat weaker type. At the other end of the dimension, acts of suggesting imply no authority of the speaker over the hearer. Second, Verschueren notices that it is possible to distinguish a whole range of different types of authority involved in directive speech acts: power or institutional authority, knowledge authority, moral authority, etc.

As can be seen from the above discussion, Verschueren's description of the directing frame and his subsequent classification of directives comply with the requirements of a cognitive approach to language: entities are categorised in terms of an open-ended number of scalar dimensions, which gives way to prototypical categories capable of accommodating both clear and fuzzy instances of directives. In this way, each type of directive can be defined in terms of the relative position that it occupies in each of the semantic dimensions. Nevertheless, the author himself (1985: 184) presents his study of directives as inconclusive: "it barely touches the surface of the semantics of directing." In this sense, the present study can be seen as an attempt to take his analysis one step further. However, the present approach to the study of directive speech acts differs from Verschueren's in three respects. First, it should be made clear that although my aim is, like Verschueren's, to describe the frames or rather the ICMs of a number of speech acts, this analysis will be based on speech act expressions, while his was based on verbs of directing. Second, while Verschueren aimed at characterizing the frame of directing on its own, I shall focus on ten types of both directive and commissive speech acts, in order to enable a comparative study of these two illocutionary types. Finally, there are also some differences as regards the dimensions or parameters along which the set of speech act types under scrutiny will be defined. Two of them roughly coincide with those proposed by Verschueren: degree of directivity and authority. However, three of his dimensions (i.e. social setting, directionality, and goals of directing) will be omitted in our study for a number of reasons:

-The dimension of social setting singles out a number of areas of social interaction in which non-basic directive verbs are prominent (e.g. verbs like *vindicate*, *claim*, *ban*, *proscribe*, *summon*, etc. are tied to legal settings). Verschueren (1985: 155) himself acknowledges that basic verbs (e.g. *invite*, *suggest*, *advise*, etc.) are neutral as to the social setting variable: they do not contain clues to the type of social setting in which they may occur.

-Verschueren's discussion of the goals of directing is not, in my opinion, too satisfactory. On the one hand, it seems incomplete, given that ordinary

directive goals like “directing someone to perform a given action” (e.g. directing someone to switch off the TV) are not considered among the basic types of directive acts proposed by Verschueren, like *responding*, *moving to or from a place*, and *granting or giving something*. On the other hand, it does not seem clear that belonging to one or another of these basic types can be related to the degree of prototypicality of a given directive. In my opinion, directing someone to move or to pass a book are equally directive.

-Finally, the dimension of directionality is not useful for distinguishing among the directive types which have been selected for the present analysis. According to Verschueren, this dimension helps to classify speech acts along a scale at the two extremes of which there are those speech acts displaying either positive directionality (i.e. attempts to make the hearer do something) or negative directionality (i.e. attempts to make the hearer *not* do something). An example of negative directionality would be *to prohibit*. The directive types studied in this book fall within the group of positive directionality.

The exact number of variables which are taken into account in the description of the propositional ICMs of the directive and commissive speech acts which are the object of this study will be presented and discussed in section 3.4.2.

3.2. A Cognitive View of the Codification-Inference Controversy on Speech Acts

Assuming the risk of overgeneralization, most theories on illocutions fall within either of the following two categories. On the one hand, there are those accounts which accept the hypothesis of literalness to a greater or a lesser extent and, as a result, accept the existence of some degree of codification in the performance of speech acts. These theories also have in common the acceptance of the concepts of indirectness and indirect speech acts. However, the conventionality stance is not homogeneous. There are those theories which only accept the conventionality thesis for those three basic speech act types which correspond to the three universal sentence types (i.e. Searle, 1969; Sperber and Wilson, 1986; and Givón, 1989). Others postulate the possibility of grammatically accounting for other illocutionary values in addition to the three basic ones in the most diverse means. Here I may include Dik’s (1989) grammatical conversions, the lexico-grammatical selections of systemic-functionalism (Halliday, 1994), and Sadock and Zwicky’s (1985) minor sentence types, among others. On the other hand, there exist some theories which reject the hypothesis of literalness altogether and postulate that all speech acts are subject to inferential mechanisms of interpretation (e.g. Bach and Harnish, 1979; Recanati, 1987; Leech, 1983; conversational approaches like Geis’s, 1995). Within these theories, the distinction between direct and indirect speech acts is not operative, since all speech acts are inferred on the basis of the expression plus the relevant contextual information.

In attempting a cognitive revision of these two opposing views on illocutionary phenomena, it is not my intention to fully reject any of them. On the contrary, I acknowledge their importance in the delimitation of the subject matter and I believe that an unjustified absolute rejection of any of the above theories on speech acts would necessarily result in the loss of some potentially useful insights. As a matter of fact, I do not see those theories so much as incorrect as incomplete. In my opinion, their apparently contradictory insights into the nature of speech acts are but partial accounts, each of which focuses on a different aspect of a multi-sided object. In the first place, those theories of speech acts which accept the hypothesis of literalness are correct in pointing out that certain speech acts are fully codified as part of the grammar of a given language. The oft-quoted example of suggestion, *Why not paint the house purple?*, illustrates this extreme of full grammatical codification. Unlike other constructions (e.g. *Why don't you paint your house purple?*), it may not be interpreted as a question but only as a suggestion. In the second place, those theories which reject the hypothesis of literalness are also justified in believing that inference, and therefore pragmatics, are important to the interpretation of some illocutionary acts. The understanding of a sentence like *I like hot cocoa* as either a request for a cup of hot chocolate or as a simple informative sentence is clearly dependent on background knowledge, the context of the utterance, and the addressee's inferential capacities.

This first argument in favour of the integration of both codification and inference in speech act analyses is rather intuitive. However, there is a second, more empirical argument which arises from the incapacity of psycholinguistic research to prove in a conclusive way the exclusiveness of either linguistic codification or contextual inference in the interpretation of speech acts. Let us elaborate on this second argument in detail. As will be illustrated below, a vast number of psycholinguistic experiments have been carried out in order to determine whether the comprehension of illocutionary acts relies plainly on inferential processes aided by contextual information, or whether it involves the decoding of linguistic information exclusively.³³ These experiments can be classified into two groups depending on which of the former hypotheses is supported by their results.

33. The role of linguistic codification in those theories which accept the literal force hypothesis is twofold. In the case of direct illocutions, the linguistic form automatically triggers the correct interpretation. In the case of the so-called ISAs, the understanding of the literal force -as codified in their sentence types- is regarded as a necessary first step in the interpretation of an utterance. Once the literal meaning has been proved to be irrelevant in a given context, then the addressee can attempt to infer the ulterior meaning of the utterance.

Group A: Experiments Supporting a Purely Inferential Approach to Speech Acts

The first group of experiments provides evidence against those speech act theories which are based on the literalness hypothesis. Their results suggest that on interpreting ISAs, the addressee does not first recognise the literal meaning and then, by considering the context, realizes that there must be an ulterior meaning which needs to be inferred. Their main piece of evidence against these theories is based on the low response-times involved in the interpretation of the ISAs under scrutiny, which would be incompatible with all the interpretation steps postulated by the aforementioned theories.

Ervin-Tripp (1976) and Holmes (1983) are among those authors who have gathered evidence which suggests that ISAs are not computed via inference from their literal meanings and contextual information. This stance is supported by a collection of communication misunderstandings like the following (Hung and Bradac, 1993: 98):

A: Do you have a room for 20 on Monday nights?

B: Just a minute... Yes I do. Give me your name and department, please.

A: I don't want to book a room now, but do you have a room for 20 on Monday nights?

These cases in which the addressee derives the indirect meaning straightaway, even though it is the literal meaning that is intended by the speaker, are taken as proof that the addressee strongly bases his comprehension on situational information, disregarding form.

Likewise, psycholinguistic experiments (reaction-time or response-time experiments) attempt to invalidate the traditional assumption that ISAs take longer to be processed than literal expressions due to the fact that they violate communicative norms.³⁴ Gibbs (1979, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1994), Ervin-Tripp et al. (1987), and Gibbs and Gerrig (1989) attempt to prove that ISAs take no longer to be understood than either literal sentences or direct speech acts.

34. These experiments are varied. Some of them involve the paraphrasing of the last line of a story. That line could be either an indirect request, a literal use of the same sentence, or a direct request. It was shown that the length of time taken in the paraphrasing of an indirect request was not any longer than that taken to paraphrase literal uses or direct requests. Others consist in asking respondents to derive the indirect meaning and then testing them on the literal meaning. If the literal-meaning step must precede the derivation of the indirect meaning, then this prior experience with the literal meaning would have facilitated their responses to the literal paraphrase sentences compared with respondents who had not been asked to derive the indirect meaning. However, no facilitation effect was found.

Again, they conclude that the comprehension of ISAs does not follow after an obligatory literal misanalysis, but that it is rather based on an inferential process guided by contextual information.

Finally, studies on child development present a strong case in favour of the view that the literal comprehension strategy of attending to the words of the utterance and ignoring the context only becomes prominent well after the child has mastered the contextual strategy of attending to, and computing the speaker's intention from the context rather than the utterance alone (Olson and Hidayard, 1981; Holmes 1983; Beal and Flavell, 1984; Bonitatibus, 1988; Ackerman, Szymanski and Silver, 1990). These experiments, also, seem to point towards the appropriateness of an understanding of ISAs purely based on inference.

Group B: Experiments Supporting an Approach to Speech Acts Compatible with the Literal Force Hypothesis

Nevertheless, a second group of experiments of a similar nature gives rise to just the opposite conclusions on the matter under consideration. As far back as the middle seventies, Clark and Lucy (1975) carried out a series of tests in which they presented their respondents with sentences that could have either a literal meaning (e.g. *Color the circle blue*) or an indirect meaning (e.g. *Can you color the circle blue?*). With each sentence they were shown a picture of a circle and were asked to determine whether the accompanying picture satisfied the sentence request. Response-times were measured and the results suggested that the interpretation of indirect requests took an average of one second longer to verify than that of direct requests, which supports the hypothesis of the existence of a literal force which needs to be recognized previously to the understanding of the intended illocution.

From the perspective of language acquisition studies, Carrell (1981a, 1981b) presented arguments supporting the fact that both first and second language learners relied on linguistic features more than on contextual information for their interpretation of ISAs.

Conclusions Drawn from the Comparison of Group A and Group B Experiments

The apparent conflict in outcome of the two sets of experiments presented above seems to have been caused by the existence of considerable differences in the conditions under which those experiments were carried out. Those tests included in group A placed respondents in the context of the utterance before asking them to accomplish their tasks. The contexts were described in detail and, in general, they represented well-known everyday situations. On the contrary, those experiments within group B did not provide their respondents with any contextual knowledge. Informants were asked to

interpret sentences out of a context of utterance. It follows that group A experiments were biased to demonstrate the relevance of contextual information, while group B experiments were bound to emphasize the role played by linguistic features in the interpretation of ISAs.

Moreover, with respect to those experiments in group A, it has been further observed that many of the ISAs instances used in those tests were cases of conventional ISAs. As pointed out by Dascal (1989), the use of highly conventionalized figurative expressions in these experiments leaves the question of the generalizability of their conclusions to less conventionalized forms of ISAs unanswered.³⁵

The main conclusion that can be drawn from the comparison of group A and group B experiments is that, depending on the circumstances, the speaker may rely to a greater or to a lesser extent on either the linguistic form itself or on contextual information.³⁶ However, for the reasons presented above, they do not provide the smallest argument in favour of the exclusion of either codification or inference from the study of speech acts.

A third argument against an exclusivist position has to do with some of the problems that extreme conventionalism and extreme inferentialism bring along. Due to their radical views on the nature of illocutions, both approaches are fraught with difficulties. Those theories which place excessive emphasis on *codification* are able to account for only a very limited number of illocutionary acts (e.g. assertions, imperatives, questions, suggestions), while those accounts which favour *inference* are unable to explain the fact that languages universally distinguish three basic sentence types, as well as the fact that certain illocutions (i.e. those which rely on some kind of more or less codified linguistic means) are interpreted more rapidly and with less cognitive cost than others. In this connection, Searle's addition of an inferential theory of ISAs to

35. Further criticism of group A experiments includes the observation that they rely solely on the length of response time, without any data about what had actually happened in the individuals' minds from the moment that a sentence was presented. Dascal (1989: 254) proposed that it is possible that the processing of literal and indirect meanings run in parallel, and are eventually completed almost simultaneously. This parallel processing model, which contrasts sharply with the sequential nature of the speech act theory three step model, is in accordance with other results on discourse comprehension reviewed by Kintsch (1988).

36. In this connection, Ruiz de Mendoza (1994a: 49), and Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal (1997: 305) have hypothesized the existence of two types of comprehension strategies: (1) *Text strategies*: Other things being equal, supply minimum contextual information and rely maximally on textual features, and (2) *Contextual strategies*: Other things being equal, supply maximum contextual information and rely minimally on textual features. The analysis of the two groups of experiments presented above seems to confirm this proposal: speakers have both types of strategy at their disposal and use one or the other depending on the peculiarities of the conversational exchange. If the message is explicit enough, they will make use of the text strategy. Otherwise, the contextual strategy will be preferred.

his initial account of speech acts in terms of constitutive rules, and Bach and Harnish's positing of a standardisation process as an appendix to their inferential theory of speech acts, are just disguised attempts to integrate both inference and codification respectively into their initial accounts without renouncing to their claims that speech acts are exclusively conventional or a matter of sheer inference in each case.

The foregoing discussion suggests that both extreme inferentialism and extreme grammaticalism present important problems. It will be argued that they can be sorted out if both inference and codification are taken into account in the explanation of speech acts. Nevertheless, there remains to be determined what the nature and scope of these two categories of linguistic resources is. In this respect, the adoption of a cognitive framework results in a different characterization of concepts like *inference* and *codification* which is more in accordance with the findings of cognitive linguists and psycholinguists on the nature of conceptual categories. By having provided empirical evidence that entities can be defined in terms of different degrees of membership (vs. all-or-nothing membership) within a prototypically defined category, cognitive linguistics makes it no longer necessary to account for language phenomena in exclusively grammatical or inferential terms. In this fashion, *inference* and *codification* are seen as non-discrete categories which represent the two extreme points of a scale or continuum. Between them there can exist an infinite number of intermediate occurrences displaying different degrees of closeness to either one or the other of the prototypical peaks represented by pure inference or pure codification respectively. By way of illustration, consider the following three sentences:

- (1) I advise you to buy the small house
- (2) If I were you, I would buy the small house
- (3) The small house is more convenient

While in the first sentence the force of the piece of advice is fully codified (through lexical means), in the case of the other two sentences this is not so. Both expressions are open to a double interpretation as either acts of advising or as a conditional and a declarative sentence respectively. Nevertheless, sentence (2) is intuitively more easily recognized as a piece of advice than number (3). The special status of speech acts like (2) has been explicitly acknowledged by traditional theories of illocutions, which refer to them as *conventional indirect speech acts*. More specifically, traditional speech act theories (Searle, 1975; Morgan, 1978) regard conventional ISAs as special instances of ISAs whose illocutionary force is easier to retrieve due to the existence of a convention of use. This notion of conventional ISA is not

without problems. To begin with, no explanation is given of the origins or motivation of the convention of use that accounts for their special status. Second, in spite of being recognized as a distinct subgroup, it is postulated that they need to be inferred, just like all other instances of ISAs (Searle, 1975). Finally, conventional ISAs are also treated as a discrete category displaying clear-cut boundaries. No degrees of conventionalization are recognized. The following examples of requests, however, suggest that it is possible to distinguish many levels of conventionalization, some of them reaching almost the status of full codification:

- (1) Would you mind opening the door for me, please?
- (2) Could you open the door for me, please?
- (3) Can you open the door for me, please?
- (4) Could you open the door?
- (5) Can you open the door?

I believe that the problems haunting the traditional notion of conventional ISA may be overcome by approaching the issue of conventionalization under the light of the continuum between codification and inference postulated above. In this way, it is possible to redefine the concept of conventional ISA as simply those instances of illocutions which are closer to the codification end of the continuum. In other words, conventional ISAs are those which display a high degree of codification without having yet reached the status of full codification. This view of conventional ISAs presents two advantages over the traditional one:

- First, it provides us with an explanation of the reasons which make an instance of illocution conventional. In this connection, the higher level of codification of conventional ISAs accounts for the establishment of the convention of use which is associated with them. High levels of codification result in high levels of explicitness in the expression of a given illocution. This means (1) economy of processing (i.e. little or no inferential work is involved in the interpretation of the message), and (2) minimization of possible misunderstandings (i.e. the more explicit a message is, the less room it leaves for misunderstanding). It is only logical that, due to these positive properties of highly codified or conventional illocutions, they will be more often used by speakers of a certain language, which in turn paves the way for the generation of a convention of use.

- Second, because conventional ISAs are redefined as a segment of the continuum between codification and inference, they inherit the scalar nature of the former. This makes it possible to explain the existence of different degrees of conventionalization in the performance of conventional ISAs.

3.3. The Concepts of Literalness and ISAs Revisited

The existence of a cline of codification is not compatible, however, with the traditional version of the literal force hypothesis. The idea that the three universal sentence types are associated to three basic illocutions, from which the rest of the illocutionary values need to be inferred, leads to the understanding of codified and inferred illocutions as either-or discrete categories. Opting for an absolute rejection of the literal force hypothesis would not solve this problem, since it would overlook the fact that most languages possess, as a matter of fact, three basic sentence types. In order to overcome this incompatibility between the existence of a codification cline, on the one hand, and three universal sentence types, on the other hand, I shall follow Risselada's (1993) proposal of a weaker version of the literal force hypothesis. As will be explained below, this weak literal force hypothesis has the following advantages: (1) it enables a more comprehensive grammatical treatment of illocutionary acts which is not restricted to only those illocutionary forces which correspond to the three basic sentence types; (2) it is still consistent with typological evidence regarding the existence of three universal sentence types; (3) it is compatible with the occurrence of different degrees of codification in the performance of speech acts (i.e. it makes it possible to integrate both codification and inference within a simple explanatory framework).

This weaker version of the literal force hypothesis basically consists in ascribing a more global and less specified illocutionary value to the three universal sentence types. Instead of matching declaratives with assertions, imperatives with orders or commands, and interrogatives with questions, Risselada (1993: 71) proposes the following characterizations of sentence types:

- *Declarative sentences*: those which present a proposition.
- *Interrogative sentences*: those which represent a proposition as (partially) open.
- *Imperative sentences*: those which present the content of a proposition for realization.

In this way, Risselada (1993: 72) redefines the relationship that holds between particular sentence types and speech act types as simply one of *compatibility* between sentence type and a range of illocutionary values, as opposed to the traditional definition as literal or direct meaning. As a consequence, declarative sentences appear as the most neutral and versatile of the three, because they are compatible with the expression of virtually any type of illocutionary value. The imperative and interrogative sentence types are much more restricted. It is not possible to convey promises by means of imperative sentences or assertions by means of interrogative sentences, for instance. This compatibility may result, in practice, in a *default illocutionary value* of the sentence (see definitions above), which only obtains when the utterance does not contain further indicators of illocutionary force. If there are

other specifications of illocutionary force, then the final interpretation of the sentence will be the result of the combination of the *default* meaning of the sentence and the meaning expressed by those indicators of illocutionary force. Although Risselada does not explicitly say so, it follows logically from this approach to illocutions that the more specified an expression is in relation to a certain force (i.e. the higher the number of indicators of illocutionary force that it contains), the more codified it is and vice versa. An important consequence of Risselada's proposal is, therefore, that it accounts for a cline of codification degrees in the realization of speech acts. Last but not least, it enables a grammatical treatment of more instances of illocutions than the three basic ones, since grammar is no longer concerned exclusively with cases of full codification, but it is needed in order to account for those linguistic features which produce instances of more or less grammaticalized or codified speech acts.

A further consequence of this approach, as pointed out by Risselada (1993: 73), concerns the concept of *indirectness*. Those utterances which were regarded as indirect under the original literal force hypothesis, need no longer be considered as such under Risselada's weaker hypothesis. Since the meaning of sentences is taken to be largely unspecified, it is no longer correct to talk about a direct and an indirect reading, or about the conversion of a basic illocution into a derived one (cf. Dik, 1989, 1997). Simply, the greater the number of indications (i.e. linguistic hints) that a certain illocutionary force is intended, the more explicit or codified it will be, and vice versa. The generic default illocutionary value of the three universal sentence types can be further specified to a greater or a lesser extent, but, being largely underspecified, it cannot be properly said to be converted into a different illocutionary value.

3.4. Outline of an Alternative Approach to ISAs from a Cognitive Perspective

Elaborating on the view of illocution that has been proposed in the three preceding sections, I will now put forward my own approach to illocutionary meaning and expression. My proposal will take the form of a constructional approach to speech acts, according to which the pieces of knowledge that make up each illocutionary category are paired with the linguistic means (i.e. realization procedures) through which they can be explicitly communicated.

3.4.1. Illocutionary Constructions

In Risselada's alternative approach to illocutions the following assumption is central:

The illocutionary force of the various speech act types [...] is expressed by means of combinations of linguistic properties that together reflect one or more of the characteristic features of the speech act type involved. (1993: 74)

In its most explicit form, an utterance expresses all the essential features that define an illocutionary type. Implicitness could be due to different reasons such as politeness, or simply to the fact that the context and/or the shared background knowledge already provide the participants with the necessary information to interpret the illocutionary force of an utterance.³⁷

From the above quotation, it follows that Risselada's proposal is covertly pointing towards a constructional approach to illocutionary phenomena. Although she does not explicitly mention the word *construction* in her book, her pairings of linguistic properties with features of speech act types cannot be regarded otherwise. A constructional approach to illocutionary acts has some advantages which have motivated its choice for the present analysis of directive and commissive speech acts. First, given the weaker literal force hypothesis presented in section 3.3 and the largely unspecified meaning associated with the three universal sentence types, the notion of *construction* allows us to carry out a systematic description of those formal configurations which work to further specify the illocutionary meaning of a given expression. Second, constructions make it possible to determine the relationship of specification that exists between a certain form and a certain illocutionary meaning in a way compatible with the scalar nature of the concepts of codification and inference (see section 3.2). Thus, the higher the number of features of a certain speech act type which are activated by a particular formal configuration, the more explicit or codified the construction will be; and vice versa: the smaller the number of features that are activated, the more the interpretation of the sentence will depend on inferential processes. In other words, illocutionary constructions can be organized in a hierarchy from the most explicit to the most implicit. And finally, the formulation of illocutionary constructions is in accordance with our cognitive commitment to find a motivation for form in meaning. The formal configurations that make up illocutionary constructions are not arbitrary, but they originate in the capacity of the formal elements involved to activate certain meaning conditions of illocutionary act categories.

The advantages of a constructional approach to illocutionary acts, which are implicit in Risselada's (1993) work, have been explicitly dealt with in Ruiz de Mendoza (1999: 157-167). His notion of *specialization of function*, like Risselada's *degree of explicitness*, captures the ability of a given expression to instantiate a greater or lesser number of meaning conditions of a certain speech act type, thus allowing for a codification cline in the production of illocutions. Let us reproduce one of the illocutionary constructions suggested by Ruiz de Mendoza in order to illustrate this point:

37. Risselada's (1993) use of the terms *explicit* and *implicit* speech act is equivalent to the notions of *codified* and *inferred* speech act respectively. In both cases, the degree of explicitness or codification of a speech act instance is determined by the number of meaning conditions of the illocutionary type under scrutiny which are activated by linguistic means.

THE *WILL YOU* CONSTRUCTION FOR REQUESTS

An interrogative sentence of the *will you* type may function as a request to the extent that, through the explicatures generated by the utterance, it is manifest to the addressee that:

(i) It is manifest to the speaker that the state of affairs expressed in the predication is beneficial to the speaker (or a third party) and is costly to the addressee.

(ii) It is manifest to the speaker that the addressee is capable of bringing about the state of affairs expressed in the predication.

(iii) The speaker wishes that the state of affairs expressed in the predication takes place.

(iv) The speaker gives the addressee freedom to decide upon his following course of action. (Ruiz de Mendoza, 1999: 158. Translation mine.)

Now, given this construction, it is fairly easy to determine the degree of specialization of function (i.e. degree of codification) of the following two utterances for the performance of the act of requesting:

(1) Will you help *me*?

(2) Will you go to Madrid next week?

The pronoun in italics in sentence (1) instantiates the first of the meaning conditions of the *will you* construction for requests and is, therefore, more highly specialised for the conveyance of a request than sentence (2), which does not overtly activate any of the meaning conditions of the construction. A description of illocutionary acts in terms of Ruiz de Mendoza's constructions is highly attractive for the following reasons: (1) it accounts for the motivation of form from meaning which is desirable in a study of illocutions which seeks cognitive adequacy, (2) it makes it possible to build into the grammar of a language more illocutionary values than just the three basic illocutions, and (3) it is compatible with the existence of the continuum between codification and inference, which was hypothesized in section 3.2 on the basis of the non-conclusive results of the reviewed psycholinguistic experiments and the non-discrete nature of conceptual categories.

This study follows Risselada's and Ruiz de Mendoza's lead towards a constructional approach to illocutions. Nevertheless, the present proposal on illocutionary constructions will differ from the former two in some respects which are discussed and justified below.

3.4.2. Illocutionary ICMs

Let us start with the meaning side of illocutionary constructions. Risselada defines directives according to two main features: the realization of a future action and the fact that the agent of the future action is to be the addressee. Further distinctions among directive speech acts are made on the basis of two more criteria: whether the future action is in the speaker's interest (e.g. ordering, requesting, begging) or in the addressee's (e.g. advising, warning), and the extent to which the speaker leaves the addressee an option of non-compliance (e.g. the degree of optionality of orders is very low, while that of suggestions is prototypically high). These criteria, although certainly relevant to the study of illocutionary distinctions, are not enough to differentiate between certain directive types. Beggings and requests, for instance, are both in the interest of the speaker and both offer a high degree of optionality to the addressee. By applying Risselada's criteria, we would be unable to differentiate these two speech act types. However, they have been lexicalised into the English language as two distinct illocutionary forces and, as a matter of fact, they do differ in relation to what I shall label the variable of speaker's will (i.e. the degree to which the speaker wants the addressee to carry out the action. See description of ICM variables below). Prototypical beggings display a higher degree of speaker's will than prototypical requests. One more example. Risselada's account does not allow us to distinguish clearly between orders and threats. Both are binding (i.e. offer little or no optionality) and both serve the speaker's interests. However, it is obvious that they are different speech acts. The number of classification criteria used by Risselada should be increased in order to account for the differences in meaning between certain illocutionary types. Moreover, there are also certain aspects of the meaning of speech acts which, not being distinguishing features, nevertheless form part of the knowledge that speakers of a linguistic community share about a certain illocutionary act type. The parameter of *social distance* would be a good example of this. This parameter is not a defining feature of any specific speech act type: orders, promises, etc. can be performed independently of the degree of intimacy that holds between speakers. Nevertheless, the way in which a given speech act is produced may be influenced by the degree of intimacy of the participants. By way of illustration consider the fact that a piece of advice given to a close friend or relative is usually less mitigated than one addressed to a stranger. These aspects of the meaning of illocutionary acts may motivate certain formal properties of the corresponding illocutionary constructions. Therefore, they should also be systematically described prior to the analysis of the formal part of the construction. The number and nature of the variables which are relevant to the categorization of the directive and commissive speech act types dealt with in this study will be described at the end of this section.

A preliminary analysis of our corpus suggest that our conceptualization of illocutionary categories includes (1) the knowledge of the values taken on by

each of the parameters involved in the characterization of illocutionary acts, and (2) the knowledge of the relations that hold between those variables. I hypothesize that all this information can be systematically organized in terms of propositional ICMs, which, as pointed out by Lakoff (1987: 285), consist of an *ontology* and a *structure*. The ontology of an illocutionary ICM would include the values taken on by the variables relevant to its description, while its structure would comprise the interplay between the different variables. Since the relations between the parameters of each illocutionary ICM have been found to be largely arbitrary and culture-specific, I shall refer to them as *conventions*. In addition to these conventions which are specific of each particular illocutionary type, Ruiz de Mendoza (1999: 113) has drawn our attention to the existence of other more general social conventions which explain certain idiosyncrasies of the behaviour of several related speech act types. Ruiz de Mendoza refers to one of the wide-ranging conventions operating in our western world as *convention of politeness*, according to which people are expected to alter those states of affairs which are costly to others. As shall be shown in chapters four to thirteen, my analysis provides evidence supporting the usefulness of taking into consideration this convention in the study of illocutionary categories. It also suggests that the convention of politeness should be extended in several ways in order to capture other relevant aspects of what constitutes polite behaviour in the occidental world (see chapters five, eight, eleven, and thirteen).

I would not like to end this discussion on the nature of propositional illocutionary ICMs without considering their adequacy for the description of illocutionary categories in a way compatible with prototype theory. As has already been shown, some recent accounts of illocutionary categories like Verschueren's or Risselada's succeed in accommodating both central and peripheral members of a given speech act type, which constitutes a substantial development in comparison with traditional taxonomies based on the classical theory of categorization. The source of prototype effects is slightly different in each of these proposals. In the case of Verschueren the different degrees of membership stem from the scalar nature of the attributes involved in the description of the category. For Risselada, the fact that the criterial attributes themselves may display degrees of membership is just one of two possible sources of prototype effects, the second being the optimality with which the relevant criteria of classification are instantiated in each concrete case. Although neither of these authors makes explicit reference to this issue, they appear to accept the existence of a set of necessary and sufficient features, which define illocutionary categories without leading to all-or-nothing membership thanks to the scalar nature of the variables and/or to the optimality with which they are instantiated. Nevertheless, an initial study of directive categories revealed some weaknesses in this approach (see Pérez, 1997b). Although each illocutionary category was found to share a number of variables, which were necessary for membership, these essential attributes did

not seem capable of accounting on their own for all the wealth of information which was in some way or another associated with each illocutionary type. I noted, for instance, that our knowledge on how to perform requests does not only include the idea that it is necessary to mitigate the act, but also the fact that the need for mitigation will increase as the cost of the requested action does, or as the social distance between the speakers becomes larger, to give just two examples. These and similar aspects of the functioning of directive speech acts motivated my search for a different proposal on the nature of conceptual structure, which would make it possible to account for them in a way consistent with the prototype approach. The ideas put forward with respect to relational semantic structure in Santibáñez (1999) provided me with the type of knowledge organization structure needed for this purpose. This author attempts to offer a model of semantic organization free from the limitations of former proposals such as Lakoff's (1987) *radial categories*, which overlook the fact that the presence of semantic invariants need not be incompatible with a prototype approach, or Wierzbicka's (1996) *semantic primitives*, which appear as so generic that they do not fully account for our knowledge of concepts. Santibáñez draws on Ruiz de Mendoza's (1996) insight that it is possible to find semantic invariants or, to use his terminology, *general definers*, for concepts. By reanalysing the concept of *mother*, Ruiz de Mendoza (1996: 345) notes that it invokes a schema "with a general definer (i.e. 'woman who has (had) (at least) a child'), which can be instantiated in different ways as needed." The optimality of each concrete instantiation accounts for its prototype effects; while the presence of a general definer allows us to anchor all our knowledge of a concept in a common reference point, a feature which is noticeably lacking in Lakoff's characterization of the concept in terms of a radial category of independent converging models. As is aptly pointed out by Santibáñez, Ruiz de Mendoza's proposal presents one weakness:

There seems to be no problem in arguing that its relation to 'child' is a necessary aspect of the meaning of 'mother' which is shared by all the submodels; however, if we also regard it, as Ruiz de Mendoza does, as a sufficient condition, the instantiation of further relations in the construction of a network will turn out to be redundant. That this is not the case is evident from a sentence like *My mother intends to divorce my father*, where we need to retrieve additional relational information from the marital model in order to understand it (Santibáñez, 1999).

As mentioned above, this is also the case with the directive illocutionary categories studied in Pérez (1997b), where some of the defining attributes were found to be necessary but not sufficient, in the sense that further knowledge of other non-necessary attributes or of the interactions holding between the attributes was sometimes required in the performance of the speech act.

Taking stock of this discussion and going back to the issue of the nature of our propositional ICMs, let us briefly summarize the main reasons why they

qualify as appropriate tools for the description of illocutionary categories in a way consistent with cognitive theory:

(1) The set of necessary and non-necessary attributes which define an illocutionary category constitute its ontology.

(2) The presence of a set of necessary attributes does not preclude the existence of prototype effects, which may stem from the scalar nature of the attributes, from the degree of optimality with which a given attribute is instantiated in each concrete case, or from the non-satisfaction of one or more of the non-necessary attributes.

(3) The set of necessary attributes does not exhaust our knowledge about a certain speech act category. Further knowledge of non-necessary attributes, and of the conventional interplay between two or more of the attributes of a category, between one of the attributes and other variables of social interaction, and/or between one of the attributes and other more general conventions of social behaviour (e.g. convention of politeness), is also part of its structure. This is in accordance with the open-ended nature of propositional ICMs, which as observed by Ungerer and Schmidt (1996: 48) can hardly be exhaustive.

In accordance with the cognitivist proposals on the nature of the variables used in the processes of categorization, I shall make use, whenever it is possible, of scalar or gradual parameters, which allow for different degrees of implementation and, therefore, enable us to account for more or less prototypical members of a particular illocutionary category. More specifically, the variables used in this analysis of speech acts are the following:

(1) *Agent type*: the person who performs the action expressed in the predication can be the speaker, the addressee, and/or a third party.

(2) *Time of the action*: the action presented in the predication can take place in a past, a present, or a future time.

(3) *Degree of agent's capability*: the agent's capability to perform the action expressed in the predication needs to be presupposed for the performance of certain acts.

(4) *Degree of speaker's will*: degree to which the speaker wishes the state of affairs expressed in the predication to take place.

(5) *Degree of addressee's will*: degree to which the addressee wishes the state of affairs expressed in the predication to take place.

(6) *Degree of cost-benefit*: degree to which the realization of the state of affairs expressed in the predication represents something positive (i.e. benefit) or something negative (i.e. cost) for the speaker, the addressee, and/or a third person.

(7) *Degree of optionality*: degree to which the person who is to materialize the state of affairs expressed in the predication is free to decide upon his following course of action.

(8) *Degree of mitigation*: degree to which the force of the speech act is softened.

(9) *Degree of power*: the relative position of the speaker and the addressee in a hierarchy of authority.

(10) *Degree of social distance*: the relative position of the participants in a continuum of intimacy.

(11) *Degree of formality of the context*: the degree to which the context of the utterance is formal and highly structured or informal and relaxed.

Several explanations are in order regarding this choice of variables. First of all, since cognitive models are inherently incomplete (see Ungerer and Schmid, 1996: 48), I have limited the number of variables to be analysed to eleven. These do not exhaust all the dimensions which could be considered in relation to directive and commissive speech acts, but they have already been shown to be some of the most productive in the literature.

Variables like *agent type* and *time of the action* have been used in the description of speech act categories ever since the first classification attempts were made by Austin (1962) and Searle (1979), albeit in a somehow unsystematic manner. Austin only refers to agent type in the case of commissive speech acts. Searle distinguishes between directive and commissive acts by pointing to their different agent types (i.e. directives point to an action by the addressee, while commissives present the speaker as the agent). His use of this variable, however, is too strict if considered from a cognitive perspective. It is not taken into account, for instance, that acts are defined in relation to several variables, not just one, and that, therefore, the lack of fulfilment of one variable is not reason enough to prevent a given categorization. To give just one example, an order like *Let's finish this report tonight* involves an action by both the speaker and the addressee. We have seen that, in Searle's account, directives were characterized by having the addressee as the agent. Within this author's strict view of categorization, this fact would prevent this example from being conceptualized as a directive.

The variable of *capability* is also taken into consideration by Searle (1969: 66) in his formulation of the constitutive rules for directives (i.e. the addressee should be capable of carrying out the action presented in the predication). However, this variable is ignored in his description of the constitutive rules for promises (see Searle 1969: 63), in which case it is the speaker's capability that is at stake. In the present study, I shall pursue a systematic analysis of directive and commissive types in relation to the three variables discussed so far (i.e. agent type, time of the action, and agent's capability).

The variable of *degree of speaker's will* is roughly similar to the parameter of *speaker's directivity* which can be found in Verschueren's (1985) work. This author puts forward a convincing case in favour of the necessity of taking into account the strength of the wish or desire expressed by the speaker in his attempt to influence the hearer's subsequent course of action in his description of directive speech acts. Verschueren claims that the degree of speaker's directivity is useful in differentiating between several of those categories (e.g. begging is characterized by a high degree of directivity in contrast to suggesting or advising which typically display a lower degree of speaker's directivity). I have, therefore, included this variable in my analysis. Moreover, as speech acts have an interactional nature, I debated as to whether the strength of the *addressee's* wish or desire that a certain state of affairs is brought about, not taken into account by Verschueren, may play a role in the delimitation of speech act categories. A preliminary analysis of the corpus data has revealed that this is the case and that, furthermore, these two variables are relevant to the study of both directives and commissive illocutions, and not just to directives as Verschueren's analysis suggests. In order to avoid the bias of the term *directivity* towards issues related to the category of directive speech acts, I have chosen to label these variables as *speaker's will* and *addressee's will* respectively.

The variables of *cost-benefit*, *optionality*, *power*, and *social distance* have been taken from the work on illocutionary acts by Leech (1983), though they have been widely used by other authors (e.g. Searle, 1975; Bach and Harnish, 1979; Verschueren, 1985; Risselada, 1993). The variables of cost-benefit and optionality are understood here in exactly the same terms in which they were used by Leech. On the contrary, my definitions of the variables of power and social distance will differ somehow from Leech's. Let us explain these differences in detail.

My variable of *power* is an elaboration of Leech's *social power*. Leech (1983: 126) defines social power as the asymmetrical relation which exists between two participants who occupy two different positions in a hierarchy of authority. He does not go any further into explaining what he understands by *authority*. However, as pointed out by Verschueren (1985: 180) and, more recently, by Spencer-Oatey (1996), it is possible to distinguish different types of power or authority (e.g. institutional, knowledge, moral, etc.). Taking this into account, I have preferred to use the less specific term *power*, instead of Leech's *social power*, which seems to imply that authority always stems from social institutions or principles. Therefore, I have made use of a working definition of *power* as simply the capacity of a person to impose his will on someone else for whatever reasons. Furthermore, power is here understood as a prototypical category itself including both central and more peripheral instances of authority.

Finally, the variable of social distance is defined by Leech (1983: 126) simply as "what Brown and Gilman call the 'solidarity' factor". In turn Brown

and Gilman's (1972) *solidarity factor* involves concepts like *social similarities and differences* and *like-mindedness* between people. Other authors have defined social distance in different ways like "positive/negative affect" or "degree of reciprocal liking" (Baxter, 1984), "degree of familiarity" (Blum-Kulka et al., 1985), "familiarity" (Blum-Kulka and House, 1989), "frequency of contact" and "length of acquaintance" (Slugoski and Turnbull, 1988), "friendship" (Boxer, 1993), etc. To the lack of a unified consistent definition of social distance we should add the problem of the existence of a significant number of different terms to refer to what is, in essence, the same phenomenon: *solidarity* (Brown and Gilman, 1972), *social distance* (Leech, 1983; Brown and Levinson, 1987; Holmes, 1990), *familiarity* (Wood and Kroger, 1991), *closeness* (Holtgraves, 1986), *affect* (Slugoski and Turnbull, 1988), *relational intimacy* (Lim and Bowers, 1991), *friendship* (Boxer, 1993); etc. In this study I have chosen to use the term *social distance* because it seems general enough to refer to the degree of closeness between two persons whatever the particular nature or origin of such closeness, whether it stems from their belonging to the same social group or to more private, yet interactional and, therefore, social factors like affection, like-mindedness, or admiration for others.

Another variable included in the ensuing analysis is that of *mitigation*. Fraser (1980) and Holmes (1984) offer two comprehensive accounts of the heterogeneous array of mechanisms which serve the purpose of softening the force of a given speech act: disclaimers (e.g. *If you wouldn't mind...*), distancing techniques (e.g. use of the passive as in *All passengers are required to fasten their seat belts*), tag questions (e.g. *Pass the salt, will you?*), hedges (e.g. *Could you just stop making noise?*), etc. Both authors include *indirection* as another strategy which may bring about a reduction of the force of an illocution. Nevertheless, for the reasons stated in section 3.3, I have not made use of this notion. On the contrary, I would like to include the degree of codification of a given illocutionary act as a potential mitigation strategy. Depending on the number of variables of a certain illocutionary ICM that get activated through realization procedures, the illocution will be more or less codified, and the lower its degree of codification, the greater the degree of optionality of the addressee will tend to be, and hence, the weaker the force of the speech act.

The last of the variables included in our analysis is that of *formality*. Since speech acts are always performed in a particular context of utterance, I have deemed it interesting to take into account the nature of at least one relevant aspect of the situation in my description of illocutionary ICMs. A context is regarded as formal when it is structured in such a way that it constrains the freedom of action of the participants. That is to say, in a formal context one needs to conform to certain principles or manners which regulate behaviour within it. Informal contexts, on the contrary, are understood to be relaxed and little constraining.

Although, most of these variables have already proved useful to illocutionary studies in the work by other authors, I have also assessed their validity for the purposes of the present study in a preliminary analysis of a small subset of our corpus containing approximately two hundred instances of speech acts. It was during this preliminary study that I saw the need of (1) attending to the degree of will of the addressee as well as to that of the speaker (cf. Verschueren (1985) who only considers the strength of the speaker's wish that a certain action is carried out) and (2) attending to the degree of capability of the agent -whoever this may be-, rather than just to the degree of capability of the addressee, as is the case in Searle's (1969) proposals.

3.4.3. Realization Procedures

Regarding the formal side of illocutionary constructions, my proposal also presents some distinguishing characteristics that I shall now attempt to discuss.

Sentence types (i.e. *declaratives*, *imperatives*, and *interrogatives*) are certainly one of most significant formal elements that can take part in the expression of illocutionary force -if only because of their universality. Nevertheless, as Risselada's weaker literal force hypothesis suggested, the illocutionary meaning of constructions based on sentence types alone is fairly unspecified. Imperative sentences, for instance, possess a very general illocutionary meaning which cannot be equated to that of ordering or to any other specific illocutionary type. This generic directive illocutionary meaning of imperative sentences is captured by a construction like the following:

IMPERATIVE CONSTRUCTION

Form: Imperative sentence

Meaning:

- (1) Presentation of a state of affairs for its realization in the future
- (2) The addressee is presented as the agent.
- (3) The speaker is presented as having a certain desire that the addressee carries out the action.

The imperative construction, based on the imperative sentence type alone, is so little specified as to its meaning conditions that it makes imperatives compatible with all directives types from ordering to suggesting, advising, warning, requesting, begging, and even boundary categories like threatening. All these speech act types display meaning conditions (1)-(3) in their corresponding ICMs. Additionally, this imperative construction is not

compatible with other non-directive speech act types, like promising, which have to do with future actions by the speaker rather than the addressee (see the description of the propositional ICMs of directive and commissive illocutions in chapters four to thirteen). Furthermore, if we compare the imperative construction presented above with the declarative construction below, it will be evident that the former is more highly specialised for the performance of directive speech acts than the latter. The three meaning conditions of the imperative construction activate three corresponding features of any directive ICM. On the other hand, the meaning condition of a declarative construction *per se* only makes explicit one meaning condition of directive ICMs (i.e. the presentation of a state of affairs), and this only partially, since declarative constructions are not restricted to future actions as directive speech acts are.

DECLARATIVE CONSTRUCTION:

Form: Declarative sentence

Meaning: Presentation of a state of affairs

The imperative construction, however, is too general and it does not specify which other linguistic properties may work to make of a particular imperative expression a better instance of an order, request or any other speech act by means of activating some or all of the meaning conditions of the corresponding directive ICM. Risselada rightly refers to lexical items as one of the linguistic formal elements which, together with sentence types, may help to make more explicit the meaning of an illocutionary construction. This is not a new proposal. Lexical items have been considered to be indicators of illocutionary force from the beginnings of speech act theory. The use of an imperative sentence followed by the adverb *please* would activate the three meaning conditions of the imperative construction above plus a fourth condition which is specific of certain directives like requests (i.e. mitigation).³⁸ Therefore, an imperative sentence followed by the adverb *please* would be more highly specialised for the expression of requests than a simple imperative construction.

38. It should be noted that we are talking about an imperative sentence with a neutral intonation. Suprasegmental features, like intonation, represent one more type of linguistic indicators of illocutionary force. Furthermore, the fact that the use of a lexical item like *please* activates one of the meaning conditions of requests is not enough reason to say that it converts the imperative sentence into a request; cf. Dik's (1989, 1997) illocutionary conversions. As Ruiz de Mendoza (1999: 126-133) has amply argued, the use of lexical items like *please* only serves to further increase the level of specialization of an expression as the means of conveying a particular illocutionary force, but it does not fully determine the illocutionary meaning of an expression. The use of intonation, for instance, can override the effect of lexical elements of this kind.

Risselada also proposes to integrate certain linguistic properties of the predication as indicators of illocutionary force. Let us explain this in detail as I shall be adopting Risselada's stance on this issue. I agree with Risselada that certain linguistic properties of sentences like their tense, person of the agent, etc. have a significant role to play in the expression of speech acts. Traditionally, these properties have been regarded as part of the content of the predication and have been thought of as something separate from the illocutionary meaning of the sentence. Nevertheless, the present study of directive and commissive speech acts corroborates Risselada's findings that those properties activate important aspects of the meaning (ICMs) of illocutionary acts. For instance, the presence of a third argument in the first person singular in an interrogative sentence (e.g. *Can you pass me the salt?*) activates one of the defining conditions (i.e. the speaker is the beneficiary of the action) of several directive illocutions like orders, requests, threats, etc. As a result, this type of *Can you ...?* construction appears as displaying a higher degree of specialization for the performance of a directive than for the performance of a sheer question, given that the ICM of *question* does not include any condition in which the speaker should be the beneficiary of an action. As Risselada (1993: 77) remarks, these properties are certainly instantiations of illocutionary acts meaning conditions even though they cannot be isolated from the properties of the content of the predication. This problem, as a matter of fact, had already been anticipated by Searle (1969: 30): "we can distinguish between two (*not necessarily separate*) elements in the syntactic structure of the utterance, which we might call the propositional indicator and the illocutionary indicator" (emphasis mine).

The relevance of grammatical properties of this kind in the expression of illocutions has been found to be so extensive in a preliminary study of the corpus data that I believe that they should be taken into account in the formulation of illocutionary constructions. This is, therefore, one point in which my description of illocutionary constructions differs from Ruiz de Mendoza's: the form of the constructions which I propose is more highly specified, including a wider range of linguistic properties (i.e. sentence type, lexical properties, grammatical properties). In this extension of the notion of form in illocutionary constructions I still go one step further. As has been shown by conversation and discourse analysts, the study of illocutions cannot be restricted to isolated sentences, as is often the case in traditional theories of speech acts. Our corpus of real instances of speech acts suggests that in most cases illocutions cannot be equated with isolated sentences, but rather with combinations of at least two consecutive sentences and sometimes two or more conversational turns. This has been observed to have some consequences in the performance and understanding of certain speech acts. As shall be seen in the case of ordering, for instance, the use of isolated imperatives (e.g. *Turn on the heater*) as opposed to combinations of imperatives with declaratives (e.g. *Turn on the heater. I'm freezing*) is not an

arbitrary choice, but actually serves the purpose of activating certain meaning conditions of ordering. The order ICM displays as a defining feature the fact that the speaker has certain authority over the addressee. The use of isolated imperatives activates this meaning condition. Since the power of the speaker over the addressee constrains the latter's freedom of action, the speaker need not offer any explanation for the performance of an order. The use of an isolated, unexplained imperative may be understood as a sign of the speaker's power. It is not surprising, therefore, that over eighty per cent of the examples of ordering in our corpus are expressed by isolated imperatives. Those cases in which the imperative is followed by a declarative sentence generally correspond to less prototypical instances of orders in which some of the meaning conditions are not fulfilled. Given the significance of suprasentential configurations in the expression of speech acts, I shall extend my new conception of construction further so as to include them.

3.4.4. Our Own View of Illocutionary Constructions

In summary, for the reasons discussed above, the type of illocutionary construction put forward in this study consist of (1) a formal specification that includes an array of linguistic properties such as sentence type, lexical elements, grammatical properties, suprasegmental properties, and suprasentential configurations and (2) a number of meaning conditions (i.e. those included in the corresponding illocutionary ICM). This extended notion of construction is required by the nature of the object of study. Illocutionary phenomena do not lend themselves to a treatment in terms of traditional constructions in which strict boundaries are set up between the content of the predication and illocutionary meaning, in which isolated words or sentences are the kind of linguistic units under consideration, or in which suprasegmental features are not generally considered.

So far, our concept of illocutionary construction can be understood as just a mere refinement of those suggested by Risselada and Ruiz de Mendoza, regarding both the formal and meaning parameters involved. On the one hand, the formal side of the notion of illocutionary construction has been extended to include lexical, suprasegmental, and suprasentential features. On the other hand, it has been suggested that the semantics of the illocutionary construction could be best accounted for in a systematic way in the form of propositional ICMs. There is, however, one more relevant aspect in which this constructional account of illocutions differs from previous ones. Let us deal with it in detail now.

It is interesting to note the fact that there exists a vast, probably infinite number of possible illocutionary constructions for a given speech act type. By way of illustration, consider the following instances of requests, which are but a small subset of all the possible expressions which could be used to convey this illocutionary intention:

- (1) Can you hold on a second?
- (2) Can you hold on a second, please?
- (3) Could you hold on a second, (please)?
- (4) Will/would you hold on a second, (please)?
- (5) Can't/Couldn't/Won't/Wouldn't you hold on a second, (please)?
- (6) Hold on a second, please/can you?/can't you?/will you?/etc.
- (7) Would you mind holding on a second, (please)?
- (8) Hold on a second, if you don't mind/if it is not too much trouble.
- (9) May I ask you to hold on a second?

The consequences that this has for an account of illocutionary phenomena such as the one pursued here should be carefully considered. A different number of meaning conditions of the relevant illocutionary ICM may become activated through linguistic means, thereby giving rise to illocutionary constructions which vary as to their degree of codification. Since the variables which make up illocutionary ICMs are scalar in nature, and since the rating of a given speech act type in relation to each of such variables depends on the needs of each specific interactional exchange, the number of illocutionary constructions is bound to be fairly high, as has been illustrated above in relation to requests. Moreover, if it is taken into account the fact that different linguistic resources may be used to activate the same meaning conditions - although in slightly different ways-, the amount of illocutionary constructions may be even higher. In order to increase the degree of mitigation of a request, for instance, the linguistic system offers an array of resources such as the use of lexicalised mitigators (the adverb *please*), the use of past tense modals (*could* or *would*), the use of expressions indicating little cost in terms of the amount of time that needs to be invested (*Can you hold on a minute?*), etc.

To sum up, the number of possible illocutionary constructions for the expression of a given speech act in a particular context is almost limitless due to (1) the open-ended nature of ICMs, (2) the scalar nature of the parameters of illocutionary ICMs, (3) the high number of possible interplays between the variables of a particular illocutionary ICM, (4) the cline of codification which is possible in the expression of a particular act, and (5) the varied number of resources that language offers for the expression of a given variable. It would be virtually impossible to analyse the totality of contexts and the related ratings of the meaning conditions of a speech act category in those contexts. And if not impossible, it would certainly be a rather uneconomical approach to the description of illocutionary phenomena, since it would lead to the formulation of a specific construction for each possible formal configuration (e.g. constructions for requests with *will you...?*, constructions for requests with *can you...?*, constructions for requests with *can you + please?*, and so on. For each

formal configuration, the construction would specify the meaning conditions of the corresponding illocution that are instantiated. In order to maximise the economy of our constructional explanation of illocutionary phenomena, I have taken a different approach. After describing the meaning conditions which make up the ICMs of those directive and commissive speech acts under consideration, I shall attempt to determine the *realization procedures* (i.e. linguistic means) which are made available to us by language to activate those meaning conditions.³⁹ How many and which of these realization procedures are used in each specific interactional exchange (i.e. how many and which of them constitute the form of an illocutionary construction) will be determined by the specific assessment of each of the variables of a given illocutionary ICM in each particular interactional exchange.⁴⁰

3.4.5. A Grammatical Model for the Description of Illocutionary Realization Procedures

The semantic side of illocutionary constructions will be structured in the form of propositional ICMs, as explained in section 3.4.2. It remains to be decided, however, what grammatical theory best suits the description of the realization procedures which constitute the formal side of illocutionary constructions.

As advanced in section 3.4.4, such theory should be such that it is capable of providing enough terminological wealth to include in our description of realization procedures small chunks of language, like the traditional categories of adverbs, prepositional phrases, adjuncts, etc., clausal and intraclausal relationships (subordination, coordination), and also supraclausal relationships (i.e. those meaning relations between clauses which are not overtly expressed

39. The term realization procedure has been borrowed from Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal (1997). These authors understand it as the options offered by the linguistic system for the realization of a certain strategy. Similarly, in this analysis, realization procedures activate meaning conditions of illocutionary ICMs.

40. Notice also that this approach in terms of realization procedures differs from the Searlean account based on illocutionary force indicating devices. Searle's ifids were thought of as activators of a certain illocutionary category as a whole, while our realization procedures instantiate specific variables of a given illocutionary ICM. According to Searle, for instance, a sentence with a first person subject in the future tense (e.g. I'll wait forever), if uttered in the appropriate context, fully activates the illocutionary category of promises. In the present approach, this sentence only instantiates two of the variables of the promising ICM (i.e. agent type and time of the action) and is, therefore, capable of hinting towards, but not of fully codifying the illocutionary act of promising. In the appropriate context of utterance, that sentence may, of course, lead to an unambiguous promising interpretation, but this will largely be in virtue of the fact that the rest of the variables of the promising ICM are activated contextually, not because of the linguistic form of the speech act.

by means of connectors or conjunctions). In this connection, classical English grammars, like Quirk et al. (1985), devote some space to the study of those suprasentential connections which can take place within a text, as well as to the description of the typology of connective devices (e.g. pragmatic and semantic implication, lexical linkage, etc.) which effect those connections, but which do not provide us with the necessary terminology for distinguishing between the different types of interclausal relationship. In Quirk et al. (1985: 1423 ff.) passing reference is made to the existence of causal and temporal connections. However, this does not do justice to the rich inventory of relationships which may be established between two independent sentences (e.g. consecutive, reason, purpose, conditional, etc.). A grammatical model which offers the necessary terminology for the description of realization procedures at the discourse level is Dik's (1989, 1997) FG. Within FG, the formal and semantic properties of clauses are described in terms of an abstract underlying clause structure. A different component of FG, the system of expression rules, assigns a concrete form, order, and intonation pattern to the constituents of the underlying clause structure in a way compatible with the peculiarities of each language. This model of grammar is structured in four layers of analysis of the underlying clause:

Layer 1, which deals with the analysis of *predicates* (i.e. properties or relations) and *terms* (i.e. entities).

Layer 2, which deals with the analysis of *predications* (i.e. states of affairs).

Layer 3, which deals with the analysis of *propositions* (i.e. possible facts).

Layer 4, which deals with the analysis of *illocutions* (i.e. speech acts).

At each of these levels of analysis, FG distinguishes between two types of device, *operators* and *satellites*, which capture those modifications or modulations which can be brought about at the relevant level by grammatical or lexical means respectively (Dik: 1989: 52). Thus, we may find level one operators and satellites (e.g. perfective-imperfective operator, manner or speed satellites, etc.), level two operators and satellites (e.g. tense operators, time satellites, etc.), level three operators and satellites (e.g. subjective modality), and level four operators and satellites (e.g. declarative, imperative, interrogative operators, manner satellites, etc.). Now, what is of special interest for the purposes of this study and what acted as an even stronger motivating factor in the choice of FG as the grammatical model for the description of our realization procedures is Dik's (1997: 432) suggestion to the effect that "the functional relations at discourse level overlap with the semantic relations of satellites at clause level." It is possible, therefore, to speak of a *discourse nucleus* which can be subject to modifications and specifications by a variety

of *discourse satellites*. In other words, the typology of intraclausal nucleus-satellite relations can also be found at the interclausal or discourse level, which provides us with the necessary terminology for this level of description of our realization procedures (e.g. discourse satellites of reason, purpose, condition, etc.).

The notions borrowed from Dik's FG which will be useful to the analysis of speech acts in chapters four to thirteen are the following:

-*Quantifying Term Operators*, which inform us about the size of the intended referent ensemble (1989: 149).

-*Level One Beneficiary Satellites*, which specify the person or institution for whose benefit the state of affairs is effected (1989: 195).

-*Level One Company Satellites*, which specify an entity together with whom the state of affairs is effected (1989: 195).

-*Level One Manner Satellites*, which indicate the way in which an Action is carried out, a Position is maintained, or a Process occurs (1989: 196).

-*Level One Inherent Modality*, which captures the relations between a participant and the realization of the state of affairs in which he is involved. Inherent modality includes distinctions related to the ability, willingness, or the question of whether the participant is obliged, or permitted to do the state of affairs (1989: 205).

-*Level Two Epistemic Objective Mood Operators*, which express the speaker's evaluation of the likelihood of occurrence of a state of affairs in terms of his knowledge of states of affairs in general (1989: 205).

-*Level Two Deontic Objective Mood Operators*, which express the speaker's evaluation of the likelihood of occurrence of a state of affairs in terms of a system of moral, legal, or social norms (1989: 205).

-*Level Two Time Satellites*, which represent the lexical means through which the state of affairs expressed in the nuclear predication can be located with respect to temporal dimensions (1989: 206).

-*Level Two Reason Satellites*, which express the motivation underlying the occurrence of a state of affairs (1989: 207).

-*Level Two Purpose Satellites*, which express the motivation for the occurrence of a state of affairs-1 by specifying a future state of affairs-2 that the controller wishes to achieve through state of affairs-1.

-*Level Two Condition Satellites*, which specify a condition for the occurrence of a state of affairs (1997: 432).

-*Reason, purpose, and condition satellites* may also be found at the illocutionary and discourse level.

-*Combinatory Coordination*, which is a construction consisting of two members which are functionally equivalent, bound together at the same level of structure by means of the combinatory coordinator *and* (1997: 191).

-*Alternative Coordination*, which is a construction consisting of two members which are functionally equivalent, bound together at the same level of structure by means of the alternative coordinator *or* (1997: 191).

In FG the term *addressee* is used to refer to “extra-clausal constituents which may precede, follow, or even interrupt the clause, and which explicitly signal that the utterance is intended for the person named in the Address” (1997: 385). Addressees include proper names, titles, functions, or references to the relation between the speaker and the addressee. In my analysis, however, I prefer to use the traditional term *vocative* for these purposes, in order to avoid confusion with the more general sense of the word *addressee* as simply the person to whom the message is directed.

For some of the realization procedures to which I refer in my analysis FG has no specific terminology available. For example, Dik refers to the form *please* simply as an *element* of the underlying clause (1997: 246). Among other elements for which I shall use non-FG labels, there are the so-called *hedges*, *expressions of tentativeness*, *stock expressions*, and *repetitions*, whose nature will become apparent in the discussion of the examples of my analysis.

Together with the terminological wealth that FG offers for the description of realization procedures, this model is also preferable to others, because it shares the cognitive commitment to the study of language in a psychologically adequate way. In this connection, the description of language carried out within FG is expected to conform to a standard of psychological adequacy, “in the sense that it must relate as closely as possible to psychological models of linguistic competence and linguistic behaviour” (1989: 13).

4. THE ACT OF ORDERING

4.1. The ICM of Ordering

The analysis of the data confirms the initial hypothesis that speech acts are prototypical categories. As was expected, orders can be defined in terms of a prototype or best example which optimally displays a number of attributes. The degree of optimality with which a given attribute is instantiated in each concrete case, and/or the non-satisfaction of one or more of the non-essential attributes, explains the existence of more peripheral instances of ordering. Prototypical orders take the following values:

-Agent Type. Prototypical orders present the addressee as the agent of the action proposed in the predication.

-Time of the Action. Central instances of ordering refer to the future.

-Agent's Capability. Prototypical orders presuppose an addressee who is capable of carrying out the specified future action.

-Addressee's Will. In prototypical instances of ordering, the addressee's wish or desire to carry out the proposed future action is usually small. In other words, prototypical orders display a low degree of addressee's will.

-Cost-Benefit. Central instances of the category of ordering are characterized by involving a cost to the addressee and a benefit to the speaker.

-Optionality. Prototypical orders offer little or no choice to the addressee in deciding upon his subsequent course of action.

-Mitigation. Clear examples of orders are rarely mitigated.

-Speaker's Will. Since central cases of orders generally involve a benefit to the speaker, it is only logical that the speaker's degree of will should be high too.

-Power. Orders are generally uttered by speakers who have some authority over their addressees.

The two remaining variables (social distance and formality) have been found to have little relevance for distinguishing orders from other directives when they are considered on their own. Nevertheless, they correlate with other variables in interesting ways, giving rise to certain alterations in the force of the speech act and sometimes even in its categorization. Since our knowledge of orders includes these aspects, the description of these two variables should also be part of the ICM of ordering. Most examples in the corpus reveal that as long as the rest of the attributes listed above hold, the speech act will remain an order independently of the formality of the context or the social distance that exists between the speakers. Nevertheless, it has been observed that in those order instances where one or more of the attributes of the corresponding ICM are not present the variables of formality and social distance can play a significant role in the interpretation of a certain utterance as a weaker or stronger order or as a different kind of speech act altogether. Consider example (1):

(1) -Joe: They are my... My name is not Felix.

-Patricia: I know. (Calling out). Mike! Tony! Find a place for these boxes.
(JVV)

Agent type: Addressees

Time of the action: Future

Agent's capability: High

Addressee's will: Weak

Cost-Benefit: Benefit to S; Cost to A

Optionality: Low

Mitigation: Low

Speaker's will: Strong

Social Power: Equal

Social Distance: Small (friends)

Formality: Informal

In this example, one of the attributes of the ICM of ordering does not fully apply, namely, the speaker does not have much authority over the addressee. The speech act seems to be half way between an order and a request. The context in which it was uttered (informal context, small social distance) favours its interpretation as a request. It seems as if the closeness that exists between the speakers helps somehow to increase the level of optionality of the speech act, despite the use of the imperative and, that, as a result, it softens

its force. However, if the same utterance took place in a formal context or if the social distance between the participants were greater, given its harshness, its interpretation as an order would be preferable.

These observations suggest that there is an interesting correlation between the degree of formality of the context or the social distance between the participants, on the one hand, and the strength of the force of the order, on the other hand. The two following principles capture these phenomena:

-the smaller the social distance between the speaker and the addressee, the weaker the force of the order, and vice versa.

-the more informal the context, the weaker the force of the order, and vice versa.

By way of illustration, consider example (2) below:

(2) -Waturi: Get rid of the light... This isn't your bedroom, this is an office. Maybe if you start treating this like a job instead of some kind of welfare hospital, you'll shape up. (JV)

This sentence, uttered by a boss to his employee, qualifies as a prototypical order. The fact that the context of utterance is a formal one (i.e. an interview with the boss) and that the social distance between the participants is substantial contributes to making it into a strong order. However, if uttered in a more informal situation (i.e. a casual conversation between a boss and his employee during a coffee break) or if the social distance between them were smaller (if they were brothers, for instance), the same utterance would be felt as a weaker order. The reason for this correlation between formality/social distance and the strength of ordering stems from the interplay between the variables of social distance and formality, on the one hand, and the parameter of optionality, on the other. Generally, both informal contexts and small social distances between participants enhance the addressee's freedom of action. We usually feel greater freedom to act as we want when we find ourselves in an informal situation, because in a formal context our actions generally need to conform to stricter rules of behaviour. Likewise, we feel that the existence of a small social distance from our interlocutor provides us with a greater freedom of action. Imagine, for instance, that one's boss is also one's brother. In cases like this, there is an interplay between the variables of social power and social distance to the effect that the speaker's authority is somehow overruled to a greater or lesser extent. Thus, the optionality of the addressee to decide upon his subsequent course of action is enhanced. As a result, such an increase in the optionality variable triggers off a weakening of the force of the order. These observations

can be propositionally described as conventions 1 and 2 of the ICM of ordering:⁴¹

Convention 1: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of optionality, and the weaker the force of the order.*

Convention 2: *The more informal the context, the higher the degree of optionality, and the weaker the force of the order.*

According to our description of the ICM of ordering, a good example of a prototypical order could be the following:

(3) -Waturi: (to his employee) Take that light off your desk. (JVV)

As is understood from the information contained in the script, the speaker has authority over the addressee (i.e. he is the addressee's boss). His authority is granted by a social institution (the company they work for). The speech act denotes a future state of affairs which is to be brought about by the addressee and which is beneficial to the speaker and costly to the addressee. Since the ordered action involves a benefit to the speaker, his degree of will is high. On the contrary, the degree of addressee's will is low because the performance of the action involves a cost to him. The utterance is not mitigated in any sort of way. Finally, since the speaker has some authority over the addressee, the options which the latter has to refuse to carry out the order are scarce (low optionality). Moreover, as the social distance between the speakers is large and the context of utterance is somehow formal, the resulting order is considerably strong and harsh.

As suggested above, less clear members of a given category are characterized by the presence of certain attributes to a lower degree. This is confirmed by some of the examples in the corpus. In this respect, it has already been shown how low degrees of authority of the speaker over the addressee motivate an interpretation of the speech act which is closer to a request than to an order (example 1).

In example (4) below, it is the cost-benefit variable which fails to conform sufficiently to that of a prototypical order and, as a result, the interpretation of the utterance is half way between the acts of ordering and of advising. This boundary case deserves closer examination:

41. The conventions included in the illocutionary ICMs capture the consequences of the interplay between two or more defining variables of the corresponding illocutionary category.

(4) -Brian's mother: Is this the first time or the last time we do this?

-Brian: Last...

-Brian's mother: Well, get in there and use the time to your advantage.

-Brian: Mom, we're not supposed to study; we just sit there and do nothing. (TBC)

Most attributes of the ICM of ordering hold: the speaker presents a future action for realization; the addressee is the expected agent of the future action; the addressee has the necessary capacity to carry out the action; the speaker has authority over the addressee, which is granted by a social institution (the family); there is no mitigation; the degree of optionality is extremely low (the child has to do what his mother tells him to do); the degree of speaker's will is high (the mother wants her child to do as she says); and the degree of addressee's will is low (the child does not want to carry out the proposed action). However, the cost-benefit variable does not behave like that of prototypical orders. To begin with, unlike more central orders, the state of affairs is beneficial to the speaker only in the obvious sense that the addressee would comply with the speaker's order. Because of this, the interpretation of the sentence as an order is not so straightforward. Moreover, the nature of the state of affairs (beneficial/costly) is ambiguous between two different readings. From the point of view of the speaker, it involves a benefit to the addressee (i.e. the mother wants her child to go to school and make the most of his time, which will be beneficial to him). From the point of view of the addressee, the state of affairs involves a cost (i.e. the child does not want to go to school because he finds it boring).

The mixed nature of the speech act is explained by the fact that there is no obvious benefit to the speaker and that the nature of the state of affairs can be understood as either costly or beneficial depending on whose opinion is considered (i.e. the speaker's or the addressee's). From the point of view of the speaker, the utterance seems to be meant as a combination of an order and a piece of advice. That is to say, the mother seems to be advising her son about the right kind of behaviour, while at the same time she uses her authority over him to make sure that he will follow her piece of advice. Nevertheless, from the point of view of the child, the utterance is more clearly an order, given that he can only see the carrying out of the state of affairs as costly. In any case, what is of interest to our discussion is the fact that the lesser optimality of one of the attributes of the ICM of ordering (i.e. a benefit to the speaker) is responsible for the less clear status of the utterance as a member of that category.

On other occasions the non-satisfaction of the cost-benefit variable results in a further non-fulfillment of the parameter of addressee's will. Since prototypical orders involve a cost to the addressee, they are also characterized

by displaying a low degree of will on the part of the addressee. However, there are circumstances in which, despite the cost of carrying out the proposed action, the addressee's will is strong; for example, (1) when someone has an altruistic desire to do something costly in favour of others -the benefit is to a third person-, or (2) when the carrying out of a costly action may bring about future benefits -when the action involves a short-term cost but a long-term benefit to the addressee. The following sentences illustrate these facts:

(5) Doctor to mother of ill child: Put her to bed, give her an aspirin and let her sleep all day.

(6) As Tom hustled Pugwash and the pirates away, she ran back to the Jolly Jailer. "Out with 'ee all!" she called to her customers in the bar. "We all know Mayor Mutton an' 'is men rigged the election. Now's the time to give 'em their cummupance. Follow me!" And she led the noisy group out into the churchyard. "Quiet all off 'ee!" she ordered. "Hide behind the tombstones an' attack when I tell 'ee!" (BNC)

In both cases the addressees are willing to carry out the proposed action: in example (5) in order to help a third party, and in example (6) in order to achieve a future common benefit (revenge against their enemies). In both examples, the benefit is not to the speaker -as is the case in prototypical orders-, but to a third person in example (5) and to the addressee herself in example (6). However, the order reading is still maintained due to the fact that the addressee is presented as having recognized a certain degree of authority in the speaker. In example (5) this authority stems from the speaker's superior knowledge on health matters. In example (6), the speaker's power emerges from the simple fact that she has been accepted as the leader of the popular movement. Since this kind of power is less central than that based on institutional facts, examples (5) and (6) appear as less prototypical instances of orders and as a matter of fact they could even be seen as boundary cases between the acts of ordering and instructing (in which case the speaker need not have any authority over the addressee).

Also in relation to the power variable, consider examples (7) and (8):

(7) She kicked out at him as he covered her body with his but he held her tight and rolled with her into the protection of the trees. "Keep on your belly," he ordered as he grabbed the Greener. He didn't bother to look back to see whether the shots were coming from the patrol boat or from the tender. (BNC)

(8) Claire is getting upset.

-Claire: Do you want me to puke?

-Bender: Over the panties, no Bra, blouse unbuttoned, Calvin's in a ball on the front seat past eleven on a school night?

-Andrew: Leave her alone! (TBC)

In both examples (7) and (8), the attribute of the ICM of ordering which states that the speaker has authority over the addressee does not seem to hold. Speaker and addressee have equal social power. They are friends and neither of them is the other's subordinate. According to the findings above, the failure of these instances to comply with this specific attribute should make of them less clear members or even non-members of the category. Our knowledge of the English language, however, tells us that this is not the case. Intuitively, those utterances are understood as fairly clear instances of ordering. There are two possible answers to this puzzle. First, it could be the case that the power attribute is actually not relevant to the description of the ICM of ordering. That is to say, it may not be necessary for the speaker to have power over the addressee to order him to do something. Second, it could also be the case that my initial definition of the social power attribute was not accurate enough and that it should be redefined so that it can accommodate instances such as (7) and (8) above. I believe that it is this second hypothesis that is the correct one, because as suggested by Verschueren (1985: 254), the authority involved in the performance of orders need not arise exclusively from a social institution. Physical superiority, for instance, can also secure the performance of a prototypical order.

Examples (7) and (8) above point to a further kind of authority which endows the speaker with the necessary power to perform an order, and which I shall label *moral authority*. Let us see why. If these examples are observed closely, it becomes apparent that there is one further difference from what has been defined as prototypical orders. This point of divergence concerns the cost-benefit attribute. In both examples, the benefit is not to the speaker (as is the case with the most central cases of orders) but to the addressee in example (7) and to a third person (i.e. Claire) in example (8). In the first case, the speaker is trying to save the addressee's life; in the second he is trying to defend Claire against someone else's verbal attacks. The fact that the speaker is not acting in his own interest but in someone else's seems to endow him with the moral authority necessary to perform the corresponding orders.

There is, however, a significant difference between orders performed by a speaker who possesses moral authority and those uttered by a speaker whose authority comes from an institution or from his physical superiority. In the latter cases, there is a higher probability that the addressee will feel forced to comply with the order. The woman in example (7) can refuse to be helped and actually does refuse to comply with the speaker's order. On the contrary,

someone who receives an order from a superior (i.e. institutional power) or from someone whose physical superiority can threaten his well-being, would not generally refuse to comply.

The discussion of the authority variable does not end here. There are other instances which do not fall within any of the kinds of authority dealt with so far, but where the speaker still seems to be endowed with a power of some kind that allows him to perform an order and which in turn explains that the addressee understands his utterance as such. Consider these examples:

(9) -Brian: Well, would you mind telling me how you know all this about me?

Allison reaches in her bag.

-Allison: I stole your wallet.

-Brian: Give it to me... (TBC)

(10) -Claire: Okay, what about you, you hypocrite! (...) What would your friends say if we were walking down the hall together. They'd laugh their asses off and you've probably told them you were doing it with me so they'd forgive you for being seen with me.

-Bender: (furious once again) Don't you ever talk about my friends! You don't know any of my friends, you don't look at any of my friends and you certainly wouldn't condescend to speak to any of my friends so you just stick to the things you know, shopping, nail polish, your father's BMW. (TBC)

In both examples, speaker and addressee are equals as regards both institutional and physical power. Also in both cases the speaker is acting in his own benefit and, therefore, he cannot be said to have moral authority in the sense proposed above. Even so, they both seem to have some kind of authority that explains why their utterances are readily understood as orders. In both examples (9) and (10) the orders under scrutiny are responses to impolite acts on the part of the other participants in the conversation. Thus, in example (9), Brian has just been told by Allison that she has stolen his wallet. In example (10), Bender has just been insulted by Claire. It seems that, somehow, the fact that the speaker has been ill-treated by his interlocutor puts him in a superior position that allows him to perform a basically discourteous act as an order. Logically, it is only natural that one defends oneself from other people's attacks. In example (9) such self-defence involves ordering Allison to give back the wallet. In example (10), it involves ordering Claire to mind her own business. For lack of a better term, I shall label this kind of power *self-defence authority*. Furthermore, in the light of the above discussion, the power variable should be redefined in the following terms:

Power: Prototypical orders are characteristically uttered by speakers who possess institutional or physical power over the addressee. Other less central instances of power (e.g. moral, self-defence, knowledge, addressee-granted authority) give way to less prototypical orders.

As shown in relation to examples (5)-(10), the specific ratings of the power variable correlate with the degree of optionality, and as a result, with the force of the order. These interplays make up the third of the conventions of the ICM of ordering:

Convention 3: *The lower the degree of power of the speaker and/or the less central the type of power, the higher the degree of optionality, and the weaker the force of the order, and vice versa.*

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF ORDERING⁴²

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the addressee
<u>Time of Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent’s Capability</u>	Prototypically high
<u>Addressee’s Will</u>	Prototypically low
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Prototypical orders involve a benefit to the speaker and a cost to the addressee
<u>Optionality</u>	Prototypically low See conventions 1 and 2
<u>Mitigation</u>	Prototypically low
<u>Speaker’s Will</u>	Prototypically high
<u>Power</u>	Prototypically the speaker has some degree of authority over the addressee
<u>Social Distance</u>	Orders can be performed whatever the social distance that holds between the speakers See convention 1
<u>Formality</u>	Orders can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context See convention 2

42. The underlined variables correspond to the necessary attributes of the category.

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF ORDERING

Convention 1: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of optionality, and the weaker the force of the order, and vice versa.*

Convention 2: *The more informal the context, the higher the degree of optionality, and the weaker the force of the order, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The lower the degree of power of the speaker and/or the less central the type of power, the higher the degree of optionality, and the weaker the force of the order, and vice versa.*

4.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Ordering

Orders have traditionally been associated with the use of imperative sentence types. A closer look at the corpus, however, reveals the inaccuracy of such an unqualified equation between orders and imperative sentences:

Imperative-based orders	127 occurrences
Declarative-based orders	33 occurrences
Interrogative-based orders	0 occurrences
Total number of orders	150 occurrences

To begin with, not only orders, but also all other categories of directives in the corpus (i.e. requesting, warning, advising, etc.) can, in principle, be performed by means of an imperative. Furthermore, orders can also be conveyed through the use of declarative sentences (e.g. *You are to do your homework right now*). In this section, it is my objective to formulate some of the most common of those realization procedures which are used by real speakers of English to activate the variables that make up the ICM of ordering. The following is also an attempt to show that the traditional intuitive association between orders and imperatives is not completely unfounded. For reasons that are given below, imperative sentences are more highly specialized for the expression of directives -and, therefore, for the expression of orders- than declarative or interrogative sentences are.

4.2.1. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Ordering

The compatibility of imperative sentences with the expression of ordering derives from the fact that sentences of this kind activate three meaning conditions of the ICM of ordering. The imperative construction pairs imperative sentences with the following three meaning conditions:

- (1) Presentation of a state of affairs to be brought about in the future.
- (2) The addressee is presented as the agent.
- (3) The speaker is presented as having a certain desire that the addressee carries out the action.

Imperative sentences *per se*, leaving aside the consideration of other lexical, grammatical, suprasegmental, and/or suprasentential factors, activate three of the defining variables of the ICM of ordering, namely, the facts that orders (1) involve future actions, (2) that these future actions are to be carried out by the addressee, and (3) that the speaker wishes that the addressee carries out the future action. These three variables, however, are shared by most directive types to a lesser or a greater extent. Consequently, the same factors that make imperative sentences appropriate for the expression of ordering make them also suitable for conveying other directives (e.g. requesting, advising, begging, etc.). It is necessary, therefore, to consider the relevance of other formal properties which, used in conjunction with the imperative sentence type, will result in a higher degree of codification in the performance of an order. Those found in the corpus are considered below.

Fall/Rise-Fall Intonation

In the first place there is a significant subgroup, amounting to approximately fifteen per cent of the examples of imperative-based orders in the corpus, which display a strong authoritative falling or rise-falling intonation. In those instances drawn from written sources, this type of intonation is signalled by the use of exclamation marks. In the case of those examples taken from films, the intonation was either directly observed in the performance of the actors or it was clearly specified in the script of the film (e.g. he answers with a strong, angry, etc. intonation...). For instance:

- (1) Jules: Now describe to me what Marsellus Wallace looks like! (PF)
- (2) Teacher to one of his students: Step up here! (TBC)
- (3) Executive officer orders *abruptly*: Lieutenant Hellerman, you have your orders! Now seal the goddam bay before we all go down!!! (CT)

This type of intonation is generally used by people who have some degree of authority over their addressees. In this way, its use activates an important variable of the ICM of orders: the fact that the speaker has power over the addressee. Most importantly, the existence of a fall or rise-fall intonation implies that the utterance conveys a definite decision on the part of the speaker. A fall or a rise-fall intonation, as opposed to a rising intonation does not leave a possibility for discussion. In this way, the characteristic lack of optionality of orders is activated. The use of this realization procedure

together with an imperative sentence activates the following variables of the ICM of ordering:

- (1) Presents a future action for realization.
- (2) Presents the addressee as the agent of the future action.
- (3) Presents the speaker as having a certain desire that the future action is carried out by the addressee.
- (4) Presents the speaker as more powerful than the addressee.
- (5) Displays no mitigation.
- (6) Displays lack of optionality.

Imperatives and fall/fall-rise intonation patterns constitute grammatical and suprasegmental means of activating, among others, some of the variables of the ICM of ordering. Let us now consider other means of a lexical nature.

Time Satellites of Immediateness

A small number of imperative-based orders in the corpus (about six per cent of them) include a level two time satellite. Consider the following examples:

- (4) “The rest of you exit, *now*,” he orders abruptly. (BNC)
- (5) “Go *now*,” he ordered, “*at once*, and rang off.” (BNC)
- (6) “Betty,” he ordered, “get that guy Talmadge we just brought back from Madrid up here *right away*.” (BNC)

In all cases the time satellites in italics refer to the most immediate future and this specifically activates two variables of the ICM of ordering: power and cost-benefit. To begin with, the use of a time satellite of immediateness, like those in examples (4)-(6) is felt as a further imposition on the addressee. The latter is not only asked to do something (cost), but he is also asked to do it within a certain period of time (greater cost and smaller freedom of action). This new imposition adds to the actual cost of having to carry out the expressed action. This obvious activation of the cost-benefit and optionality variables triggers that of the power attribute. In principle, the higher the imposition, the greater the speaker’s power needs to be in order to perform an order. The level of specialization of the use of imperatives plus level two time satellites for the expression of orders is determined by the number of variables of the ICM of ordering that are activated by means of these realization procedures:

- (1) Presents a future action for realization.
- (2) Presents the addressee as the agent of the future action.
- (3) Presents the speaker as having a certain desire that the future action is carried out by the addressee.
- (4) Presents the speaker as more powerful than the addressee.
- (5) Displays no mitigation.
- (6) The action is presented as costly to the addressee.
- (7) The optionality of the addressee is constrained.

It should be noticed that the resources for the instantiation of order-related variables -imperative sentences, fall/fall-rise intonation patterns, level two time satellites of immediateness in an imperative sentence- can be used together or separately. As should be expected, when they are used together, the degree of codification of the resulting piece of ordering increases. Consider the following example in which the three realization procedures discussed so far are used simultaneously:

(7) Vincent: If you're through havin' your little hissy fit, this chick is dyin', get your needle and get it *now!* (PF)

Finally, as will be illustrated in sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3, the realization procedures described so far can also be used in conjunction with declarative and interrogative sentences.

Absence of Beneficiary Satellites

Several instances of imperative-based orders in our corpus contain a level one beneficiary satellite. See the following examples:

- (8) "Bring *us* a bottle of that Stag's Leap 1975," he ordered. (BNC)
- (9) "Bring *me* my autovin-autovon speaker phone," he ordered his driver. (BNC)

Level one beneficiary satellites of this kind activate the cost-benefit variable (i.e. the carrying out of the future action is beneficial to the speaker). However, orders share this feature with other directives like requests or beggings. Because of this, the existence of a level one beneficiary satellite cannot in principle be regarded as an exclusive realization procedure for the expression of the act of ordering. Let us compare, however, examples (8) and (9) above, with the following utterances in which there is not any level one beneficiary satellite:

- (10) Bring a bottle of that Stag's Leap 1975.
 (11) Bring the autovin-autovan phone.

I debated as to whether the presence or absence of a level one beneficiary satellite could have any bearing on the illocutionary interpretation of these sentences. A first, a rather intuitive answer to this question was offered by a group of native informants from the universities of Salford (U.K) and Berkeley (U.S.A). All of them pointed out that sentences (10) and (11), which do not display a level one beneficiary satellite, seemed better examples of orders than sentences (8) and (9), which do have a satellite. The problem was, therefore, to explain why the absence of this kind of satellite activates an order reading for these native informants more readily. Once again this has to do with the special power relation which holds between the participants (i.e. speaker's superiority) and which makes it unnecessary for the speaker to justify or explain his order. Stating who is to be the beneficiary of the action is not necessary in the case of orders, because the addressee's optionality to carry out the action, given the speaker's superiority, will be equally low independently of whether there is a beneficiary or of who happens to be the beneficiary. Therefore, in accordance with the general linguistic principle of economy, it is unnecessary to further specify an order with this kind of level one satellite. On the contrary, the existence of beneficiary satellites points to a different illocutionary meaning, usually that of a request.

In contrast with orders, in the case of requests the optionality of the addressee to carry out the proposed action is high -due to the lack of a power asymmetry between the participants. As a result, the use of a level one beneficiary satellite in this case does have a *raison d'être*, namely, to persuade the addressee to carry out the action. This property of beneficiary satellites was pointed out by Ruiz de Mendoza (1994b). He argues that the fact that the speaker presents himself as the beneficiary activates a model of social interaction according to which the members of a community feel compelled to change those states of affairs which are not desirable for others. As pointed out earlier, in the case of orders it is not necessary to activate this cultural model through the use of level one satellites given that, due to his greater authority, the speaker needs not persuade the addressee to comply. The addressee's compliance is taken for granted.⁴³

Use of Vocatives

Now let us consider the following examples:

43. Apparently similar examples like *Give me that screw...* (TBC) are not affected by this discussion because in this case the beneficiary is part of the argument structure of the verb *to give* and not an optional satellite as in examples (8) and (9).

(12) Teacher to his pupil: Sit down *Jobnson...* (BNC)

(13) Sit down *honey*.

(14) Captain to subordinate: *Son*, don't talk to me about duty. Open the fucking safe! (CT)

These sentences exemplify one more type of linguistic resource which may be involved in the activation of some of the variables of the ICM of ordering: the use of vocatives which include terms of address, which signal the existence of a large social distance between the speakers (i.e. use of surnames) or a power asymmetry between them. As pointed out in section 4.1, the smaller the social distance between the participants, the weaker the force of an order. Intimacy is a factor which enhances the degree of optionality of the addressee, hence mitigating the force of the order. In this way, the use of terms of address comes to play a certain role in the activation of this aspect of the variable of social distance in relation to orders. The use of an endearment term of address (i.e. *honey*) activates the variable of social distance by pointing to the intimacy between the speakers. This functions as a mitigator of the force of the imperative. Mitigation is a characteristic feature of prototypical requests, but not so of prototypical orders. The explanation of why the use of an endearment term or a nickname (i.e. signs of intimacy) may function as a mitigator is the following. The corpus attests the existence of what seems to be an unwritten rule of interaction: the smaller the social distance between two people, the more factors like mitigation and politeness are taken for granted. As a consequence, the use of the term of intimacy itself ends up functioning as a kind of mitigator by signalling that the situation is one (i.e. intimacy) in which lack of mitigation is permitted. This may be a case of metonymy. If each situation requires a different degree or even the absence of mitigation, then making reference to the particular situation may stand for the mitigation-conditions associated with it. This is the case with example (13). In example (12), however, the use of the surname -signalling a large social distance- has precisely the opposite function. It announces that, since there is no intimacy between the speakers, the lack of mitigation of the imperative sentence must be understood as just an activation of one of the variables of the ICM of ordering (i.e. lack of mitigation). Because of this, the use of surnames or any other terms indicating the existence of a large social distance between the speakers can be used to make it explicit that the communicative intention of the speaker is that of conveying an order. Imperatives which are accompanied by vocatives pointing to a large social distance between speakers activate the following pieces of knowledge of the ICM of ordering:

(1) Present a future action for realization.

(2) Present the addressee as the agent of the future action.

(3) Present the speaker as having a certain desire that the future action is carried out by the addressee.

(4) Signal that the lack of mitigation of the imperative sentence is due to the fact that the speaker has some authority over the addressee and not to any other possible reasons (i.e. intimacy).

(5) Present the speaker as having authority over the addressee.

Example (14), in which the vocative (i.e. *son*) points to a power asymmetry between the speakers is yet another means of pointing to those same variables and, thus, of increasing the degree of codification of the intended act. This type of vocative signalling power asymmetry is common, for instance, in the context of the army:

(15) *Private Benjamin*, go to your position!

Plural Imperative with Let's

Before ending the discussion on imperative-based orders, I should consider a small group of occurrences which have the peculiarity of being plural imperatives of the following form:

(16) "Let's get the hell out of here," Dennison ordered. (BNC)

(17) "Let's see that hand again," the Indian ordered. (BNC)

The form *let's* has traditionally been associated with the acts of suggesting or proposing in which both the speaker and the addressee are involved in a future action. Since prototypical orders only involve an action carried out by the addressee, the form *let's* is not a very good candidate for their expression. As a matter of fact, all the occurrences of *let's* found in the corpus correspond to boundary instances of orders which fail to fulfil one or more of the variables of the corresponding ICM. In example (16), for instance, the proposed action benefits both the speaker and the addressee. In example (17) it is the variables of cost-benefit and addressee's will that fail to be fulfilled. The speaker has the necessary authority to impose on the addressee, but since the benefit of the addressee's action is to himself, the degree of the addressee's will is high, and therefore, the speaker has no need to utter a strict, imposing order. Given the circumstances, the use of the more polite form *let's* is deemed enough to assure that the addressee will do as told. The understanding of *let's* sentences as orders is dependent to a large extent on contextual information (e.g. knowing the power relationship between the speakers, for instance). It should be borne in mind that this formal configuration is an appropriate vehicle for the expression of less central instances of orders, as (16) and (17) illustrate.

4.2.2. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Ordering

Unlike imperative sentences, declarative sentences *per se* barely instantiate one of the variables of the ICM of ordering and this only partially. Let us formulate the declarative construction:

DECLARATIVE CONSTRUCTION

Form: A declarative sentence.

Meaning: Presentation of a state of affairs.

This construction makes declarative sentences compatible with the performance of orders, since these also involve the presentation of a state of affairs. But it also makes of declarative sentences an extremely little specialized realization procedure for the performance of an order. As a matter of fact, declarative sentences are so little specified as regards their meaning conditions that they are compatible with virtually any type of speech act. Further specifications of the form of a declarative sentence, through grammatical, lexical, and/or suprasegmental means, may contribute to increasing the level of specialization of declaratives for the performance of orders. By way of illustration consider the following examples:

(18) “Nobody is to be late”, she ordered. (BNC)

(19) “You are to finish the report by Monday.”

(20) Mother to her son: No, no, no. You are gonna brush them now. (R)

(21) Marietta to Johnny (a couple): You’ve gotta find ‘em! (WAH)

(22) “You better go out and escort them in,” he ordered the agent who’d just questioned him. (BNC)

(23) “Never mind, but now you must carry it out...,” ordered the PRO. (BNC)

(24) Sailor to a stranger: ... I want ya to stand up and make a nice apology to my girl. (WAH)

(25) “I want this number added to your Listen List when you start operations,” he ordered. (BNC)

Let us see the different declarative-based realization procedures for the performance of orders in turn.

Second Person Singular Subject Plus Non-Past Tense Declaratives

One of the most productive ways of further specifying a declarative sentence in order to make an intended order force explicit is by means of using a second person singular subject and a non-past tense. This is the case in examples (19) to (23). In this fashion, two of the variables of the ICM of ordering are activated: (1) the addressee is presented as the agent, and (2) the action is to take place in the future. Since only two variables of the ICM are activated, this type of realization procedure gives rise to very little codified types of order.

Declaratives Including Level Two Deontic Objective Mood Operators

It is possible, however, to produce more highly codified orders by further specifying declarative sentences which already conform to the formal conditions stated in the previous section. This can be done, for instance, by means of level two deontic mood operators like the one in italics in example (19), which is repeated here for convenience:

(19) “You *are to* finish the report by Monday.”

Realization procedures like the one exemplified in (19) are capable of activating the following variables of the ICM of ordering:

- (1) Presents a future action.
- (2) Presents the addressee as the agent of the future action.
- (3) Presents the addressee as lacking optionality.
- (4) Presents the speaker as having authority over the addressee.

The same meaning of obligation can also be expressed by other level two mood operators as is the case in examples (21)- (23):

(21) You’ve *gotta* find ‘em! (WAH)

(22) “You’d *better* go out and escort them in,” he ordered the agent who’d just questioned him. (BNC)

(23) “Never mind, but now you *must* carry it out...,” ordered the PRO. (BNC)

In chapters 6 and 7, it is shown that deontic objective mood operators may also be found in the expression of the acts of advising and warning. As is made apparent in those chapters, their use as realization procedures for ordering, advising, and warning displays subtle peculiarities motivated by the

differences in the meaning conditions that conform the corresponding illocutionary ICMs.

Declaratives of Speaker's Desire (or Declaratives SD)

Unlike imperative-based orders (section 4.2.1), those instances of declarative-based orders analyzed so far do not explicitly activate the variable related to the speaker's will. Examples (24) and (25) illustrate a way in which this variable can be instantiated by means of a declarative sentence:

(24) Sailor to a stranger: ... I want *ya* to stand up and make a nice apology to my girl. (WAH)

(25) "I want this number added to your Listen List when you start operations," he ordered. (BNC)

This kind of declarative sentence can also be specified as to the person who is to carry out the action that is the object of the speaker's wishes. This is the case in example (24), in which the agent of the future action is to be the addressee as is specified by the second person singular pronoun in italics. Example (24) is therefore a more highly codified order than example (25) in which the agent of the future action has not been overtly presented. This is captured by the fact that while example (24) instantiates the following four variables of the ICM of ordering, example (25) only activates variables (1) to (3):

- (1) Presents a state of affairs for realization.
- (2) The realization of the state of affairs is to take place in the future.
- (3) Presents the speaker as having a certain desire that the state of affairs is realized.
- (4) Presents the addressee as the agent of the action.

4.2.3. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Ordering

The corpus contains no examples of interrogative-based orders. This is probably due to the fact that one of the meaning conditions of the interrogative construction clashes with one of the variables of the ICM of ordering. In order to see this in detail, let us formulate the interrogative construction:

INTERROGATIVE CONSTRUCTION

Form: An interrogative sentence.

Meaning: Presentation of a state of affairs or proposition as (partially) open.

The inherent openness of interrogative sentences generally activates the optionality variable. For this reason, interrogatives are highly compatible with speech act types like requesting or suggesting, which display a high level of addressee's optionality. On the contrary, orders are characterized by offering scarce or, more frequently, no optionality to the addressee and, therefore, they are not very compatible with a sentence type (i.e. interrogative) which is so inherently open and unimposing. It is possible, however, to minimize the characteristic openness and optionality of an interrogative sentence via some of the linguistic resources presented in the previous two sections. In so doing, the speaker will be instantiating, among others, one of the most significant features of orders (their lack of optionality) and, therefore, making it more explicit that his intention is to convey an order. The following examples illustrate this:

(26) Can you switch off the radio, (please)!!!

(27) Could you take that dog out of here right now!!!

In these sentences the falling imposing intonation, together with the use of time satellites of immediateness, contribute to making the speaker's intended speech act of ordering more explicit. The falling intonation inhibits the characteristic openness of interrogative sentences, thus activating the lack of optionality which is typical of orders. The time satellite of immediateness, as shown in section 4.2.1, activates the variables of cost-benefit (greater cost) and optionality (lower freedom of action) characteristic of orders. More indirectly, time satellites also instantiate the variable of power -by presenting the speaker as having some authority over the addressee. This latent authority allows the speaker to overlook rules of social interaction which would otherwise make the use of linguistic resources which increase the cost and diminish the optionality of the addressee inappropriate.

4.3. Generalizations on Realization Procedures for Ordering

This corpus-based study of order expressions yields the following generalizations:

1. Imperative sentences are by far the most explicit means of expressing orders. Even when no other realization procedures are involved, the

imperative sentence-type manages to activate three variables of the ICM of ordering. In contrast to this, the declarative sentence-type only partially activates one parameter of this speech act ICM. Finally, at the other end of the codification-inference continuum, the interrogative sentence-type does not activate any of the variables of the ICM of ordering and, moreover, its meaning condition openly clashes with one of the variables (i.e. low optionality) of the ICM under scrutiny. By presenting a state of affairs or proposition as partially open, interrogative-based utterances convey an idea of optionality which is, in principle, incompatible with the impositive nature of orders.

2. When further realization procedures, other than sentence type, are taken into consideration, it is observed that imperative-based realization procedures for orders still remain the most explicit, followed by declarative-based orders, and at an even greater distance by interrogative-based orders.

3. The simultaneous use of more than one of the realization procedures described above increases the degree of codification of the utterance as an expression of an order. Consider the following sentences:

(28) I want this number added to the listing.

(29) I want this number added to the listing *now!*

(30) *Son*, *get* those damned reports ready! *I want* them *straight away !!!*

The time satellite (i.e. *now*) and falling abrupt intonation of example (29) instantiate the variables of cost-benefit, optionality, and power, thus making the order more explicit than the similar instance of order in (28). Likewise, in example (30), the words in italics are those linguistic elements that activate different variables of the ICM of ordering. The address term *son* points to the speaker's power over the addressee; the imperative verb activates the variables that have to do with the agent type (addressee) and the time of the action (non-past); the declarative sentence of speaker's desire (*I want*) displays the variable related to the speaker's will; the time satellite of immediateness adds a further imposition to the cost of the action and as a result activates the variable of cost-benefit; and finally, the rise-fall abrupt intonation further strengthens the characteristic lack of optionality of orders. As a result, the utterance is a highly codified instance of order which would require a fairly marked context to be interpreted as a different type of speech act.

SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF ORDERING

Agent Type	Imperative sentence type, pronoun <i>you</i> , <i>let's</i>
Time of the Action	Imperative sentence type, non-past verb tense
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>can</i>)
Addressee's Will	
Cost-Benefit	Time satellites of immediateness
Optionality	Fall/rise-fall intonation, level two deontic objective mood operators
Mitigation	Fall/rise-fall intonation, time satellites of immediateness, vocatives (surnames...)
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence type, declaratives SD
Power	Fall/rise-fall intonation, time satellites of immediateness, absence of beneficiary satellites, vocatives (surnames...), level two deontic objective mood operators
Social Distance	Vocatives (surnames...)
Formality	

5. THE ACT OF REQUESTING

5.1. The ICM of Requesting

Agent Type. The corpus shows that the most central instances of requests have the addressee as their agent:

(1) Jeffrey to his aunt: Will you tell Mom when she gets home from the hospital that I've gone to dinner at Sandy Williams's house? (BV)

(2) "Forgive me, my darling," he requested with such charm that she was ready to lie down and die for him. (BNC)

Examples (1) and (2) illustrate this feature which requests share with other directives like ordering, advising, warning, and begging. The same attribute is partially shared by other illocutionary act types (e.g. threatening, inviting) which, as will be shown below, are half way between the categories of directives and commissives. Thus, in the case of threatening, the agent of the future action may be either the speaker or the addressee, depending on the latter's compliance (e.g. *Shut up or I'll punish you*). Finally, the attribute under consideration differentiates requests and directives, in general, from the category of commissive acts: the future action expressed by a promise, for instance, is to be carried out by the speaker, not the addressee.

Only four examples out of the one hundred and eighty instances of requesting considered in this analysis display a different type of agent. The following utterance is representative of this small group of special cases:

(3) Ed to a baby's father: Could I just look at him a little bit more? (RA)

In this example the agent of the action expressed in the predication (e.g. *look at the baby*) is the speaker. However, the addressee is also implicitly expected to perform a future action (to give his leave). Otherwise, the speaker

will not be able to carry out the action he wishes to perform. The rest of the variables of the ICM of requesting, which are described in detail throughout this chapter, are all fulfilled by this group of utterances. Sentence (3) refers to a future action; the addressee is assumed to have the capacity to perform a future action (i.e. to grant permission); the degree of addressee's will is low; the future action will result in a benefit to the speaker and a cost to the addressee; the addressee's degree of optionality is relatively high; the degree of mitigation is also significant; the degree of speaker's will is high; and finally, the power of the speakers is not relevant. The partial fulfilment of one of the variables of the ICM (i.e. addressee as the agent) is not enough to exclude utterances like (3) from the category. Nevertheless, examples of this kind do constitute peripheral instances of requests, namely, requests for permission. That they are still requests is confirmed by the fact that they are also affected by some of the phenomena that have been observed in more central cases of requests. To give just one example, let us consider the correlation between the degree of social distance, the cost of the action, and/or the formality of the context, on the one hand, and the realization of other variables of the ICM of requesting (e.g. mitigation), on the other. As shall be made clear below, the larger the social distance, the greater the cost of the action, and/or the more formal the context, the greater will be the need for mitigation in the performance of a request. By way of illustration consider example number (3) above and (4) and (5) below:

(4) Lawyer to judge (formal context): Your honour, might I ask the court to examine this document, please? (GAS)

(5) Mike to Sandy (friends who have had a row): Could I talk to you a minute? (BV)

In number (3) the social distance between the speakers is large (i.e. they are strangers) and the cost to the addressee is significant (the speaker is asking to be allowed to take a last look at the baby he had previously attempted to kidnap). These two factors motivate the high level of mitigation which is displayed in (3): use of past modal, use of mitigating adverbs like *just*, and expressions like *a little bit more*, which function as mitigators due to the fact that they are attempts to minimize the cost of the action. In example (4), it is the formal context (i.e. a trial) which requires the use of mitigation (e.g. vocative, past modal, adverb *please*). Finally, in (5) it is the costly nature of the action that makes it necessary to use mitigating devices like the past modal or the expression *a minute*. Since these friends have just had a quarrel, the speaker assumes that the addressee will not be willing to talk to him, which explains the costly nature of the requested action.

Requests for permission like (3), (4), and (5) above are easily accommodated as peripheral members of the category of requests in the

present account. This is one of the advantages of a prototype approach such as the one I advocate in this study, especially if compared to traditional definitions of requests like Searle's in terms of strict constitutive rules. His propositional content rule for requests states that they refer to a future act by the addressee. According to this, examples like (3), (4), and (5) above, in which the agent of the action expressed in the predication is clearly the speaker, could not be categorized as requests at all. This would be so, in spite of the fact that requests for permission also imply a future action by the addressee (i.e. the granting of permission).

Time of the Action. Regarding the time variable, all instances of requests in our corpus refer to a non-past time. This variable is shared by the rest of directives and also by commissive speech acts, in which case the future action is to be performed by the speaker. However, this parameter is useful in differentiating the aforesaid categories from those of assertives, questions, or expressives, which are not so narrowly constrained as regards the time expressed in the predication.

Agent's Capability. Prototypical requests also share with other directives and commissives the presupposition that the agent is capable of performing the action presented in the predication. As was the case with the time of the action parameter, this feature distinguishes directives and commissives from other speech act types (e.g. expressives, questions, and assertives, in which case the agent's capability is not relevant to the performance of the act).

Speaker's and Addressee's Will. Just as was the case with orders, the corpus reveals that requests are characterized by displaying a low degree of addressee's will and a high degree of speaker's will. In the vast majority of the examples in the corpus, the addressee's will is weak, in the sense that the addressee would not carry out the action if he had not been requested to do so. In some extreme cases (four occurrences), the addressee may even have a specially negative attitude towards the realization of the state of affairs in question. This negative attitude on the part of the addressee may be explicitly anticipated in requests of the following type:

(6) "Wouldn't you wait?" they requested. "The General would like to greet you." (BNC)

(7) Won't you shut up?

(8) Claire to a friend who keeps chasing her: Can't you just leave me alone? (TBC)

In examples (6) to (8) the use of the negation reflects the speakers' anticipation of the low degree of addressee's will.

Cost-Benefit. The values taken by the variables of speaker's and addressee's will are only logical if we consider the workings of the cost-benefit

parameter. One hundred and seventy three out of the one hundred and eighty requests in the data base refer to the realization of an action which results in a benefit to the speaker and a cost to the addressee. Consider the following examples:

(9) Student to his teacher: Could you describe the ruckus, sir? (TBC)

(10) Teacher to students: Ok, here is how it starts. Um. Okay. Where's... Can you two move that desk down there a little bit? (DM)

Both in (9) and (10) the speaker will benefit from the fact that the addressee does what he is told to do. In (9) he will get to know the meaning of the word *ruckus*. In (10) he will get a table out of his way, something which he needs in order to proceed with his lesson. On the contrary, the performance of those actions does not benefit the addressee (they are costly to him). The addressee will have to invest time and effort in doing something without getting any benefit in return.

The corpus also shows a few instances of requests (seven in total) in which the benefit is not only to the speaker, but also to a third person. In these cases, the performance of the action continues to be costly to the addressee:

(11) Jeffrey and a friend enter a restaurant. Jeffrey says to the waiter: Yeah, could we get a small table in the back? (BV)

Both Jeffrey (i.e. the speaker) and his friend (i.e. a third person) will benefit from the action of the addressee. The cost -although a very small one in this case- is to the addressee.

Furthermore, although the corpus does not include any such occurrence, it is not difficult to imagine the existence of requests in which the benefit is mainly to a third person, and only secondarily to the speaker. Also in this case, the cost is to the addressee:

(12) A father to his eldest daughter: Can you help your brother with his homework today?

In my opinion and in that of the native informants, example (12) is as good an instance of a request as those in which the benefit is just to the speaker. However, let us consider the following case:

(13) Conversation between two strangers in a bar. They have taken to each other from the moment they met and they have been talking for a while.

-Man: Will you have a drink with me?

-Woman: Why not? (DOA)

In the situation depicted in example (13) the carrying out of the action expressed in the predication involves a benefit to the speaker who wants to have a drink with the addressee. But, the act of having a drink is intrinsically beneficial and, in this sense, the action can be understood as beneficial to the addressee too. In cases like this, in which the action benefits both the speaker and the addressee, the utterance tends to be understood as an invitation rather than as a request.

The above discussion on the cost-benefit variable can be summed up by saying that prototypical requests always involve a cost to the addressee, while they may benefit either the speaker, or the speaker and a third person.

It is also interesting to consider the fact that cost-benefit is a scalar parameter, and therefore, the cost which a request brings about can range between a maximum and a minimum point. Compare the following examples:

(14) Sailor to his girlfriend, Lula: Just sounded like an old gal havin' a good time to me... You ready to dance?

Lula to Sailor: I'm always ready to dance. But I need a kiss first, honey. Just one? (WAH)

(15) "Can you remind me to buy a bottle of Martini?" (BNC)

(16) To a friend: Alvy, while you are in California, could you possibly score some coke for me? (AH)

The action presented in sentence (14) is not very costly. It is known from the context that Lula and her boyfriend are on very good terms. Therefore, Lula's request for a kiss cannot be regarded as costly. The only cost involved is the fact that the idea of performing such an action does not emerge from Sailor's volition, but from Lula's. Therefore, the cost stems from the fact that Sailor has to accommodate Lula's wants (i.e. his giving her a kiss) within his own plans (i.e. going dancing). Since the cost of Lula's request is so small - giving a kiss seems like a pretty nice thing to ask for-, Sailor will not find this difficult to do in the least. In example (15) the nature of the requested action is a little more costly. Having to remind someone of something requires the agent to invest time and effort in an activity which is not as rewarding as the one in the previous example (i.e. giving someone a kiss). Finally, the utterance

in (16) conveys a request which involves a great cost to the addressee. The legal consequences of dealing with drugs will be negative for the addressee if he is caught in the possession of cocaine. Hence the costly nature of this request.

According to my findings, the degree of cost associated with the realization of an action does not have any bearing on the prototypicality of a given request instance. In other words, an utterance can be an equally good example of the request category independently of the degree of cost involved in the action that is being asked from the addressee. However, the degree of cost has been found to have an influence on the workings of other variables of the ICM of requesting in several ways which affect the performance of this speech act type and which, therefore, need to be taken into account in the corresponding ICM. The most significant correlations have been observed between the variables of cost-benefit, addressee's will, and mitigation and they can be formulated as conventions 1 and 2 of the ICM of requesting in the following fashion:

Convention 1: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the lower the degree of addressee's will, and vice versa.*

Convention 2: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act the requesting, and vice versa.*

Consider the following sentence:

(17) Patricia and Joe are standing at the edge of an active volcano. Patricia to the religious chief of a tribe who lives at the foot of the volcano: Chief! Chief! Could you come up here, please? (JVV)

Climbing up to the edge of the volcano involves a risk for the chief's life: the cost of performing the requested action is considerable. As a result, the degree of addressee's will is at its lowest possible value (convention 1). Because of this, if the speaker wants to achieve her goal -that the addressee climbs up the volcano-, she needs to make use of a large number of mitigating devices such as the use of the past modal *could* and of the adverb *please*, as a way of persuading the addressee to carry out the action (convention 2).

Optionality. Requests appear as half way between the minimum optionality offered by directives like orders or threats, and the maximum optionality which characterizes the acts of warning, advising, and suggesting. Moreover, commissive or semi-commissive acts like promising, offering, or inviting differ further from requesting in that the optionality variable may affect either the speaker, or both the speaker and the addressee. In relation to requests, however, only the optionality of the addressee is under consideration.

The reason why the optionality levels displayed by requests are higher than those of orders or threats is explained by the fact that the latter types of illocutionary acts are usually performed by *powerful* speakers. That is to say, orders and threats are uttered by speakers who have some authority (either physical, institutional, moral, etc.) over the addressee (see section 4.1 for a discussion of the different types of authority or power which can influence the performance of a speech act). In contrast to this, requests do not require a powerful speaker. As shall be illustrated below in connection with the power variable, the corpus contains requests that are uttered by speakers who are indistinctly more, less, or as powerful as the addressee. Moreover, in those cases in which the speaker happens to have a higher degree of authority than the addressee, it has been observed that either (1) the speaker makes a conscious and explicit effort not to use his power in order to constrain the addressee's optionality, or (2) his power is not operative in the situation under scrutiny. Consider examples (18) and (19):

(18) A boss to his secretary: I need to go through those reports on Saturday. I know it is your day-off, but I would really appreciate it if you gave me a hand with them. Don't feel forced to come, though. I will certainly understand it if you can't make it. (Example suggested by one of our native informants)

(19) Teacher to the janitor of the school: Look, Carl... this is a highly sensitive area and I, I tell you something ... certain people would be very very embarrassed. I would really appreciate it if if this would be something that, that you and I could keep between us... (TBC)

Example (18) describes a situation in which the speaker has institutional power over the addressee (i.e. his secretary). However, on this particular occasion the speaker does not wish to make use of this power so as to achieve his goal of getting his secretary to help him with the reports. That is to say, he does not want to impose his will by means of uttering an order. His intention to give the addressee freedom to decide (i.e. to enhance the optionality conveyed by his utterance) is communicated by means of sentences like *I know it is your day-off; Don't feel forced to come, though. I will certainly understand it if you can't make it.* Example (19), on the other hand, points to a situation in which the speaker's power is not operative. The speaker is a teacher and, in principle, teachers have institutional power over janitors. However, in this particular situation, the addressee (i.e. the janitor) is in possession of some confidential information which, if revealed to the public, would jeopardize the speaker's well-being. Hence the tentativeness and mitigation of the utterance and the higher degree of optionality of the addressee.

The fact that requests offer a higher degree of optionality than orders or threats does not mean that the addressee's freedom to decide on the performance of the requested action is totally unconstrained. In fact, requesting appears as a more bounding act than advising or warning, to name just two examples within the category of directives. The reason for this is that, while requests involve a benefit to the speaker and/or third person, those other directives (i.e. advising and warning) result in a benefit to the addressee. Since it is the addressee who is affected by the future action, he is freer to act as he pleases. In contrast to this, the fact that requests benefit the speaker and/or a third person activates a principle of social interaction which has been described by Ruiz de Mendoza in the following way:

CONVENTION OF POLITENESS

If it is manifest to the addressee that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to the speaker, and if the addressee has the capacity to change that state of affairs, then the addressee should do so (1999: 113. Translation mine).⁴⁴

In the case of requests the addressee is forced to consider this convention of social interaction because his decision to carry out the requested action or to refuse to do so affects others (i.e. speaker, third party). The acts of advising and warning are not influenced by the above convention, because the beneficiary of the action to be carried out by the addressee is the addressee himself.

The conclusion which can be drawn from the above comparison of the functioning of the optionality parameter in relation to requests and to other directives (i.e. ordering and threatening, on the one hand, and advising and warning, on the other) is that the level of optionality which characterizes requests can be located at a middle point between the minimum freedom of action characteristic of ordering and threatening, and the maximum freedom offered by advising and warning. Nevertheless, there exist several factors which may either increase or decrease the freedom of the addressee to comply with a request. The knowledge of how the degree of optionality of a particular instance of request may be affected by the functioning of other parameters (e.g. social distance, formality, power, cost-benefit) is included in the ICM of requesting in the form of a number of conventions.

Let us consider first the influence of the social distance dimension on the optionality of a request. The following examples describe two opposing

44. Ruiz de Mendoza's (1999) convention of politeness will be extended in chapters 8, 11, and 13 in order to accommodate further aspects of expected polite behaviour which are conventionally accepted in the western world.

situations with respect to the social distance between the participants. In the first of them, the social distance is minimal: speaker and addressee are a couple in love with each other. In the second one, there exists a significant social distance between the interlocutors:

(20) Dialogue between Lula and her boyfriend Sailor.

Lula: I barfed. Tried to make it to the bathroom... turned out it was the wrong door anyways... I sort a got it cleared up.

Sailor: You sick?

Lula: A little, I think... Darling?

Sailor: Yeah?

Lula: Come sit by me.

Sailor goes over and sits on the bed holding Lula's hand. (WAH)

(21) A son of a wealthy family has been kidnapped. The FBI talks to the father of the child.

FBI officer: We are gonna get into all of this in time, but for now, just hang loose. Just sit tight so we can get a plan...

Father: Hang loose? Sit tight? (R)

In example (20) it is observed that the existence of a small social distance decreases Sailor's freedom of action. Because he cares for Lula, he is expected to be willing to materialize her wishes. In (21), on the contrary, since there exists a large social distance between the interlocutors, the speaker does not feel so forced to do as told, as can be seen from his questioning the request (i.e. *Hang loose? Sit tight?*). Convention 3 captures this idea:

Convention 3: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Example (21) also illustrates a correlation between the parameters of optionality and cost-benefit in relation to requests. The FBI officer is asking the father of a kidnapped kid to remain passive while his son's life is at risk. This is a great cost which justifies the speaker's non-compliance with the convention of politeness introduced above. This convention constrains the optionality of requests by pointing to the interactionally desirable need of trying to help others. However, if the action that is being requested is too costly, the addressee will be justified in overlooking such convention. This is so because, just as the addressee has the social obligation to try to change a negative state of affairs for the benefit of the speaker, the latter has the social obligation not to ask the addressee to do something which may be costly, harmful, or negative. If he does, the addressee is entitled to refuse to carry out the requested action in order to avoid that negative state of affairs. Let us

capture this interplay between the parameters of optionality and cost-benefit as convention 4:

Convention 4: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the higher the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

The formality of the context is yet another dimension which may have a bearing on the degree of optionality of a request. It can be hypothesized that formal contexts, since they require polite behaviour more than informal contexts do, would be more likely to reduce the addressee's freedom to refuse to comply with a request. And vice versa, informal contexts, which are not so constrained, would offer the addressee greater freedom to comply with the convention of politeness and, therefore, to decide upon his following course of action in relation to the speaker's request. Several examples in the corpus corroborate this hypothesis:

(22) Alvy (pointing to a lobster): Look! Look, one crawled behind the refrigerator. It'll turn up in our bed at night.

(They move over to the refrigerator; Alvy moves as close to the wall as possible as Annie, covering her mouth and laughing hysterically, teasingly dangles a lobster in front of him.)

Alvy: Will you get outta here with that thing? Jesus!

Annie: (Laughing, to the lobster) Get him! (AH)

(23) In court, during trial.

Attorney to witness: Is this the original of the document you received in the mail?

Witness: It is.

Attorney: May we mark this, prosecution exhibit C? And would you read the contents into the record, please? (GAS)

The context depicted in example (22) is highly informal. Alvy and Annie are a couple in a domestic scene. Alvy's request for Annie to take the lobster away from him is met with Annie's refusal. Annie feels free to refuse to carry out Alvy's request: the degree of optionality is high due to the informal character of the context. It should be noticed that convention 3, which captures the fact that small social distance is a factor which decreases optionality, is not activated in this case because the whole episode is part of a joke that Annie is playing on Alvy in order to have a laugh with him. On the contrary, example (23) refers to a highly formal situation (i.e. a trial). In this case, the judge would need a very good reason for refusing to grant the attorney's request. In the absence of a justified reason, he would feel forced to comply with the convention of politeness and, therefore, to grant the attorneys's petition. In other words, the degree of optionality is lower due to the constraints imposed by the formality of the situation:

Convention 5: *The more formal the context, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Finally, the optionality of a request may also be affected by the relative power of the speaker and the addressee. Data from the corpus confirm the initial assumption that the more powerful the speaker is, the lower the degree of optionality of the addressee will tend to be; while the more powerful the addressee is, the higher his degree of optionality. As always, it should be borne in mind that, whatever the authority of the addressee, his degree of optionality will always be constrained by more general principles like the convention of politeness outlined above. In the following example a daughter asks her father for an alcoholic drink. The father's (i.e. addressee's) authority increases his optionality and allows him to question his daughter's request:

(24) Daughter: "Could I have a drink?," she requested.

Father: "Coffee? I'll buzz Nancy."

Daughter: "No, a proper drink. The alcoholic sort." (BNC)

In contrast to this, those occurrences in which the speaker is more powerful than the addressee display a lower degree of optionality, so much so that, on those occasions in which there is not enough mitigation, their interpretation may appear to be half way between those of requesting and ordering:

(25) Detective Williams to his witness: That sure looks like a human ear, doesn't it? Let's run it down to the Coroner's office and see what they make of it. Then, I want you to show me exactly where you found it. (BV)

Mitigation. The workings of the mitigation variable are certainly more complex than they may appear at first sight. In Pérez (1997b) it was suggested that requests were characterized by displaying higher levels of mitigation than other directives whose point is also to elicit a future action of the addressee, like orders or threats. It was hypothesized then that this was due to the fact that requests are generally performed by *powerless* speakers. That is to say, they are performed by speakers who do not have any kind of authority over the addressee, either physical, institutional, moral, self-defence, or any of the various types of power that have been described in connection with orders (see section 4.1). Because of their lack of authority over the addressee, it seemed only natural that the mitigation of the act should be significant. Nevertheless, the analysis of a more ample corpus of occurrences has provided data pointing to a more complex description of the mitigation parameter in relation to requests. Since the variable of power plays a significant role in the discussion of the mitigation of requests, I shall start by determining its

functioning in relation to this illocutionary act, before proceeding to spell out the intricacies of the mitigation of the speech act type under scrutiny.

As has already been suggested, the act of requesting is not subject to any constraints regarding the power relationship between the speakers. Everybody, regardless of their status, can in principle request something from someone else. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the social power attribute does not play a role in the production and understanding of requests. In fact the relative authority of the speaker over the addressee can influence the functioning of other variables of the ICM of requesting. It has already been made clear above that the relative power of the speakers may have a bearing on the degree of optionality of a particular instance of request. Later on, it will be shown that it is also possible to establish correlations between the value taken on by the power variable and the degree of mitigation of a request. Before considering this issue, however, let us consider an interesting aspect of the power dimension in connection with requests. It is true, as has been argued above, that no special power status is needed in order to formulate a request. However, it is also true that the uttering of a request does create a new power relationship between speakers independently of what their actual social status is. By virtue of addressing a request, the speaker is automatically endowing the addressee with the power of either granting it or not. This type of *ad hoc* power should be borne in mind in the ensuing discussion on the mitigation of requests.

As there exist no restrictions on the performance of requests based on the power parameter, the following three scenarios may be found:

1. The addressee's power is greater than the speaker's.
2. The speaker and the addressee have equal power.
3. The speaker's power is greater than the addressee's.

As was the case with the optionality variable, a different behaviour of the mitigation parameter may be expected in each of the above situations. However, those instances of request in the corpus indicate that this speech act type is equally mitigated in the three power scenarios described above.⁴⁵ An explicitly mitigated request like (26) below may be used regardless of the power relation between the speakers.⁴⁶

(26) *Could you look after my child on Saturday, please? If it is not too much trouble for you...*

45. Although all instances of requests offer a certain degree of optionality, however small, it has been shown above that the actual optionality of a request instance will tend to increase as the addressee's power increases and vice versa.

46. Those elements which are used to mitigate the request are in italics.

It is interesting, however, to notice that the use of mitigation has a different function in each of the power scenarios that are being considered. In scenario number 1 (i.e. addressee more powerful than speaker), the use of mitigating devices responds to the need of persuading the addressee to perform the requested action. In scenario number 2, although the real power relation is one of equality, the addressee may still display the ad hoc type of power referred to above. Therefore, mitigation has a similar function to that in the previous scenario. Nevertheless, scenario number 3, in which the speaker is more powerful than the addressee, points to a completely different function of mitigation. In cases like these, the power of the speaker may be enough to persuade or force the addressee to carry out the requested action. However, a powerful speaker whose communicative intention is to perform a request does not wish to make use of his power in order to achieve his goal. If he wanted to do so, he would simply choose to utter an order, instead of a request. On these occasions, the use of mitigation has to do with the speaker's desire to communicate his granting the addressee with optionality and, therefore, the lack of imposition of his act. Example (18) above, which is reproduced here as (27) for our convenience, illustrates this use of mitigation:

(27) A boss to his secretary: I need to go through those reports on Saturday. I know it is your day-off, but I would really appreciate it if you gave me a hand with them. Don't feel force to come, though. I will certainly understand it if you can't make it. (Example suggested by one of the native informants)

The conclusion that can be drawn as regards the mitigation variable is that, although for different reasons, requests are prototypically mitigated. In this they differ from other directives (e.g. ordering, threatening) which are not generally mitigated.⁴⁷

Furthermore, as was the case with optionality, the degree of mitigation of a request can be influenced by the values taken up by other parameters of the ICM. To begin with, we observe that the more costly the requested action is,

47. This should not be understood in the sense that it is not possible to find mitigated orders. But these are extremely peripheral, boundary instances of this category, which display a feature (i.e. mitigation) which is characteristic of a different illocutionary category (i.e. requests). If the rest of the features of the ICM of ordering still hold, then the act under consideration may be understood as an order, albeit a *polite* and, therefore, less central instance of the category. In this respect this study differs from other accounts (Dik, 1989, 1997) in which a mitigated order is simply categorised as a request, without considering the existence of peripheral members of both categories -polite mitigated orders, impolite non-mitigated requests-, which would blur the boundaries between these two illocutionary groups.

the weaker the addressee's will tends to be, and, therefore, the greater the need of mitigation will be in order to overcome the addressee's expected lack of cooperation:

(28) Father to his son: I'll have to stop you there ... because look at this nasty letter I got this morning, dear ... and look boy you know how busy I am ... so, please, could you make the film yourself? (BNC)

The father had promised his son to help him with a film he had to do as homework. Due to his professional duties he is not capable of keeping his promise and he is requesting his son to shoot the film on his own. Understandably, the cost of the requested action is substantial for the little boy, therefore his father makes an extensive use of mitigating devices: use of past modals, adverb *please*, use of endearment terms (e.g. *boy*), and clauses introducing justifications for his course of action (e.g. *because...*, *you know how busy I am...*). Let us capture these insights in convention 6, which relates the diverse pieces of knowledge already stated in conventions 1 and 2 of our ICM of requesting:

Convention 6: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the lower the degree of addressee's will, and the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, and vice versa.*

Together with the cost-benefit variable, both the formality and the degree of social distance also have a bearing on the level of mitigation required by a given instance of request. Let us see each of these variables in turn.

Because it has the property of softening the force of speech acts, mitigation has traditionally been associated with politeness. Since formal contexts require higher levels of good manners and polite behaviour than informal contexts, we should expect those requests which are performed in formal contexts to show higher levels of mitigation than those which take place in informal situations.

(29) Secretary: Excuse me, excuse me, Miss Johnson.

Miss Johnson: Oh, yes.

Secretary: Would you stop by the principal's office before your next class, please? Mr. Grandy would like to speak to you??? (DM)

The secretary in example (29) finds herself in need of interrupting a department meeting in order to give a message to Miss Johnson, one of the teachers. This formal context calls for the heavily mitigated request which has been reproduced above. Again we find the use of past modals, the adverb *please*, and a second sentence which informs the addressee of the reason which motivates the request. Convention 7 encapsulates this piece of

knowledge regarding the interplay between the variables of formality and mitigation in the performance of requests:

Convention 7: The more formal the context, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, and vice versa.

I have left the analysis of the interplay between mitigation and social distance to be dealt with at the end of this discussion. The data in the corpus confirm the initial hypothesis that as social distance is reduced, so the need for mitigation decreases, and vice versa. The following examples illustrate this:

(30) Alvy to a close friend of his: Tell the folks where you are today, Donald. (AH)

(31) "Your torch, Bryce," he requested. (BNC)

Both (30) and (31) are uttered by people who have a high degree of intimacy (i.e. close friends). Likewise, most requests performed between intimates in the corpus display very low levels of mitigation.⁴⁸ However, the corpus also contains several counter-examples in which, in spite of the social closeness which holds between the participants, the request is significantly mitigated. These are examples like (5), (16), (24), and (28) above, the last of which is reproduced here as (32) in order to illustrate this point:

(32) Father to his son: I'll have to stop you there ... because look at this nasty letter I got this morning, dear ... and look boy you know how busy I am ... so, please, could you make the film yourself? (BNC)

At first sight, requests like (32) seem to contradict the observation that a small social distance reduces the need for mitigation. However, a closer look at these seemingly counter-examples reveals that there is an underlying regularity which explains their peculiar behaviour: the fact that in all these cases the cost of the requested action is particularly significant. This results in a marked use of mitigating devices in spite of the small social distance holding between the speakers. Let us describe the last of the conventions of the ICM of requesting with this information:

Convention 8: The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, except if the cost of the requested action is considerable.

48. An interesting peculiarity of requests performed between intimates is the persistent use of vocatives (e.g. endearment terms, nicknames, first names) which point to the intimacy (i.e. social closeness) of the speakers. The fact that the speaker bothers to communicate overtly a piece of information which is already manifest to both speaker and hearer leads to think that it should have an ulterior function as a realization procedure for requests. This formal aspect will be dealt with in section 5.2.

The last two variables that are the object of this analysis of speech acts, formality and social distance, appear to be irrelevant for the performance of requests. This speech act type can be performed regardless of the social distance that exists between the participants or the degree of formality of the context. Nevertheless, as has been shown throughout this section, these two dimensions interact interestingly with other variables of the ICM. The resulting correlations of such interactions have already been captured in several conventions which are also part of the ICM of requesting.

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF REQUESTING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the addressee
<u>Time of Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically high
Addressee's Will	Prototypically low See conventions 1, 6
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Requests prototypically involve a cost to the addressee and a benefit to the speaker, or to the speaker and a third person See conventions 1, 2, 4, 6
<u>Optionality</u>	Requests prototypically involve some degree of optionality See conventions 3, 4, 5
Mitigation	Prototypical request are generally mitigated See conventions 2, 6, 7,8
Speaker's Will	Prototypically high
Power	Requests can be performed whatever the power relationship which holds between the speakers- Ad hoc power
Social Distance	Requests can be performed whatever the social distance that holds between the speakers See conventions 3, 8
Formality	Requests can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context See conventions 5, 7

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF REQUESTING

Convention 1: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the lower the degree of addressee's will, and vice versa.*

Convention 2: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 4: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the higher the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 5: *The more formal the context, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 6: *The greater the cost of the requested action, the lower the degree of addressee's will, and the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, and vice versa.*

Convention 7: *The more formal the context, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, and vice versa.*

Convention 8: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, except if the cost of the requested action is considerable.*

5.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Requesting

5.2.1. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Requesting

The number of interrogative-based requests in the corpus clearly outnumbers those instances of imperative or declarative-based requests. The number of occurrences of each of these sentence types is the following:

Interrogative-based requests	159 occurrences
Imperative-based requests	13 occurrences
Declarative-based requests	8 occurrences
Total	180 occurrences

This overwhelming speaker's preference for the use of the interrogative sentences in the performance of requests is certainly not gratuitous. The interrogative sentence-type is in itself capable of instantiating one of the distinctive features of the ICM of requesting: optionality. Neither imperatives

nor declaratives considered in isolation have this ability. As defined by Risselada (1993), the interrogative construction presents a proposition as (partially) open. Hence the inherent optionality which characterizes this sentence type.

Not any interrogative sentence, however, is equally fit to be used as a request. Look at the following sentences:

- (1) Will she stop making that noise?
- (2) Will you stop making that noise?

It is possible to find a marked context in which (1) could be understood as a rather implicit request to the addressee to get a third person to stop making noise. For instance, if the person making the noise is the addressee's daughter and is, therefore, under his control. In a context like this, the speaker may prefer to address the request to the father instead of doing so directly to the little girl. He may think that this will be more operative because the little girl will be more prone to recognizing her father's authority than that of a stranger. Except in marked contexts like the one described, interrogative sentences used as realization procedures for requests tend to take on the form of example (2) above. That is to say, they involve a second person (singular or plural) subject (i.e. *you*). This is only natural if it is taken into account that, according to our description of the ICM of requesting (section 5.1), this kind of illocutionary act is characterized by having the addressee as its prototypical agent type. The use of a second person (singular or plural) subject is only instantiating this variable of the ICM under scrutiny.

Likewise, the use of a non-past verb tense activates the time variable of the ICM of requesting.⁴⁹ Compare the following sentences:

- (3) Do you mind handing me the book?
- (4) Did you mind handing me the book?

Because requests refer to non-past actions, (3) is compatible with a request interpretation, while the past tense used in (4) makes this sentence an extremely bad candidate for the performance of the speech act type under consideration. Therefore, interrogative sentences which display a second

49. The use of past modals (e.g. *could/would you...?*) is not affected by this generalization. This type of auxiliary constitutes a polysemous category whose central meaning has to do with the expression of past events, but which also has another more peripheral meaning which is related to the expression of politeness (see Taylor, 1995: 149-154).

person subject and a non-past tense are one possible realization procedure for requests. This formal configuration is capable of activating the following aspects of the meaning of a request:

Interrogative Sentence + Second Person (Singular or Plural) Subject + Non-Past Tense

- (1) Agent type: addressee
- (2) Time of the action: non-past
- (3) Optionality

The corpus only shows a small group of examples in which a request is performed by means of an interrogative sentence displaying a first person subject:

- (5) Could I just look at him a little bit more? (RA)
- (6) Can I talk to you a minute? (BV)
- (7) Can I come in? Can we talk? (JVV)
- (8) Can I explain that to you? (BNC)
- (9) May I stay with him a while? (BNC)

All these cases, however, correspond to a non-central type of request: requests for permission. As shown in section 5.1, these differ from more prototypical instances of requesting in that both the speaker and the addressee are expected to carry out a future action: the speaker will carry out the action expressed in the predication and the addressee will carry out the action of granting permission. This explains the differences in form observed in examples (5) to (9).

The motivation of the first person subject in the following three requests is a little more complex:

- (10) Could I have a drink? (BNC)
- (11) Could I have a ride home?
- (12) Can I have your autograph? (AH)

At first sight, these sentences are not requests for permission, they appear as requests for the addressee to perform an action, yet they have a first person subject. If considered in closer detail, sentences (10) and (11) are found to be ambiguous between a request and a question interpretation:

(13) Could I have a drink in a British pub if I were under 16?

(14) Could I have a ride home from somebody if I missed the last bus?

In the contexts described in (13) and (14), the speaker is only interested in getting certain pieces of information from the addressee. He is not actually asking for a drink or for a lift home. This type of realization procedure is therefore little specialized for the performance of requests. As a matter of fact, it instantiates only a small number of the variables of their ICM. As a consequence of this, the interpretation of sentences like (10) and (11) as either requests or questions will depend on which of the ICMs of these two types of act is activated by contextual information.

The case of example (12) is different. It is difficult to think of a context in which a sentence like this is not understood as a request, but rather as a simple question. In other words, this kind of formal configuration is more highly specialized for the performance of requests:⁵⁰

Can + First Person Subject + Have + Second Person Possessive Adjective + Noun?

The fact that the speaker questions the addressee about the possibility of becoming the possessor of an object which belongs to the addressee produces a collapse of logic which can only be reestablished if the sentence is understood as a request. Possession is a state. Therefore, it is absurd for someone to ask others about one's capacity to possess something that clearly belongs to someone else. If it belongs to someone else, it does not belong to one. In example (12), it is clear that the possessor of the autographs is the addressee. The only way in which the speaker can become the possessor of an autograph which belongs to the addressee is if the latter gives it to him. Hence the request reading of this type of sentence.

Let us go back to interrogative-based requests which display second person subjects and non-past tenses. We should ask ourselves whether all interrogative sentences of this type are equally specialized for the performance of requests. Consider the following examples:

50. It should also be noticed that this kind of request formula is difficult to translate into other languages like Spanish. **¿Podría yo tener/obtener su autógrafo?* is a strange sentence in Spanish. As a question it is absurd that the speaker should question someone else about his own capacity to possess something. Furthermore, the sentence would never be used as a request in Spanish. This evidence points to this kind of formula as idiosyncratic of the English language.

- (15) Are you tired?
- (16) Do you see that knife?
- (17) Can you hold the baby?
- (18) Will you open the door?
- (19) Could you switch on the TV?
- (20) Would you cook tonight?

All the above sentences can be understood as requests provided the appropriate context. However, as Ruiz de Mendoza (1994b, 1999) has argued, some of them are more specialized means of performing requests than others. (15) and (16) are no doubt the least specialized procedures of the list. (17) and (18) are more easily interpreted as requests even in the absence of a context. Finally, (19) and (20) are highly specialized means for the production of requests. So much so, that the interpretation of these two utterances as simple questions would require a significantly marked context.

I would like to argue that the higher degree of specialization of some of these procedures, far from being arbitrary, can be found to have its motivation in the meaning conditions which make up our ICM of requesting. Thus, sentences of the *Can + you + infinitive* type activate the following variables of the ICM:

- (1) Agent type: addressee
- (2) Time of the action: non-past
- (3) Optionality

And, they point to another of the variables of the ICM.⁵¹

- (4*) Addressee's capacity

51. There is a difference between those realization procedures which fully activate a variable (i.e. specify the value that a given speech act takes in relation to that variable) and those which merely point to the fact that a certain variable is relevant to the definition of a speech act, without actually specifying the value that the variable takes up in the corresponding ICM. The use of the modal *can* above merely points to the fact that the parameter of addressee's capacity is relevant to requests (as opposed to assertions, for instance), but it does not activate this variable because it does not overtly express the assumption that the addressee should be capable of performing the action. In a sentence like *You can close the door for me, right?*, on the contrary, the affirmative use of the modal does not only point to the variable, but it also makes it explicit that the speaker assumes that the addressee is capable of performing the requested action. Those variables which are pointed to, rather than activated, are signalled by an asterisk.

The first three variables can be activated by any interrogative sentence displaying a second person subject and a non-past tense. The last of the variables on the contrary is not pointed to by interrogatives of the *Do +you + infinitive?* or the *Are +you noun/adjective?* types. This may explain partly why the *Can + you + infinitive?* kind of request is better adapted for the performance of requests than the two previous formal configurations. The problem arises when a sentence like the following is considered:

(21) Are you able to hold the baby?

Interrogatives like (21) are able to point to the addressee's capacity variable of the ICM of requesting as well as the *Can + you + infinitive?* forms. In spite of this, the latter is more easily recognized as a request than the former. The reason why the English language has preferred to conventionalize one of these forms as a realization procedure for requests rather than the other very probably has to do with the general principle of economy that underlies linguistic activities. Both forms activate and point to the same number of variables of the ICM of requesting, but the *can you ...?* form is briefer and, therefore, preferable.

Going back to examples (15)-(20), the higher specialization of (18) is also found to be motivated. Interrogatives of the *Will + you + infinitive?* type not only instantiate those variables that are activated by other interrogative sentences like (15)-(16), but they also point to another parameter (i.e. number 4 below):

- (1) Agent type: addressee
- (2) Time of the action: non-past
- (3) Optionality
- (4*) Addressee's will

Finally, sentences (19) and (20), which display the highest degree of specialization as realization procedures for requests, are found to activate still one more variable of their ICM: mitigation. These two examples differ from (17) and (18) in the past tense of their modal auxiliaries. Thanks to the mitigating properties of past modals, sentences (19) and (20) manage to make this specific aspect of requests explicit. Below I have summarized the variables which are activated and pointed to by these two types of realization procedures:

Could + You + Infinitive?

- (1) Agent type: addressee
- (2) Time of the action: non-past
- (3) Optionality
- (4*) Agent's capability
- (5) Mitigation

Would + You + Infinitive?

- (1) Agent type: addressee
- (2) Time of the action: non-past
- (3) Optionality
- (4*) Addressee's will
- (5) Mitigation

So far I have been able to show that the degree of specialization of most realization procedures for requests correlates with the number of variables which they manage to activate. The analysis of the corpus material has revealed even more subtle formal configurations which, by activating or simply pointing to a higher number of variables, constitute even more specialized realization procedures:

Use of Time Satellites

Eighteen of the interrogative-based request instances in the corpus contain a level two time satellite which indicates the duration of the requested action:

(22) Will you stop it *a moment?* (BNC)

(23) Could you just stop *for a while* 'cos that that is really disgusting...? (BNC)

(24) Could you just turn it down *for a second?* (BNC)

(25) Can you just turn your radio down *a minute* and then we can talk about your gnomes all right? (BNC)

The kind of time satellites associated with the performance of requests indicates duration. More specifically, they point to a very short duration of the requested action.⁵² The use of this kind of time satellite has a mitigating effect. This softening of the illocutionary force is achieved via the activation of the cost-benefit variable. It has been shown in section 5.1 that requests involve a cost to the addressee. By pointing to the short duration of the requested action, the speaker both acknowledges its cost and attempts to minimize it. Hence the effect of mitigation. Now consider the following examples:

52. In the case of orders, level two time satellites were used to express immediateness or to make haste.

(26) Would you holler *when you have a minuté*? (BNC)

(27) Could you play your signature tune in full *someday*? (BNC)

In this case the time satellite does not refer to the duration of the action, but rather to the time of the action, indicating that the speaker has got freedom to choose the moment when he wishes to perform the action. It is interesting to compare this type of time satellite to those used in orders (e.g. *Do your homework, now!*), which, on the contrary, indicate immediateness and lack of choice in determining the time of the action. Those used in examples (26) and (27) have a mitigating effect, just like those in examples (22) to (25). The difference between them is that in the case of (26) and (27), the mitigation is achieved by means of increasing the optionality of the speaker, rather than by means of minimizing the cost of the action. More specifically, his optionality is increased because he is given the opportunity to choose the moment when he wishes to carry out the action.

Use of Quantifying Term Operators

The cost to the addressee which characterizes requests can also be minimized through the use of quantifying operators like those in the following sentences:

(28) Okay, can you pick...try and pick *some* up on your way up...? (BNC)

(29) Could you just say *a wee bit* about yourself ... how old you are, how many kids if you have a job ... what you do and ...? (BNC)

(30) Can you just say *a little bit* about what it was like at school ...? (BNC)

(31) Well, can you dry *a few* glasses? (BNC)

(32) Could you just give me *a very brief* overview of the main areas and skills that you've been working on this term? (BNC)

The reduction in cost brought about by the use of the quantifying operators in italics has a mitigating effect which becomes apparent if the above instances of request are compared with possible counterparts which do not contain this type of operator. Compare, for instance, example (31) above with a sentence like *Can you dry the glasses?*

Use of Level One Manner Satellites

A similar reduction in cost can be effected by means of manner satellites like the one below:

(33) Can you date that *roughly*? (BNC)

As was the case with the use of quantifying operators, the cost of the requested action is reduced and the force of the illocutionary act is mitigated as a result.

Use of Level Two Epistemic Objective Mood Operators

Examples of the use of epistemic mood operators as part of realization procedures for requests are the following:

(34) Erm, so could you *possibly* speak to MX? (BNC)

(35) Could you *possibly* phone MX and ask him if it was him...? (BNC)

(36) Could you *perhaps* come to the dentist with me tomorrow evening? (BNC)

Level two operators like those in italics can be used to increase the optionality of a request and consequently to mitigate its force.

Use of Hedges

The term *hedge* was coined by Lakoff (1972) to refer to certain lexical devices which may be used to attenuate illocutionary force. The corpus contains the following example of the use of hedges in the production of requests:

(37) Can you *kind of* tell me about the help that you've had er with her behaviour problems? (BNC)

It is worth noting that not only expressions like *kind of*, *sort of* and the like can function as hedges. As pointed out by Holmes (1984) and as the corpus reveals, one of the most common types of hedges in English requests is the adverb *just*. Over twenty three entries contain this adverb:

(38) Can you just put your head forward? (BNC)

(39) Can you just put that ... on there? Over there. Yes. Right, right on. (BNC)

(40) Could you just say your name? (BNC)

(41) Could you just have a quick look at it for me erm and er ...? (BNC)

Hedges like *kind of* or *just* function as mitigators of the illocutionary force by minimizing the task or cost of the speech act.

Use of Level Four Satellites of Condition

A number of condition satellites such as *if you like*, *if you don't mind*, *if you wouldn't mind*, *if you are sure that it's ok*, *if it's not too much trouble*, *if it is not an inconvenience*, etc. can also be used to mitigate a speech act and, therefore, their use can hint towards a request interpretation of a given utterance. Consider the following examples:

(42) Hand me the CD, *if you don't mind*.

(43) *If that is not too much trouble*, could you look after my kids tonight?

It is necessary to point out that condition satellites can be divided into two different groups depending on how they manage to activate the variable of mitigation. As a matter of fact they do so in two different, although interrelated ways. The first group would include expressions like *if you don't/wouldn't mind* and *if you like*. These succeed in mitigating the force of the act by means of increasing the addressee's degree of optionality in relation to his willingness to comply with the request. The addressee is told that, if the carrying out of the action is against his will, he is free to choose not to do it. On the contrary, the second group of expressions (e.g. *if it's not too much trouble*) mitigate the illocutionary act by increasing the addressee's optionality in relation to the cost-benefit parameter. In this case, the addressee is told that if the carrying out of the action is too costly to him, he is free to choose not to do it.

Use of Expressions of Tentativeness

Two request instances in the corpus make use of expressions of tentativeness as realization procedure for requests:

(44) Can you *try and* retrieve the samples? (BNC)

(45) Okay can you pick ... *try and* pick some up on your way up? (BNC)

Instead of requesting the addressee directly to bring about a certain state of affairs, the speaker asks the addressee only to try to do it. In this way the degree of optionality of the addressee is increased, since he can avoid carrying out the requested action by saying that he has attempted to do so, but without success. As the optionality is increased, so is the degree of mitigation of the act.

Use of Satellites of Reason

Telling the addressee the reason why he is requested to do something is a means of persuading him to do as told by appealing to his rationality. The fact that the speaker needs to make use of this kind of persuasive device is, however, a sign of the fact that he acknowledges the addressee's optionality. Therefore, the presence of a subordinate or a juxtaposed reason clause, either following or preceding an interrogative-based request, can be regarded as yet another kind of realization procedure for requests. Here are some of the examples found in our corpus:

(46) Could you just turn it down a bit? *Yeah because it's making a noise on the line.* (BNC)

(47) Can you stop it a minute? *I'd like you to think about and try and explain to me what those three ideas were if you remember.* (BNC)

Use of Level One Beneficiary Satellites

The relevance of beneficiary satellites for the expression of directives has already been discussed in the description of realization procedures for ordering (section 5.2). Briefly summarized, my position is the following: (1) the fact that the speaker is the beneficiary of the addressee's action is a feature which requests share with other directives like orders; (2) it has been observed that in the corpus the overt instantiation of the beneficiary satellite is significantly more frequent in the case of requests than in the case of orders: twenty per cent of interrogative-based requests show this feature against only five per cent of orders; and (3) the reason for this tendency is the following: in the case of orders, the speaker's power is enough to secure the addressee's compliance. Therefore, it is not so necessary to make use of other means of persuasion. On the contrary, requests are characterized by their optionality. Because of this, the overt activation of the cost-benefit parameter functions as a reminder to the addressee that his optionality is constrained by rules of social interaction like the convention of politeness, according to which one is expected to change those states of affairs which are negative to others. This explains the greater use of beneficiary satellites in the performance of requests. By way of illustration consider the following examples:

(48) Can you look at these citations *for us?* (BNC)

(49) Can you just look at these goods *for me?* (BNC)

Use of the Adverb *Please*

This lexical item is found in nineteen of the interrogative-based requests of the corpus. When used with the rising intonation which characterizes interrogative-based requests, *please* functions as a mitigator, thus activating the corresponding variable of the ICM of requesting. Here are some examples:

(50) Can you give me the name of the person it is going to then, please?
(BNC)

(51) So, please, can you make this film yourself? (BNC)

(52) Could you open the shop for me next Friday, please? (BNC)

(53) Will you please ask Peter about my promotion? (BNC)

(54) Would you explain the details of the contract, please? (BNC)

Examples (52) and (54) are already mitigated via the use of past modals. The use of *please* increases the degree of mitigation of the speech act. As was explained in section 5.1 there are occasions on which higher degrees of mitigation are required in the performance of a request. By way of illustration consider those situations in which the cost of the requested action is significant, as in (52), or those in which the context of the utterance is formal as in (54). In examples (50), (51), and (53), the use of the adverb *please* is the only marker of mitigation. Due to its mitigating effect, the presence of this adverb in interrogative sentences with present modals functions as a hint towards a request interpretation.⁵³

Use of Intonation and Stress

The inherent optionality and mitigation which, as has been shown, characterizes interrogative sentences or some of the realization procedures described above (e.g. adverbs *just* or *please*) can be overcome by suprasegmental features of intonation. The corpus shows several examples of this phenomenon:

53. This position is contrary to the one held within Functional Grammar (Dik, 1997: 245). According to Dik, the use of *please* automatically converts a basic illocution (i.e. declarative, interrogative, or imperative) into a request. Ruiz de Mendoza (1999: 126-133) puts forward conclusive evidence against the FG view of *please* as an illocutionary converter. I agree with Ruiz de Mendoza that *please* cannot unequivocally convert an utterance into a request. Other linguistic resources, like intonation, may prevent such conversion as will be shown later. My view of *please* as a type of realization procedure which activates only one of the variables of the ICM of requesting is compatible with Ruiz de Mendoza's findings. Thus, *please* can

(55) Can't you just shut up!!! (TBC)

(56) Why don't you just shut up!!! (TBC)

Both utterances display an abrupt falling intonation plus strong stress on the adverb *just*. It has been shown in section 4.2 that the use of falling intonation is a typical realization procedure of orders. The use of this resource in interrogative sentences has the effect of depriving them of their inherent openness, thus reducing the degree of optionality of the speech act. The heavy stress on *just* also works towards the reduction of optionality. Let us see how. I have previously explained that, in normal circumstances, *just* minimizes the cost of the action and increases the mitigation of the speech act. If this adverb is heavily stressed as in the examples given, its meaning changes in the following way: the cost of the action is presented as being so small that it is inconceivable that the addressee will refuse to grant the request. His optionality is reduced and in this way, the use of *just* rather than mitigating the act, increases its force.

Use of Negated Modals

Examples (55), (56), and others like (57) and (58) below contain an element which deserves closer attention due to its effects on the interpretation of requests: the use of negated modals.

(57) Can't you come to the damn airport? (BV)

(58) Wouldn't you wait? (BNC)

As shown in Pérez (1997b), the use of negated modals gives way to a type of realization procedure which is characterized by its impoliteness. The reason for this is quite simple. In normal circumstances, the addressee is expected to comply with the convention of politeness and to carry out the requested action. However, the use of the negative construction presupposes the addressee's refusal or inability to carry out the request and, therefore, presents

function as a marker of mitigation and, therefore, since it activates one of the variables of the ICM of requesting, it points to this illocutionary reading. However, if the rest of the variables of this ICM do not hold, the use of *please* will certainly not be enough to make of such utterance a request (i.e. it is not a conversor). However, if some of the request variables hold, then the use of *please* may be understood as a further sign that we are to interpret the sentence as a request. In other words, the isolated activation of one of the variables of an ICM is not enough to interpret an utterance as an instance of such an ICM. However, the accumulative activation of variables points with increasing certainty to such interpretation.

him as an impolite person. In Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms, the presentation of the addressee as an impolite person would be an attack on his positive face (i.e. his desire to be admired and respected by other members of his community). Hence the impoliteness of this kind of request.

Use of Vocatives

It has been observed that the use of vocatives which point to a close social distance between the speakers generally functions as a hint for the interpretation of a sentence as a request:

(59) Can you cut my nails, *mum?* (BNC)

(60) Can you organize the raffle, *Karen?* (BNC)

(61) Can you hand me the plate, *darling?* (BNC)

These three sentences contain vocatives which point to a close distance between the speakers. The vocative in sentence (59) names the family relationship that exists between the participants. The one in sentence (60) presents the speakers as relatively close to each other. It is precisely this closeness which makes it possible to use the first name (i.e. *Karen*) instead of a title (e.g. *Mrs. Smith*). Finally, in (61) we find an endearment term (i.e. *darling*) whose use is only appropriate between speakers who are intimates. I would like to argue that these vocatives marking social closeness function as mitigators of the speech act force and, hence, as pointers towards a request meaning. The reason was partially advanced in the description of the ICM of requesting as convention 8, which is repeated here for convenience:

Convention 8: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of requesting, except if the cost of the requested action is considerable.*

In general, the closer one is to somebody, the less likely one is to use mitigating devices or to be explicitly polite, simply because it is taken for granted that one respects and cares for people who are intimates and there is no intention of imposition which needs to be mitigated. In cases like this, the use of a vocative signalling to an intimate relationship functions as a reminder to the addressee that, in the situation under consideration, that lack of overt mitigation is due to the reason just mentioned: the absence of imposition. On the whole, this may be seen as a metonymic process. The reference to a certain type of interpersonal relationship (i.e. social closeness) stands for the degree of mitigation that corresponds to that type of relationship.

Use of Hesitations and Pauses

Some of the examples provided by the BNC reveal a significant number of hesitations and pauses in the performance of requests which, moreover, are not found in the production of other directives. Here are some examples:

(62) *Er...* could you give [pause] me some idea of where you fit in though? (BNC)

(63) Yeah, so could you spend ... *erm* ... ten minutes working together in a [pause] in a group and can you think of five things that you would like to get changed to make it better? (BNC)

(64) *Erm* ... could you just ... *er* ... pick it up? (BNC)

I would not like to go as far as to claim that pauses and hesitations constitute a kind of realization procedure for requests. Rather, they seem to be by-products of the activation of the ICM of requesting. A speaker who performs a request has no certainty as to whether the addressee will decide to comply with his wishes. This explains his very probable unconscious use of hesitations and pauses. Their presence would be strange in the production of orders, for instance, in which case the superiority of the speaker gives him absolute certainty, at least in theory, that the addressee will do as told:

(65) ?Captain to private: Er, clean ... *erm* ... clean the WCs.

Utterances like (65) come through as significantly powerless instances of orders, hence their oddity. The existence of hesitations and pauses, therefore, can be understood as a sign that the speaker is not sure of the possibilities of success of his intended act. In this sense they may give the impression of mitigation. However, as they are not used consciously (cf. the use of *please*), I believe that they cannot be regarded as proper realization procedures.

5.2.2. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Requesting

The imperative sentence-type activates the following aspects of the ICM under consideration:

- (1) Presents the addressee as the agent.
- (2) Presents an action for its realization in the future.
- (3) Presents the speaker as having a certain wish or desire that the action is carried out.

These three meaning conditions are shared by requests, orders, threats, and beggings, among other directives. Therefore, imperative sentences are very little specialized for the expression of a request. By adding one or several of the realization procedures for requests that I have described in the previous section, the speaker can point to and/or fully activate further variables of the ICM and, thus, produce a more explicit request. Let us see some examples:

(66) Imperative + Vocative (Endearment Term):

“Forgive me, *my darling*,” he requested with such charm that she was ready to lie down and die for him. (BNC)

(67) Imperative + Time Satellite:

Hang in there *a second*. (AH)

(68) Imperative + Vocative (Endearment Term) + Reason Satellite:

Honey! Come on out here! *Want you to meet a couple friends of mine!*
(RA)

5.2.3. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Requesting

As observed by Risselada (1993), declarative sentences are the most unspecified in meaning of the three sentence types. They only present a proposition. This makes declaratives compatible with the performance of most speech acts. But, at the same time, it also makes them an extremely little specialized form for the expression of a particular illocution. Those requests which are expressed by means of a declarative sentence will tend to be minimally explicit. Consider an example like:

(69) I want you to show me exactly where you found it. (BV)

Example (69) predicates a future action for realization, it presents the addressee as the agent of that action, and the speaker as wanting the addressee to carry out the action. These three features, however, are shared by several directives: orders, request, threats, beggings, etc. The declarative sentence above is not very explicit as to which of these directives is intended by the speaker. Again, its use in conjunction with other realization procedures of the variables of the ICM of requesting will increase its degree of explicitness:

(70) *Please, I just want you to show me exactly where you found it, if that is not too much trouble.*

The use of conditional expressions, hedges, and the adverb *please* increases the optionality and, as a result, the degree of mitigation of the act. Optionality and mitigation are two of the variables which characterize requests as opposed to threats or orders. Furthermore, the sentence displays the average falling intonation of a declarative sentence. It does not present the harsh abrupt falling intonation which is proper of orders or threats. Because of all this, the utterance appears as a very explicit instance of requesting.

**SUMMARY OF REALIZATION
PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF REQUESTING**

Agent Type	Pronoun <i>you</i> , imperative sentence type
Time of the Action	Non-past verb tense
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>can</i>), use of negated modals (<i>couldn't</i>)
Addressee's Will	Inherent modality (<i>will</i>), condition satellites-1 (<i>if you like...</i>), use of negated modals (<i>wouldn't</i>)
Cost-Benefit	Time satellites of duration (<i>for a second...</i>), quantifying term operators (<i>a little bit...</i>), manner satellites (<i>roughly...</i>), hedges (<i>just...</i>), condition satellites-2 (<i>if it's not too much trouble...</i>)
Optionality	Interrogative sentence type, time satellites (<i>when you have a moment...</i>), level two epistemic mood operators (<i>possibly...</i>), condition satellites-1 (<i>if you like...</i>), condition satellites-2 (<i>if it's not too much trouble...</i>), expressions of tentativeness (<i>try and...</i>), reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), level one beneficiary satellites (<i>for me...</i>)
Mitigation	Past modals (<i>could, would</i>), time satellites (<i>when you have a moment...</i>), time satellites of duration (<i>for a second...</i>), quantifying term operators (<i>a little bit...</i>), manner satellites (<i>roughly...</i>), level two epistemic mood operators (<i>possibly...</i>), hedges (<i>just...</i>), condition satellites-1 (<i>if you like...</i>), condition satellites-2 (<i>if it's not too much trouble...</i>), expressions of tentativeness (<i>try and...</i>), reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), use of <i>please</i> , mild intonation and stress, vocatives marking social closeness (<i>darling...</i>)
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence type, declaratives SD
Power	
Social Distance	Vocatives marking social closeness (<i>darling...</i>)
Formality	Past modals (<i>would, could</i>), use of mitigating strategies in general

6. THE ACT OF ADVISING

6.1. The ICM of Advising

As pointed out by Wierzbicka (1987: 182), the term *advise* may have two different senses:

(1) Advise₁: to *inform* someone about a future state of affairs.

(2) Advise₂: to attempt to show the addressee one or more possible courses of action which the speaker believes may be beneficial to the former.

Wierzbicka (1987: 182) notes that advise₁ is a type of official speech act, generally performed by professional people or people in certain positions of responsibility, who need to convey information to their clients which is understood as being beneficial to them. The following two examples are instances of advise₁:

(1) “There are all these men dressed alike, all very rich and with no underwear,” she advised the Duchess. (BNC)

(2) “American soldiers are about to cross the border,” Glosson advised in a message to all wings. (BNC)

As in the case of advise₂, in examples (1) and (2) the speaker is acting in the addressee’s benefit and the addressee is expected to take into account the information offered by the speaker in his following course of action. The only difference is that with advise₁ the speaker does not specify a possible course of action for the addressee. He only provides the hearer with the information he needs in order to decide on the most suitable course of action.

In my analysis, I have concentrated on the workings of the advise₂ category, which is the lexicalization of a true directive speech act. As has been shown in relation to examples (1) and (2), advise₁ is simply a formal way of meaning *inform* and hence, it is closer to the category of assertives than to that of directives. The act of advising, considered in this second sense, can still be

subject to a double internal classification. Depending on whether the piece of advice has been sought, or has been proffered without having been asked for, a distinction can be made between *solicited advice* and *unsolicited advice*. To the best of my knowledge, this distinction was not taken into consideration in traditional accounts of speech acts (e.g. Searle, 1969; Bach and Harnish, 1979). More recently, some studies have been devoted either to solicited advice (Hudson, 1990; DeCapua and Findlay, 1993) or to unsolicited advice (Boatman, 1987; Banerjee and Carrell, 1988). The corpus contains instances of both kinds of advice and my analysis reveals that they function differently in relation to some of the variables under consideration in the present study. Let us begin by presenting those characteristics which have been found to be common to both solicited and unsolicited advice.

Agent Type and Time of the Action. The instances of advising in the corpus show the addressee as the agent of a non-past action. Here are some representative examples:

(3) Always have a clear vision of what you want to achieve and do whatever it takes to get it. (*Company*. June 1998: 77)

(4) “Get up and get out of it,” Blake advised him sharply. (BNC)

In a small number of entries (exactly two) it is possible to find additional states of affairs which display the speaker or a third person as the agents of actions either in the past tense or the present tense:

(5) *You can't just go out* and snap away and hope to get some cracking shots. You need to start by observing birds, and reading up on their habits. *I came* into photography as a birdwatcher, and that's paid dividends in the long run. (*Photo Answers*. January 1998: 29)

(6) *Try to keep* things as natural-looking as possible, and only change the pose if it doesn't seem to be working. When *I'm out on location I might ask* a child to sit on the stump of a tree or lean up against it with their hands in their pockets... (*Photo Answers*. March 1998: 37)

These additional states of affairs are introduced in both cases to show that the speaker has got some knowledge, expertise, or at least some experience on the subject on which he is offering advice. The reasons for doing so will be dealt with below in relation to the power variable.

In other five cases, the agents of the action presented in the predication are the speaker, or the speaker and a third person:

(7) Reader: Is there anything else you would take?

Professional photographer: *I use a polarizing filter a lot. Some photographers think a polariser only improves the sky, but the effect it has on foliage by cutting out reflections is equally important. When I want to exaggerate early morning or late evening light I will sometimes use an 81B warm-up filter.* (*Photo Answers*, June 1998: 34)

(8) "I'd get the Japanese one," he advised Jim. (BNC)

In spite of the lack of any reference to the addressee as the agent of a future action, both (7) and (8) qualify as prototypical instances of the act of advising. That is to say, it is clear that the speaker's communicative intention is to influence the addressee's future course of action, not just to express information about himself. In the case of example (7), this is possible because this is an instance of solicited advice. Since the addressee himself has requested the information, he is expected to use it to his advantage. (8) is a simplified version of a highly conventionalized advice expression (i.e. *If I were you, I'd buy the Japanese one*). Therefore, even though the addressee is not explicitly mentioned as the agent of the future action, the utterance is easily recognized as a piece of advice.

Cost-Benefit. All the instances of advice in the corpus, with the exception of only seven cases, count as attempts by the speaker to influence the addressee's course of action to the latter's benefit. This feature differentiates the act of advising from other directives like ordering, requesting, threatening, or begging, in which cases the benefit is to the speaker.

Those exceptions to which I have referred above display states of affairs which benefit both the speaker and the addressee or the speaker and a third person:

(9) "Let her get on with it," advised Angelica. "Jelly's obsession with Tully seems to keep Angel away. We don't really want any more of this Ram business or nights out on the tiles with strangers." (BNC)

(10) "Let it go," he advised. "Derek's had a bad day. You heard about his girlfriend getting murdered?" (BNC)

In example (9) the benefit is both to the speaker and the addressee (i.e. *We don't really want any more of this...*). Despite the narrator's categorization of the act as a piece of advice, the fact that the speaker also benefits from the addressee's future action makes it a bad example of this category. Since the speaker is also a beneficiary, this utterance activates the convention of politeness described in section 5.1, according to which the addressee is expected to carry out those states of affairs which benefit others. The

addressee's optionality is constrained in this way, which is typical of the functioning of requests. However, as will be shown below, advising is characterized by a maximum degree of optionality and requesting is intended to benefit the speaker, but not the addressee. Because of all this, (9) is not a good example of either of these two illocutionary categories, but rather a mixture of both.

Following the speaker's directions in example (10), the addressee will benefit himself (i.e. he will avoid an open argument with Derek). In this sense, the speaker's utterance may be interpreted as a piece of advice to the addressee. Nevertheless, there is also a second beneficiary of the addressee's action, namely, Derek (i.e. a third party). Since the addressee is not the only affected entity and other people are liable to benefit from his action, the interpretation of the sentence is once more constrained by the convention of politeness, and it is halfway between those of advising and requesting, or even suggesting.

Finally, let us make some comments on the relevance of the variable of cost-benefit to distinguish advising from a very closely related type of directive like warning. The boundary between the acts of advising and warning is a very thin one. As regards the cost-benefit attribute, a piece of advice is an attempt to influence the addressee's course of action to his benefit. Moreover, advising does not prototypically involve a cost to the speaker. Let us advance that warnings, on the contrary, are characterized by attempting to influence the addressee's behaviour so that he can avoid a potential cost. Avoiding a cost can be understood as a kind of benefit; hence the narrow line that distinguishes these two speech act categories. The corpus contains instances of speech acts intended to get the addressee to avoid a cost, but which, nonetheless, are categorized by the narrator as instances of advising. Consider the following example:

(11) When the letter arrived telling her that she had been accepted to read *History of Art*, she shouted "Hooray!" and flung her arms around her brother, then burst into uncontrollable tears of relief. "Don't cry, Tory, you'll look like a boiled owl," he advised, mopping her eyes with his handkerchief. (BNC)

The speaker wants to influence the addressee's behaviour so that she can avoid the cost that her crying may cause her. In this sense, this utterance could qualify as a warning. However, this may well not be the case. There is one characteristic of the utterance in example (11) which prevents it from being categorized as a warning and this is the relative triviality of the cost involved. It seems that the cost to the addressee, which the speaker is attempting to get him to avoid, is of too little importance to warn against it. This favours the advice interpretation that the narrator himself has made explicit by means of the performative verb. Advising and warning appear to be at the two extremes

of a continuum. By means of the former, the speaker intends to help the addressee to obtain a benefit. By means of the latter, the speaker intends to help the addressee to avoid a potential cost. Between these two extreme values, however, an intermediate area may be found where it is the relative cost of the state of affairs which favours either one interpretation or the other. If the cost to be avoided is high, an utterance will have a preferred reading as a warning. If that cost is trivial or insignificant, the interpretation of the utterance as a piece of advice will be favoured. This phenomenon has a logical explanation. Given that advising prototypically involves a benefit to the addressee, it offers a high degree of optionality. For different reasons, the addressee may not want to follow the speaker's piece of advice. He may not be interested in obtaining that benefit, he may not trust the speaker, etc. Warnings, on the contrary, are prototypically uttered to help the addressee to avoid a cost. The latter's degree of optionality is consequently lower, because the menace of a cost generally leads the hearer to do as told in order to avoid it. As a result, the smaller the cost indicated by the speech act, the higher the degree of optionality of the addressee, and the more the speech act will resemble an act of advising instead of a warning.

Optionality. In the case of orders, the agent's optionality was constrained by the power of the speaker. In the case of requests, the optionality was somehow reduced by the workings of the convention of politeness. In contrast to this, the optionality associated with an act of advising is prototypically high and unconstrained. The addressee has the ultimate word in most cases, because the outcome of his decision only affects him (i.e. the addressee is both the agent and the beneficiary of the future action). However, it is also true that on some occasions, the prototypically high degree of optionality of the act of advising can be reduced. This will be illustrated below as the variable of social distance is considered in relation to this act.

Power. The analysis of the power attribute reveals that, when advising, speakers prototypically have some authority over the addressee. However, the kind of authority which characterizes advice givers is of a special type and deserves closer attention. As was argued in section 4.1, different types of power may be distinguished, each of which displays a different degree of strength. The power associated with advising, which I shall refer to as *knowledge power or authority*, is of a rather weak nature. As its name indicates, knowledge authority stems from an individual's greater understanding of a particular subject or situation.⁵⁴ This greater understanding may have been

54. I have borrowed the term *knowledge authority* from Verschueren (1985: 181). Merin (1991: 681) make similar distinctions between *rational* and *social power*, and Spencer-Oatey (1996) uses the term *expert power* to refer to those cases in which one person has some special knowledge or expertise which the other person needs.

acquired by laborious learning and training (e.g. an expert on Biology or mechanics), it may be due to lifelong experience (e.g. the knowledge and skills accumulated by mature and elderly people), or it may be simply caused by the possession of relevant information and facts about a particular situation. Here are some examples:

(12) Reader: What kind of equipment is ideal when travelling?

Top professional photographer: I find it's best to travel light. I take a Bronica ETRS medium-format camera with three lenses, backed up with a 35mm Nikon with a 28-210mm zoom. For the majority of amateurs, a 35mm SLR, standard 35-70mm zoom and a 70-210mm telezoom would cover most eventualities. (*Photo Answers*. June 1998: 34)

(13) Robyn felt herself going red. "Natalie just looking for gossip. There are days when I don't particularly like her, you know." "Then don't hang around with her, dear," Mrs. Chantry advised. "A person is known by the company they keep." "Honestly, Mom," Robyn said. "I don't know where you get all these corny sayings from." (BNC)

(14) Jeffrey: No. I told you. I don't want to hurt you. I want to help you. I think I know some of what is happening to you. (She doesn't react) Dorothy? Frank has your husband and son. Dorothy? Doesn't he? You have to do something Dorothy. Go to the police. (BV)

Example (12) is given by a skilled professional photographer; example (13) by a mother who makes use of the knowledge gained through life experience; finally, (14) is uttered by a speaker who happens to have some particular information which is useful to the addressee in deciding what should be the appropriate course of action.

Unlike the institutional or physical power which characterizes prototypical orders, the kind of knowledge authority associated with advising does not restrict the addressee's freedom of action (i.e. optionality), but merely entitles the speaker to attempt to influence the addressee's future actions. In spite of the fact that advising counts as an attempt to benefit the addressee, it is nonetheless also an attempt to influence his behaviour and, as such, it may still be perceived on occasions as somehow impositive. The feeling of imposition is absent from those instances of solicited advice, as in these cases the addressee has explicitly manifested his desire that the speaker helps him decide on his future acts. The situation is different, however, with those instances of unsolicited advice. The addressee has not overtly expressed his desire to be helped, therefore, the speaker's advice runs the risk of being taken as an intrusion into the addressee's business. This intrusion can be justified if the speaker has some knowledge that may be useful to the addressee or if the addressee believes that the speaker has that knowledge. As has been pointed

out by Thackerar et al. (1982), Zuengler (1989), and DeCapua and Findlay (1993), *perceived* expertise or knowledge is often enough for the speaker to be able to give a piece of advice. He need not actually be an expert on the subject, but as long as the addressee perceives him as an expert, he can offer advice without it appearing as a gratuitous intrusion.

Together with this kind of knowledge power, which is an important aspect of the ICM of advising, I shall also consider the relevance of more central types of power like institutional or physical authorities. The fact that the intrusive character of advising can sometimes make it appear as an imposition on the free will of the addressee has to be taken into account especially in those contexts in which there is an asymmetrical power relation between the speaker and the addressee. It was interesting to find out that the corpus contains no examples in which the addressee is more powerful than the speaker. This may be related to the risk involved in giving advice to someone who has power over you, if the advice turns out to be the wrong one. Nevertheless, if the speaker wants to take that risk and has the appropriate knowledge authority, he is certainly entitled to offer advice to his superiors. I hypothesize, however, that, all things being equal, the more powerful the addressee, the more mitigated the piece of advice needs to be in order to minimize its inherent imposition, and the more tentative it needs to be in order to prevent the addressee's negative reaction against the speaker in case of a potential negative outcome. The following examples illustrate this. They present a secretary offering unsolicited advice to her boss on how to deal with the problem of advertising.

(15) Contact AM Advertising Co.

(16) Contact AM Advertising Co. They are the best in town.

(17) I would contact AM Advertising Co. They are said to be one of the best companies in town.

(18) Maybe you'd like to consider contacting AM Advertising Co. They are said to be one of the best companies in town.

Native informants have been consulted on which one of the above utterances would be the best candidate for a piece of advice in the context under consideration. Their answers confirm the initial hypothesis. Examples (17) and (18) which are mitigated by using past modals or periphrasis like *consider contacting*, and tentative (i.e. use of passive voice to avoid presenting the speaker as committed to the truth of the proposition) are rated as the most appropriate types of advice in the situation under scrutiny. Sentences (15) and (16), on the contrary, are described by our informants as too *direct*, *dangerous*, *fresh*, and *cheeky* pieces of advice. In addition, they all point out that (15) and (16) could be good instances of advising, in spite of the

asymmetrical power relationship, if the piece of advice had been asked for by the addressee. In order to capture these facts, I shall formulate the first of the conventions of the ICM of advising:

Convention 1: *The more powerful (i.e. institutional/physical authority) the addressee is in relation to the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising, except in those situations in which the addressee himself has asked for advice.*

Addressee's Will. Because the action or actions which the speaker presents the addressee for consideration are perceived as beneficial to latter, the degree of addressee's will to do as told is expected to be high. As far as those instances of solicited advice are concerned, the corpus shows that this is definitely the case. The expressions used by advice seekers present them as eager to hear and follow the course of action or behaviour suggested by the speaker. Here are some examples:

(19) Advice seeker: I'm partially colour blind, and while I love reading about hip make-up shades, I stick to black eye liner and mascara because I never know what suits me. Are there rules about choosing colour, or should I see a professional? *Help me out of my make-up rut!!!* (*Company*. June, 1998: 44)

(20) Advice seeker: I've started to suffer from terrible panic attacks. My doctor has prescribed blockers but they don't stop the attacks from occurring. *What can I do? It's getting to the point where I'm desperate.* (*Company*. March, 1998: 34)

The fact that the addressee is looking for some advice suggests that he has no better alternative in mind and that he is willing to do as told.

On the other hand, in the case of unsolicited advice, it is not always easy to determine from the available context whether the addressee's will is strong or not. As the piece of advice has not been asked for, the degree of addressee's will very much depends on how good the suggested course of action seems to him on each particular occasion. Unsolicited advice runs the risk of not being welcomed by the addressee, because he already has a different course of action in mind, or simply because it is not deemed appropriate:

(21) "Get drunk and have a little holiday romance," he advised. *"I don't give myself permission, Francis," said Jay. "Imagine inflicting myself on anyone in this state. I'd burst into tears all the time. I've just had open-heart surgery, remember?"* (BNC)

Jay's reply to Francis's piece of advice counts as a rejection (i.e. minimum will). In the following example of unsolicited advice, on the contrary, the addressee sees some point in the speaker's suggestion and, as a result, the former's degree of will is high:

(22) It had been twenty years since the last time Paul had seen Mary. "I'd buy her some flowers," Jim advised. *Paul thought that was a good idea and ordered a bunch of red roses to be delivered to her before his arrival.* (BNC)

As shown by these examples, the degree of addressee's will in the case of unsolicited advice is largely unpredictable and depends on the particular circumstances of each interaction.

Social Distance. According to the examples in the corpus, the act of advising can be performed independently of the degree of intimacy that holds between the speakers (i.e. of the ratings of the social distance variable). However, as was shown in connection with orders and requests, the values taken up by the social distance variable may influence the functioning of other dimensions of the ICM of advising. It was suggested earlier that the high degree of optionality prototypically associated with the act of advising may sometimes be reduced depending on the degree of intimacy that holds between the participants. Optionality is not the only parameter which is affected by the workings of the social distance variable in the ICM of advising. Both the degree of mitigation of the act and the degree of speaker's will are also influenced by the level of intimacy of the speakers. Let us discuss in some detail the interplay between these variables.

Social Distance and Optionality. Consider the following example:

(23) Meg to Jeffrey: Take Mr. Mckenzie's biology course. It is the best. (BNC)

Jeffrey and Meg are a couple. In theory, since their power relationship is symmetrical and since the benefit of the action is to Jeffrey himself, he seems to have total freedom not to follow Meggy's piece of advice. In practice, however, Jeffrey's refusal to follow it might have negative consequences for their relationship. Jeffrey is important to Meg. If Jeffrey does not follow her advice, Meg will infer that he does not care about what is important to her. Jeffrey's actual chances to refuse to follow it are slim, if he wishes to preserve their relationship in good terms. In sum, optionality decreases as the addressee's concern for the speaker increases. In general, the higher the degree of intimacy (i.e. the smaller the social distance), the greater the concern

for others. Therefore, it can be concluded that the smaller the social distance, the lower the degree of optionality is in connection with the act of advising.⁵⁵

Convention 2: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Social Distance and Speaker's Will. The correlation observed between the parameters of social distance and speaker's will is exactly the opposite of the one which holds between the parameters of social distance and optionality. The corpus contains instances of advising which display opposing values with respect to the parameter of speaker's will:

(24) Advice seeker: Six months ago I sprained my shoulder badly playing tennis. It was agonizing at the time but I assumed it would improve within a couple of weeks. But it's still really painful -surely it should be better by now?

Advise giver: Sprains can take some time to mend, and can easily flare up if aggravated. Rest assured, your shoulder will improve with time and there's nothing to be gained by trying not to use it. Have you tried any of the anti-inflammatory tablets or gels on the market to ease the pain? If your shoulder continues to hurt, ask your doctor or check it out. Physiotherapy or a steroid injection into the joint may also help. (*Company*. May 1998: 161)

(25) It exasperated his grandmother to see this forceful spirit drifting like a rudderless boat, directed neither to work nor to leisure (...) "Then do something whether you feel like it or not," she advised crisply. "I'll go for a walk, then," he conceded in a sulky voice. (BNC)

Example (24) illustrates a situation in which the social distance between the speakers is rather large. The advice giver is a journalist who has never met the advice seeker (i.e. one of his readers). The speaker's interest in the addressee following the course of action that he has put forward is, therefore, not very important. It is hard to imagine a magazine advisor who worries about whether every one of his readers follows his advice or not. In example (25), on the contrary, the participants in the interaction are very close to each other (i.e. grandmother-grandson). The reader is informed in the narration that the grandmother worries about her grandson. In this case, the fact that the speaker wants the addressee to carry out the proposed action is significant. This knowledge makes up convention 3:

55. This correlation between the parameters of social distance and optionality is even more marked in the case of warnings, given that the avoidance of cost to an intimate is involved. See section 7.1.

Convention 3: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, and vice versa.*

Previous accounts of advising simply present this type of speech act as *non-wilful*, that is to say, as concerned not with the interests or wishes of the utterer (i.e. as displaying a minimum degree of speaker's will), but with those of the addressee (see Merin, 1991).⁵⁶ As I have attempted to show, the degree of speaker's will in the performance of an act of advising is variable, and may take on significant values in those situations in which there is a considerable amount of intimacy between the speakers.

It should be also noticed that those pieces of advice which display a high degree of speaker's will share this feature with both orders and requests. However, the source of such a high degree of will is of a different nature in each case. In the case of orders and requests is due to self-interest reasons, because the beneficiary of the future action is the speaker himself. In the case of the act of advising, it is altruistic: the speaker's purpose is to help the addressee, who is the one that will benefit from the performance of the future action.

Mitigation. Finally, the degree of mitigation of acts of advising is interrelated not only with the dimension of social distance, but also with those of cost-benefit, and speaker's will. Moreover, in order to understand the mitigation of advising it is also necessary to take into consideration the type of advice that we are dealing with (i.e. solicited or unsolicited). It has already been explained that advising, in spite of seeking the addressee's benefit and in spite of its intrinsic optionality, can still be perceived as a somewhat imposing act. This is due to fact that, by putting forward certain courses of action, the speaker is behaving rather intrusively. For this reason, a certain amount of mitigation should be expected in the expression of advising, in order to make it explicit that the speaker wishes to *show* the addressee potential courses of action rather than to *impose* them onto him. The corpus data confirm these expectations. Only sixteen out of the one hundred and ninety three entries of advising display no overt mitigation at all. Furthermore, as will be shown below, the lack of mitigation of these instances of advising

56. More traditional accounts of advising do not consider the variable of speaker's will as relevant to the description of this speech act type (see Searle 1969: 67). Verschueren (1985: 150) acknowledges that in some circumstances the act of advising may include a wish or desire on the part of the speaker that the addressee carries out the proposed action, but he does not specify in what circumstances. Finally, Dominicy and Franken (1994) claim that the speaker always has a certain wish that his advice is taken into consideration. For the reason offered in our discussion of example (24) above, this is highly unlikely in the case of the advice givers writing for advice sections in magazines.

is the result of the interplay of the mitigation parameter with other variables of the ICM. It can thus be concluded that the act of advising is prototypically mitigated. In this it resembles requests. However, the use of mitigation is due to different reasons in each case. A request is mitigated to minimize the cost that carrying out the proposed action involves for the addressee. Advising seeks the addressee's benefit, and therefore, there is no cost that needs to be minimized in the performance of this act. As regards advising, mitigation has the function of increasing the optionality of the act, and therefore, of making manifest that the speaker's intention is not to impose his will, but just to suggest possible courses of action. These differences in the function of the mitigation parameter in connection with advising will be useful in explaining the nature of its associated realization procedures in section 6.2 below.

The type of advice (i.e. solicited or unsolicited) also has a bearing on the degree of mitigation that is needed in its performance. The tendency observed in the corpus is that solicited advice is, in general, less mitigated than unsolicited advice. This is only a natural consequence of the fact that it is the addressee himself who has asked for advice. Therefore, the advice given has very little chance of being interpreted as imposing, and the need of mitigating the act decreases.

Let us now turn to explain the details of the interplay of the mitigation variable with other parameters. The first correlation worth mentioning is actually threefold. It has been observed in the data that as the social distance becomes smaller, the speaker's will increases, and, on the contrary, the use of mitigation decreases. Example (26) below illustrates this:

(26) Dad Tom was a social drinker and wise in his cups. George remembers that he never lost his values in drink. "Be sincere," he advised George, "and always pay your turn." (BNC)

This paragraph depicts a father giving a piece of advice to his son. This is a situation of small social distance. Putting such advice into practice will benefit George. Therefore, Tom wants his son to follow his advice and so the degree of speaker's will is high. In order to persuade his son to do what he believes is beneficial to him, the speaker chooses to give a piece of unmitigated advice (i.e. a bare imperative) which due to its strength, typical of imposing acts like orders, is more likely to move George into carrying out the proposed action. Convention 4 captures this idea:

Convention 4: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of the speaker's will, and as a result, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising.*

It should follow from convention 4 that the larger the social distance between the interactants, the greater the need for mitigation will be. The corpus confirms this hypothesis only partially. Let us consider the following examples:

(27) Lula: I'm truly sorry, Roach. But ain't gonna make it to Alaska. Least no tiny part of the way with us. You'd best find a party to take care of those dogs proper, before they all die. And, if you don't mind my sayin' so. You could most certainly use some serious lookin' after yourself, starting with a bath! (WAH)

(28) Advice seeker: I'm attending an evening wedding this summer. Is it okay to wear black? My sister says it's in poor taste. What do you think? (D.B., San Francisco)

Advice giver: No rules apply across the board, so you need to: *Use your brain*. If it's an outdoor, afternoon wedding in mid-June, *skip the black* - passing out from a clothing-induced sunstroke is really inappropriate. *Be sensitive!* If you feel there's someone who will be offended if you wear black, *then don't do it*. It's not worth it. (*Company*. June 1997: 56)

In both (27) and (28) the social distance between the speakers is large. In the first example, Lula has just met the addressee (i.e. a hitch-hiker). In the second example, the speaker is a journalist who writes for the advice section of a magazine and the addressee is just an anonymous reader. They have never met before and are, therefore, strangers to each other. In spite of the large social distance displayed in both situations, it can be observed that the degree of mitigation is higher in (27). The use of expressions like *if you don't mind me saying so*, and the use of past modals, help to soften the force of the act. In (28), on the contrary, we find sheer unmitigated imperatives (e.g. *Use your brain, skip the black, be sensitive!*). The different amount of mitigation used in each situation has a simple explanation. (27) is an instance of unsolicited advice, while (28) is a case of solicited advice. As pointed out above, solicited advice generally displays a lower degree of mitigation, because, as it has been asked for, the advice giver does not run the risk of being interpreted as imposing on the addressee.

Convention 5: *The larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising, except when the piece of advice has been asked for.*

Finally, another factor which may call for a reduction of the degree of mitigation of a piece of advice is the importance of the benefit which the speaker may derive from following it. According to the data in the corpus, the greater the benefit, the lesser the need for mitigation. Look at the following example:

(29) Then, because fomenting distrust between the two men was all he could do, “You get a chance, shoot him,” he advised with a nod. “You don’t, he’ll kill you.” (BNC)

The benefit that the addressee will derive from following the speaker’s advice is certainly important: he will save his own life. This accounts for the lack of mitigation.

Convention 6: *The greater the benefit that the addressee can derive from the performance of the action proposed by the speaker, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising.*

Formality. To finish the discussion on the semantics of the act of advising, I shall consider the variable of formality. Unfortunately, the corpus does not contain instances of advising performed in formal contexts. My tentative hypothesis, however, is that we should expect higher degrees of mitigation in those pieces of advice performed in formal contexts. Formal situations require a certain degree of politeness which makes mitigation desirable in the case of speech acts like advising, which may be considered as somehow imposing. Consider the following pieces of advice uttered to a colleague during a business meeting:

(30) Sign the contract. You need this merger.

(31) Have you considered the advantages of the merger they are proposing?

(32) If I were you, I would consider their proposal. A merger like this would benefit our company.

According to some native informants, (31) and (32) would qualify as better instances of advising in the formal context under consideration. This seems to confirm my initial hypothesis, since both examples are clearly more tentative and mitigated than (30).

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF ADVISING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the addressee
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past.
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically high
Addressee's Will	Solicited advice: Prototypically high Unsolicited advice: varies with the nature of each particular interaction
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Benefit to the addressee/No cost to the speaker
<u>Optionality</u>	High degree of unconstrained optionality
Mitigation	The act of advising generally display a certain amount of mitigation which can vary depending on the values of other parameters (see conventions 4, 5, and 6 below)
Speaker's Will	Varies with the nature of each particular interaction. It varies according to the degree of social distance between the speakers. See convention 3.
Power	The act of advising is prototypically performed by speakers who have or are perceived as having some knowledge authority
Social Distance	The act of advising can be performed whatever the social distance which holds between the speakers (see conventions 4 and 5)
Formality	The act of advising can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF ADVISING

Convention 1: *The more powerful (i.e. institutional/physical authority) the addressee is in relation to the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising, except in those situations in which the addressee himself has asked for advice.*

Convention 2: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, and vice versa.*

Convention 4: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, and as a result, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising.*

Convention 5: *The larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising, except when the piece of advice has been asked for.*

Convention 6: *The greater the benefit that the addressee can derive from the performance of the action proposed by the speaker, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising.*

6.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Advising

The distribution of the three sentence types as realization procedures of those examples of advising in the corpus is the following:

Imperative-based pieces of advice	132 occurrences
Declarative-based pieces of advice	58 occurrences
Interrogative-based pieces of advice	3 occurrences
Total number of pieces of advice	193 occurrences

Let us now see the realization procedures which characterize each of the sentence types when used in the performance of the directive type under consideration.

6.2.1. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Advising

The imperative sentence-type instantiates three variables of the ICM of advising:

- (1) the addressee is the agent of the action.
- (2) the action takes place in the future.
- (3) the speaker has some desire that the future action is carried out.

These three variables are shared by other directives (e.g. ordering, requesting, begging, threatening) and, therefore, the imperative sentence-type does not appear to be a very explicit means of expression for the act of

advising. It became apparent in sections 4.2 and 5.2 that both orders and requests can be performed by means of imperatives. Nevertheless, in the case of requests, it was also observed a preference for the use of interrogative rather than imperative-based realization procedures. As was shown before, this is due to the fact that interrogative sentences are capable of activating the optionality variable on their own. It could be argued, however, that advising is also characterized by displaying optionality. There is a possible explanation for the fact that advising, in spite of sharing a high degree of optionality with requesting, does not generally make this variable explicit through the use of interrogative-based realization procedures. Even though both requesting and advising display a considerable degree of optionality, the source of the addressee's freedom of action is different in either case. Requesting results in a cost to the addressee and a benefit to the speaker. Because of this, the granting of optionality is simply one way of minimizing such cost with the intention of persuading the addressee to comply. In other words, the optionality which characterizes acts of requesting has its origin in the speaker's intention of persuading the addressee to carry out a certain action. I may refer to this kind of optionality as *speaker-granted*. Advising, on the contrary, results in a benefit to the addressee. The speaker is not affected by the addressee's compliance or non-compliance with the speech act, which means that the degree of optionality of advising stems from the addressee himself. Given that he is the only affected entity, he is free to act as he wishes. Let us refer to this type of optionality as *addressee-originated*. The different origins of the optionality displayed by requesting and advising helps us to account for the fact that only the former makes use of interrogative-based realization procedures as a means of expressing the variable of optionality. Speaker-granted optionality needs to be communicated to the addressee, but addressee-originated optionality need not, because the addressee is already aware of it.

In the case of orders, the tendency was clearly the opposite one towards the use of imperative-based realization procedures. In this aspect, advising and ordering are very much alike, as both are performed mainly by means of imperative-based expressions. There is, however, a major difference between those imperatives used in the performance of orders and those used in the expression of advising. Orders were realized mainly by means of isolated imperatives. On the contrary, those imperative sentences which realize the instances of advising in the corpus are rarely isolated. Only sixteen of the total number of imperative-based pieces of advice are single imperative sentences. The rest (i.e. one hundred and sixteen) are either followed or preceded by independent or subordinate clauses which generally express satellites of reason, purpose, or condition.

Use of Satellites of Reason

In section 5.2 it was shown that some instances of requests display satellites of reason, which activated the variables of optionality and mitigation. The rationale behind such instantiations was the following. Telling the addressee the reason why he is requested to do something is a means of persuading him to do as told by appealing to his rationality. But at the same time, the fact that the speaker needs to make use of this kind of persuasive device is a sign of his acknowledgement of the addressee's optionality. Therefore, the presence of subordinated, juxtaposed, or independent reason satellites, either following or preceding an imperative-based request, increases the optionality of the act and, as a result, its degree of mitigation. Reason satellites have this very same function when they are used in imperative-based advising:

(1) "Stop thinking and act," Alan advised him. "*Your trouble is that you do too much thinking. You think yourself right out of all your chances.*" (BNC)

(2) "Let him go," he advised. "*Derek's had a bad day. You heard about his girlfriend getting murdered?*" (BNC)

(3) Always use spray or liquid insecticides in calm conditions *as wind will blow it all over the place...* (*Good Housekeeping*. June 1998: 153)

(4) "Keep your lashes straight *because curling them automatically gives you that wide-eyed Eighties glam look, even before you use mascara.*" (*Company*. March 1998: 151)

Independent and subordinate clauses, like those in italics in sentences (1)-(4) appeal to the addressee's rationality and common sense in order to persuade him to carry out a future action. In this way, by treating the addressee as a rational person, his autonomy of mind and freedom to make his own decisions is acknowledged. This means that the degree of optionality increases and, therefore, the inherent imposition of the imperative decreases, that is, the force of the act is mitigated. There are, however, some noticeable differences between those reason satellites used in requesting and those found in advising. Compare the satellites in examples (1)-(4) above with those in the instances of requesting below:

(5) Would you stop by the principal's office before your next class, please? *Mr. Grandy would like to speak to you.* (DM)

(6) Can you stop it a minute? *I'd like you to think about it and try and explain to me what those three ideas were if you remember.* (BNC)

(7) Honey! Come on out here! *Want you to meet a couple friends of mine!*
(RA)

(8) “Drop me here, *I have some shopping to do,*” he requested. (BNC)

Reason satellites found in requests invariably point to the existence of a beneficiary different from the addressee, like Mr. Grandy or the speaker in examples (5)-(8). In contrast, reason satellites involved in the act of advising rarely refer to the beneficiary of the action and when they do, the beneficiary is always the addressee:

(9) *Your best approach is to be honest:* say getting close to her brother made you decide it wasn't worth risking your friendship for an uncertain relationship... (BNC)

(10) “Have the courage to read this book,” Sartre advised, “*it will make you ashamed, and shame, as Marx said, is a revolutionary sentiment.*” (BNC)

(11) “Let her get on with it,” advised Angelica. “*Jelly's obsession with Tully seems to keep Angel away. We don't really want any more of this Ram business or nights out on the restless with strangers.*” (BNC)

Sentences (9) and (10) are two instances of advising. However, in (11), the reason satellite refers to both the speaker and the addressee as the beneficiaries of the action (i.e. *We don't really want...*). This is enough, as was observed in the description of the ICM of advising, to make the advice reading less straightforward and to extend the range of possible interpretations into those of requesting and suggesting.

Furthermore, the difference between the use of reason satellites in requesting and advising is also found to be quantitative in nature. In the corpus, reason satellites are significantly more frequent as realization procedures for advising than they are for requesting. Only twelve instances of requests were found to make use of this procedure, as opposed to the fifty two cases of advice which contain a satellite of reason. Furthermore, it seems to be possible to find some motivation for this in some of the differences between the ICMs of these two types of directive. It has already been shown that those reason satellites that appear in the acts of advising do not make the beneficiary of the action explicit. Rather they are used to introduce facts and information which may convince the addressee of the benefits of carrying out such an action. In this way they manage to instantiate another variable of the ICM under consideration, namely, the knowledge authority which is typical of advice givers. Since this is one of the most distinctive features of the expression of advising, its extensive use is fully justified and motivated.

Use of Quotations and Sayings

Together with satellites of reason, two other means of activating the knowledge authority parameter of the ICM of advising are the use of authoritative quotations and traditional sayings, which are repeatedly found in the corpus:

(12) First, stop curling your lashes. *“It’s not the look of the moment,” according to Louise Constad, make-up consultant for Max Factor International.* “Keep your lashes straight because curling them will automatically give you that wide-eyed Eighties glam look, even before you use mascara.” (*Company*. March 1998: 151)

(13) Next time he asks for advice, reply: “Why ask me? I’m biased” then tell him how you feel, or you may end up kicking yourself (...) And the odds are on your side: the best relationships are based on friendship, communication and attraction. *Nothing ventured, nothing gained* -so good luck! (*Company*. July 1997: 67)

(14) “Then don’t hang around with her, dear,” Mrs. Chantry advised. *“A person is known by the company they keep.”* (BNC)

Use of Satellites of Condition

Condition satellites were shown to activate the mitigation variable in the production of requests. Moreover, condition satellites found in requesting could be divided into two groups: those which instantiate the mitigation variable via the activation of the cost-benefit parameter (e.g. *If it’s not too much trouble*), and those which did so via the activation of the speaker’s will parameter (e.g. *If you don’t mind, if you like*). Condition satellites are also involved in the activation of the mitigation variable in the performance of the act of advising. However, as was the case with reason satellites, there are some differences worth mentioning between those satellites of condition used in requesting and those found in advising. Let us see some examples:

(15) *If you need a guide. If you are a seeker and you need a guide,* someone to counsel you so you can find your way forward into a spiritual realm. *And you’re on an airplane.* Don’t look in first class. (JVV)

(16) *Miss Johnson, if you want to get the class to listen,* get Emilio. (RA)

(17) *“If your house is in tremendous upheaval and your cat or dog is not reacting well to the change,* consider keeping him confined to one room,” advises Mosconi. (BNC)

In the corpus, these three sentences are representative of the types of condition satellites found in the expression of advising. Unlike condition satellites used in requesting, none of the above instances instantiates either the cost-benefit or the speaker's will parameters. In contrast to this, they refer to the addressee's will (e.g. *if you want*), to the addressee's necessities (e.g. *if you need*), or they simply describe the kind of situation in which the piece of advice would be useful (e.g. *if your house is in tremendous upheaval...*). In so doing, they are both pointing to the addressee's will variable of the ICM of advising and activating the optionality and mitigation variables. The hypothetical sense introduced by the condition satellite, together with the fact that it is up to the addressee to decide when the suggested condition holds (i.e. *if you need/want*), increases the degree of optionality of the act, and consequently, its force is mitigated.

Use of Satellites of Purpose

A considerable number of examples of advising in the corpus (twenty entries in total) are either followed or preceded by a satellite of purpose:

(18) "Give him a couple of nudges with your leg *to say listen to me*," she advised. (BNC)

(19) *To get your hair in shape*, have it trimmed regularly and use an intensive conditioner to improve the appearance of damaged ends. (*Company*. July 1997)

As in the case of reason satellites, purpose satellites appeal to the addressee's rationality. They count as attempts to persuade him of the advantages of the proposed action. In so doing they acknowledge his freedom to decide upon his future course of action and, therefore, activate the variables of optionality and mitigation.

The use of one of the types of satellites considered so far (i.e. reason, condition, and purpose satellites) is not incompatible with the use of the others. Thus, the corpus contains instances of advice which include more than one of these realization procedures:

(20) Always use spray or liquid insecticides in calm conditions *as wind will blow it all over the place (...)* *If using slug killers*, treat only the plants such as delphiniums, lupins, and hostas with sections cut from a plastic bottle pushed into the ground, leaving about 10cm of the bottle showing. (*Good Housekeeping*. June 1998: 153)

(21) Use black and white film *to focus attention*. *Colour can sometimes be too distracting especially in backgrounds*. (*Photo Answers*. July 1998: 26)

Use of Isolated Imperatives

It has already been pointed out that, unlike orders, imperative-based pieces of advice show a general tendency to be surrounded by other main or subordinate clauses which, functioning as different types of satellite, manage to instantiate several of the variables which make up the ICM of advising (e.g. knowledge authority, optionality, mitigation). However, there are several instances of advising in the corpus which do not display any overt means of mitigation:

(22) Dad Tom was a social drinker and wise in his cups. George remembers that he never lost his values in drink. “Be sincere,” he advised George, “and always pay your turn.” He was fond of George and proud of him. (BNC)

(23) Advise seeker: What is your advice?

Advise giver: “Be focused. Let no one get you down.” (*Company*. June 1998: 80)

These two utterances may, at first sight, look like counter examples to the hypothesis of the existence of a general tendency of imperative-based advising to be mitigated by means of different types of satellite. Nevertheless, their lack of overt mitigation can be easily explained if we take into account conventions 4 and 5 of the ICM of advising, which are reproduced below for our convenience:

Convention 4: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker’s will, and as a result, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising.*

Convention 5: *The larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of advising, except when the piece of advice has been asked for.*

The isolated imperative in (22) is easily understood under the light of convention 4. The social distance between the speakers is small. The speaker is *fond and proud* of the addressee. This high degree of intimacy results in an increase in the speaker’s will. Dad Tom wants his son to follow his advice because he believes it will be beneficial to him. Consequently, the mitigation is reduced. By uttering an isolated imperative, typical of more imposing acts (e.g. ordering), the speaker attempts to reduce the optionality of the addressee and to get him to follow his piece of advice so that he can benefit from it. On the other hand, convention 5 explains the lack of overt mitigation in (23). In this case, the piece of advice has been asked for and, therefore, mitigation is not required, because the speaker has no reason to find imposing something which he himself has solicited.

Other Activators of the Mitigation Variable

Throughout this section it has been observed that, even though with some differences, several of the realization procedures used in the explicitation of requests are also found in the expression of advising (e.g. satellites of reason and condition). However, several other realization procedures, which were used to instantiate the mitigation variable in the case of requesting, are not found in those instances of advice in the data collection. I am referring to procedures like time satellites (e.g. *a moment*), quantifying term operators (e.g. *a few*), use of manner satellites (e.g. *roughly*), adverb *please*, and hedges (e.g. *kind of*). Once more, this phenomenon, may be found to be motivated by some of the idiosyncratic pieces of knowledge that make up the ICM of advising. All the realization procedures enumerated above manage to mitigate the force of the act by bringing about a reduction in the cost of the requested action. Since advising seeks the benefit of the addressee, there is no cost that needs to be reduced. Therefore, those realization procedures are not operative. Consider the oddity of following examples:

(24) * If I were you, I would read this book, *please*.

(25) * Go home and get *little* rest. (In a context in which the addressee would benefit from getting as much rest as possible)

(26) * *Kind of* eat well if you want to get stronger.

On the contrary, some other realization procedures found in requesting (e.g. the use of mood operators like *possibly* or *perhaps*), which mitigate the force of the act via increasing optionality, rather than via reducing the cost of the act, are perfectly compatible with the performance of the act of advising. Even though the corpus contains no such instances of advice, it is easy to come up with some examples, all of which have been recognized by our native informants as good examples of this category:

(27) If I were you, I would *probably/possibly/perhaps* go on with it.

Likewise, the use of tentativeness as a means of activating the variable of mitigation is a type of realization procedure compatible with the performance of both requesting and advising. In this case, some illustrative cases are contained in the corpus:

(28) (...) To convince her she's not missing out on swotting time *try saying* "Research shows that people who exercise and eat a balanced diet perform better than those with the same IQ who don't look after themselves." (*Good Housekeeping*, June 1998: 117)

(29) “If your house is in tremendous upheaval and your cat or dog is not reacting well to the change, *consider* keeping him confined to one room,” advised Mosconi. (BNC)

The tentativeness of periphrases like *try saying* or *consider keeping* in the above examples contributes to softening the force of the speech act.

6.2.2. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Advising

A considerable number of advice instances in the corpus (fifty eight entries) are expressed by means of declarative sentences. As was the case with ordering and requesting, the low degree of specialization of declarative sentences for the expression of advising can be upgraded with the use of certain linguistic features.

Use of Level Two Deontic Objective Mood Operators

The use of this type of operator in the expression of orders (e.g. *you have to...*, *you must...*) has already been noted. Deontic objective mood operators are also found in those realization procedures which make the act of advising explicit. As would be expected, there are some differences between those deontic mood operators used in ordering and those used in advising. In order to explain them let us reproduce below the scale of potential distinctions yielded by the area of deontic modality as it appears in Dik (1989: 205):

Deontic Objective Modalities

Obligatory-Acceptable-Permissible-Unacceptable-Forbidden

As was shown in section 4.2.2, deontic mood operators found in the realization of the act of ordering focus clearly on the leftmost extreme of the scale (i.e. obligation). Let us illustrate this with the following instances of ordering:

(30) *You’ve gotta* find ‘em! (WAH)

(31) “Never mind, but now you *must* carry it out...,” ordered the PRO. (BNC)

Both *have got to* and *must* are grammatical means of expressing obligation to carry out the state of affairs denoted by the predication. In contrast to this it will become apparent below that deontic mood operators used in the expression of the act of advising tend to belong to second stage (acceptable) of the deontic continuum described above. Consider the following examples:

(32) “You, as the land component commander, *should* be directing Homer and telling him what to emphasize,” he advised the CINC. (BNC)

(33) “You really *ought to* meet him. He’s involved with our outreach to the handicapped at church and is also director of a big unit at the university,” Dr MacArthur advised Joni. (BNC)

(34) One *should* eat healthy food and lead a healthy life.

The operators in examples (32)-(34), although they still point to the left extreme of the scale of deontic modality, do not instantiate the obligation distinction as clearly as *must* and *have to* do. They seem to be half way between the *obligatory* and the *acceptable* points of the scale. They indicate that the carrying out of the action would not only be acceptable but also preferable (i.e. nearly obligatory) according to a certain norm. But they give the addressee freedom to decide against it. In other words, they are not so impositive as *must* or *have to*. This makes them a suitable means for the expression of advising. Let us remember that the act of advising is not as impositive as that of ordering, but it does involve the speaker’s belief that the carrying out of a certain action would be beneficial to the addressee. The use of mood operators (i.e. *should*, *ought to*) which convey certain degree of *obligation* without being fully impositive is, therefore, fully appropriate.

Before continuing this discussion of mood operators as realization procedures for advising, let us concentrate for a brief moment on example (34) above. So far I have only dealt with instances of advice which display a second person singular subject. This feature activates the agent type variable of the ICM of advising (i.e. the addressee as the prototypical agent). It is not surprising, therefore, that most entries in the corpus display this type of subject. However, as shall be shown, it is also possible to give advice by using declarative sentences with a first person singular subject (e.g. *I would eat healthy food*) and, as is the case in example (34) above, third person indefinite pronouns are also found in the expression of the speech act type under scrutiny. The use of a third person indefinite pronoun may be motivated by either of the following reasons. On the one hand, it may be the case that the piece of advice is being addressed to a general public, rather than to a particular addressee. On the other hand, it may be motivated by the speaker’s attempt to increase the mitigation of his act. By not referring to the addressee directly, the force of the piece of advice is softened.

Operators like *must* or *have to* may also be found in the expression of advising, but they either instantiate peripheral cases of the category, or are accompanied by other linguistic elements which conveniently mitigate their force so that they lose their impositive character and can, thus, be used in order to express this speech act:

(35) Rice varies as to how much liquid it absorbs -*you may have to add* a little more stock or water during cooking. (*Good Housekeeping*, February 1998: 135)

(36) Using polish isn't necessarily bad for your nails, but *you do have to take extra care of them if you want to wear it regularly...* (*Company*, June 1998: 211)

(37) "*You've got to try and take* all this more seriously," she advised. (BNC)

(38) "No, I told you. I don't want to hurt you. I want to help you. I think I know some of what is happening to you. (She doesn't react) Dorothy? Frank has your husband and son. Dorothy? Doesn't he? *You have to do something, Dorothy*. Go to the police." (BV)

Example (35) is an interesting case of interplay between deontic and epistemic modality. The obligatoriness of the deontic operator expressed by *have to* is mitigated by means of the use of the preceding epistemic mood operator *may*, which indicates lack of certainty. In this way the impositive nature of *have to* is softened, the force of the act is mitigated, and the advice reading is not only possible, but it is preferred to the interpretation of the utterance as an order. In (36) the force of the mood operator (*have to*), which in this case is strengthened by the presence of the auxiliary *do*, is deprived of its impositive value by the addition of the condition satellite (*if you want...*). The satellite instantiates the high degree of optionality of the act beyond doubt, which enables the advice reading. Example (37) includes an expression of tentativeness (i.e. *try and...*) mitigating the force of the mood operator. Finally, (38) is an instance of advice in which the social distance between the speakers is very small. The speaker is the addressee's best friend. It is part of the knowledge included in the ICM of advising that when the degree of intimacy between the participants is reduced, the speaker's will in terms of his desire to get the addressee to follow his advice tends to increase. This is so especially in those cases in which the benefit that the addressee can obtain from doing as told is significantly important. Example (38) fulfils these conditions. Because of this, its lack of mitigation is not able to inhibit an interpretation of the sentence as a piece of advice, albeit a strong one.

Use of Level One Inherent Modality

According to Dik (1989: 205), "inherent modality distinctions define relations between a participant and the realization of the state of affairs in which he is involved". One of these distinctions is related to the ability of a participant to perform an action (e.g. *can, be able to*). The use of inherent modality in a declarative sentence with a second person singular subject is yet another possible realization procedure for the act of advising:

(39) *You can* prepare the broad bean pesto in advance, then cover it with olive oil and store in the fridge for up to one week. (*Good Housekeeping*. June 1998: 223)

(40) ... As a parent you need to find out why, so approach rather than challenge her behaviour directly. *You could* comment on an article on eating disorders and see if she'll discuss it with you. Or *you could* say: "I'm worried because you find it difficult to eat with other people. Is there anything troubling you that I can help with?..." (*Good Housekeeping*. July 1998: 55)

In the case of sentence (39) both the agent type and the agent's capacity variables of the ICM of advising are activated. In the case of (40), the use of the modal in the past tense (i.e. *could*) also instantiates the parameter of mitigation. The activation of these three variables could equally well point towards a request interpretation, as they are common to the ICMs of advising and requesting. There is, however, one further characteristic of the two utterances under consideration which favours the advice reading. Both (39) and (40) are instances of solicited advice. Therefore, the state of affairs expressed in the predication is expected to be beneficial to the addressee. This activates the cost-benefit variable of the ICM of advising, but not of the ICM of requesting. Consequently, those utterances are preferably interpreted as cases of advice.

First Person Singular Declarative Sentences

A well-known type of realization procedure for the act of advising, which is dealt with in most English grammars is illustrated by example (41) below:

(41) "*If I were you,*" advised John, "*I would take that job.*" (BNC)

In its most conventional form, it consists of an invariable level two satellite of condition (i.e. *if I were you*) plus a main sentence with a first person singular subject. The advice reading of utterances of this kind is fairly simple to grasp. The speaker is referring to a hypothetical situation and he is telling the addressee what his most likely reaction would be if he were the addressee. Since everybody wants the best for themselves, it is clear that the proposed action is to be beneficial in nature. Furthermore, the condition satellite makes it explicit that the speaker is not thinking of carrying out the action in actual fact, but that he is only considering what his course of action would be for the addressee's sake. In this way, the cost-benefit variable of the ICM of advising is activated -the state of affairs expressed in the predication, if brought about, will be beneficial to the addressee. To sum up, this type of realization procedure instantiates the following variables of the ICM of advising:

- (1) Future action
- (2) Addressee as agent
- (3) Presents the future action as beneficial
- (4) Mitigation
- (5) Optionality

Such is the level of conventionalization of this type of realization procedure that the condition satellite is often left out without this causing major difficulties in their interpretation as pieces of advice:

- (42) “I’d steer clear of the fruit soup,” he advised Veronica. (BNC)

One further variant of this type of realization procedure consists in presenting the speaker as the agent of a certain action -usually a habitual action- in actual fact, rather than in a hypothetical situation:

(43) *I always research* a place thoroughly before I go. In fact, because I do it for work, I’m almost paranoid about it. Sometimes, *I’ve studied* the place so much that when I arrive I almost feel as if I’ve been there before! *I collect* all the holiday brochures I can and cut out key images of various destinations and make them into a portfolio. Then when I go there *I start* by coping those pictures, then *I will experiment* and try to get something more creative. (*Photo Answers*. June 1998: 34)

(44) *For me* it’s capturing the essence or feel of a place -whatever it is that makes it different from the last place I went to. *If I go to* Majorca, for instance, the obvious place to take pictures is the beach. But that could be almost anywhere, so *I might go* and photograph a famous building instead. Or *I might concentrate* on local people doing things, or photograph the local dishes. Anything that says, ‘This is Majorca’. This helps make the pictures interesting to anyone who looks at them. (*Photo Answers*. June. 1998: 34)

By presenting the speaker habits or preference, the cost-benefit variable is activated. If the speaker does something often, such activity is expected to be beneficial. Otherwise he would not do it. At first sight this does not appear as a very explicit way of performing an act of advising, since the addressee is not presented as the agent of a future action in any way. However, such implicitness itself activates the values of the parameters of mitigation and optionality which are characteristic of the ICM of advising. Because the addressee is not explicitly presented as the agent, he has a greater freedom of action and, therefore, the force of the act is softened. This is the case with examples (43) and (44) above. In (44) the force of that act is even weaker due to the use of the past modal (*I might*)

Declarative-Based Stock Expressions

On other occasions the activation of the cost-benefit variable is achieved in a more explicit way by making use of declarative sentences like the following:

(45) “Before you start your make-over,” advises Paula Grayson, “*it would be a clever move* to sit down with your boss and say something like: What are my strengths and where am I lacking?” (BNC)

(46) While there are drugs available to help this condition, *the Pill is the best solution because it ‘shuts down’ the ovaries...* (*Company*. January, 1998: 165)

(47) There are no hard and fast rules for which speed to use on which occasion. Film speed comes in roughly four categories: slow, medium, fast, and ultrafast. *The best thing to do is to try a range of different speeds on a range of different subjects, make a note of the results you prefer, then stick to those speeds for particular subjects in the future.* (*Photo Answers*. January, 1998:66)

Declarative-based expressions such as *it would be a clever move...*, *X is the best solution...*, *the best thing to do is to...*, and the like, present a future action as beneficial in itself or in comparison to other alternatives. Since they merely present the actions as beneficial, but they do not present the addressee as the agent of those actions, the degree of optionality and mitigation of the resulting piece of advice is increased.

6.2.3. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Advising

The corpus offers a very small number of instances of advice performed by means of interrogative-based realization procedures (i.e. three instances in total). These are the following:

(48) If you want more serious looking shots, then photographing your kids on holiday is probably not the best time to go about it as they will be excited and eager to enjoy themselves and probably won’t want to sit still for long periods. Instead, *why not use your holiday to take exactly the opposite type of picture?...* (*Photo Answers*. July 1998: 33)

(49) These bumps are little glands, which are present in everyone and do differ in shape, size and the way they feel. If you’re worried, you should go to see your doctor, but if you’d rather see a woman, *why not try your local family planning clinic?...* (*Company*. March 1998: 149)

(50) Sprains can take some time to mend, and can easily flare up if aggravated. Rest assured, your shoulder will improve with time and there’s

nothing to be gained by trying not to use it. *Have you tried any of the anti-inflammatory tablets or gels on the market to ease the pain?... (Company. May 1998: 161).*

In relation to requests, I put forward the idea that interrogative sentences were highly adequate for the performance of that speech act type due to their inherent openness which increases the optionality of an intrinsically imposing act. Since, in the case of requests, the benefit was to the speaker, the optionality of the addressee may be constrained by the workings of the convention of politeness and, therefore, it is necessary to compensate this reduction of optionality by means of a realization procedure of an inherently non-impositive nature (i.e. the interrogative form). As far as advising is concerned, given that the benefit is to the addressee, his optionality is not constrained by any principles. This may be one of the reasons that explains the small number of examples of advice which make use of interrogative-based realization procedures in the corpus.⁵⁷ However, the fact that there is no need to increase optionality -because it is taken for granted- does not mean that it is not possible to use realization procedures which activate this variable which is, in fact, one of the most relevant ones in the act of advising.

57. Another reason which explains the low number of occurrences of interrogative-based advising has to do with the fact that its optionality is addressee-originated, rather than speaker-granted, which is the case with requests. See section 6.2.1.

SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF ADVISING

Agent Type	Imperative sentence type, <i>If I were you</i> -hypothetical sentences
Time of the Action	Imperative sentence type, non-past verb tense
Agent's Capability	Level one inherent modality (<i>can</i>)
Addressee's Will	Condition satellites (<i>if you want...</i>)
Cost-Benefit	Reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), <i>If I were you</i> -hypothetical sentences, declarative-based stock expressions (<i>X is the best solution...</i>)
Optionality	Reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), condition satellites (<i>if you want...</i>), purpose satellites (<i>to...</i>), non-impositive level two deontic objective mood operators (<i>should, ought to</i>), impositive level two deontic objective mood operators (<i>have to</i>) preceded by level two epistemic mood operators (<i>may</i>), <i>If I were you</i> -hypothetical sentences
Mitigation	Reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), condition satellites (<i>if you want...</i>), purpose satellites (<i>to...</i>), inherent modality in the past (<i>could</i>)
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence type, level two deontic objective mood operators (<i>should, ought to</i>)
Power	Use of quotations and sayings
Social Distance	Use of isolated imperative sentences, vocatives
Formality	Use of mitigating strategies

7. THE ACT OF WARNING

7.1. The ICM of Warning

Thomas (1995: 103-105) made a distinction between two different kinds of warning. Type 1 warnings are those which relate to situations where you can do nothing to avoid the event itself, although, as in the case of floods or hurricanes, it is sometimes possible to take steps to avoid some of the worst consequences of the event. Type 2 warnings are designed to avert the unpleasant event altogether. According to Thomas, type 1 warnings often take the grammatical form of declaratives (e.g. *The National Rivers Authority this morning reiterated that in Devon and Cornwall, the severe weather warning remains in force, with risk of flooding in some areas.*) or imperatives (e.g. *Macbeth, be aware Macduff!!*). Type 2 warnings, on the other hand, appear in the form of a negative imperative (e.g. *Do not lean out of the window*) or a conditional (e.g. *If you move, you'll fall down!!!*). The corpus confirms the existence of these two warning types. However, the correlation established by Thomas between each of them and certain realization procedures does not seem to hold. The weather warning could perfectly well take a negative imperative or a conditional form. For instance, *Do not set out on a long distance journey today as there is a risk of flooding in this area*, or *If you stay at home during the next 24 hours, you should be able to avoid the potential danger of the flooding that is threatening the area.*

In section 6.1, I distinguished between two senses of the term *advise*, depending on whether the speaker presents the addressee with a beneficial future course of action (i.e. *advise*₂), or whether the speaker only provides the addressee with essential information so that he can decide himself what would be the appropriate course of action (i.e. *advise*₁). I believe that a similar distinction can be posited regarding the act of warning:

(1) Warning₁: the speaker informs the addressee about a potentially negative future state of affairs.

(2) Warning₂: the speaker presents a future course of action which, if followed by the addressee, will allow him to avoid some negative state of affairs.

The relevance of this distinction will become evident in the ensuing discussion. The following two examples illustrate the two types of warning defined above:

(1) An official at the North Korean embassy in Beijing called the legislation militarism under the guise of peacemaking and he warned that, quote, “The history of crimes committed by the Japanese imperialists would be repeated in due course of time.” (BNC)

(2) “Watch your back, he is trying to nail you,” he warned. (BNC)

While in sentence (2) the speaker suggests a specific action, which the addressee should carry out in order to prevent a potential cost (i.e. *to watch his back*), in example (1) the speaker only expresses his belief that a certain negative state of affairs may take place in the future, but he does not put forward any course of action which may help the addressee to avoid it. As was the case with the act of advising, I shall concentrate on those instances of warning₂. The category of warning₁ is closer to the group of declarative illocutionary acts than to that of directives.

A word of caution is needed here, however, regarding the nature of illocutionary acts like advising₁/warning₁ and advising₂/warning₂. It is important to emphasize that they should not be understood as completely separate and independent categories. Within a prototypical account of speech acts, like the one I advocate, the illocutionary acts of advising₁/warning₁ can be easily accommodated as peripheral illocutions in the boundary between declarative acts and those of advising₂/warning₂ respectively. Declarative acts simply present a state of affairs or proposition. The acts of warning₁/advising₁ inform the addressee of the existence of a negative state of affairs or action, so that he can avoid it. Those of warning₂/advising₂ present a negative state of affairs or proposition and put forward a possible future course of action which, if carried out by the addressee, may help him to avoid such a costly situation. Furthermore, the analysis of the instances of advising and warning in the corpus shows that they may display different degrees of membership within either of the categories mentioned above (i.e. declaratives, on the one hand, and advising₁/warning₁, or advising₂/warning₂, on the other.) depending on how many variables of the corresponding ICMs are activated by the linguistic expression. In other words, the distinction between the aforementioned illocutionary categories is scalar. Consider the following examples:

- (3) Last year he was interested in buying the Mona Lisa.
 (4) He killed someone three years ago.
 (5) He is going to commit murder soon.
 (6) He will kill you.
 (7) If you don't pay him, you will be murdered.

Example (3) is easily interpreted as a declarative illocution because it activates the only meaning condition of the declarative ICM, namely, the fact that the speaker is presenting a state of affairs. It may also be interpreted as an instance of warning₁. However, such an interpretation would be largely dependent on contextual information and on the addressee's inferential capabilities. First, he would need to infer that the state of affairs presented in the predication is or may be costly to him. For instance, in a context in which the addressee is an art dealer, the fact that someone else is interested in purchasing a certain masterpiece is perceived as something negative. And second, he would need to understand that the speaker is offering such information for him to do something (e.g. to prevent someone else from getting hold of the masterpiece that he wants to purchase). None of these pieces of information are made explicit in sentence (3). Finally, example (3) may be difficult to understand as an instance of warning₂, as it would take a lot of inference, or rather imagination, to determine the possible course of action which the speaker would suggest in order to avoid the cost. Example (4) is also fairly dependent on the context to be interpreted as an instance of warning₁ or warning₂. There are almost no explicit linguistic signs in its expression which hint towards such interpretations. As a matter of fact, none of the variables of the corresponding ICMs are activated. Nevertheless, one of such variables, the existence of a costly state of affairs, is partially instantiated. As has already been pointed out, both warnings₁ and warnings₂ prototypically aim at helping the addressee to avoid a costly state of affairs. Sentence (4) presents an intrinsically costly action: the action of killing.⁵⁸ Thus, it points to the cost-benefit variable of warnings. However, it does not fully instantiate it because, in order to do so, it should be overtly expressed that the recipient of the costly action is to be the addressee. To summarize, the interpretation of the sentence as a case of warning is still very much dependent on the context. Example (5), like (4), points to a negative action (i.e. to commit murder). Moreover, it refers to the future, which leaves open the possibility that the

58. In a marked context, the action of killing may be understood as beneficial. For instance, if the addressee is looking for a gunman to carry out a certain dirty job for him. However, unless otherwise specified, the action of killing is culturally understood as negative due to the consequences it brings about (i.e. pain, agony, death, etc.).

addressee may be one of the potential victims. However, the addressee is not explicitly presented as the target of the negative action as is the case in prototypical warnings and, therefore, the addressee is left to infer (1) whether he is potentially threatened, and (2) whether the information offered by the speaker is meant to help him avoid that cost. Now, sentence (6) not only presents a negative action, but it also refers to the addressee as the target of the future negative action. As a consequence, the only thing that he needs to infer, in order to interpret the utterance as an instance of warning₁, is that the information offered is meant to make him act in a way which will avoid such a cost. Its interpretation as a member of the warning₂ category is still problematic as the sentence does not make any preferable course of action explicit. Finally, in sentence (7), in addition to the variables activated in example (6), the speaker puts forward a possible course of action (i.e. the addressee should pay) which, if followed, may allow him to avoid the future cost. This is characteristic of the warning₂ category and it precludes the interpretation of the sentence as a mere declarative act or as an instance of warning₁. These observations suggest that the distinction between declarative acts, warning₁/advising₁, and warning₂/advising₂ is gradual and depends on the number of variables of a certain ICM that are activated either contextually or through linguistic means as illustrated above. The fuzzy nature of the warning₂ category will also become manifest in the ensuing description of the corresponding ICM.

Agent Type. Except for a very reduced number of exceptions (nine entries), the examples of warning in the corpus prototypically present the addressee as the potential agent of a future action. Exceptions to this general tendency are cases in which both the speaker and the addressee are agents:

(8) Crisafulli believed Sims to be west and north of town, beyond a skin of electrical cables stretching across a field from the highway. “We’re going to have to go under the power lines,” he warned the crew. (BNC)

(9) “United can rule for the next ten years,” he warns. “It’s essential we don’t get too carried away by this success.” (BNC)

The fact that the speaker is also to perform the action which he puts forward results in the somewhat special behaviour of other variables of the ICM of warning. Since the speaker presents himself as one of the potential agents, the action is expected to be beneficial in some way, as nobody would voluntarily offer himself to do something which would be to his own detriment. In the case of warnings such benefit consists in the avoidance of a cost and it logically results in an increase in the degree of speaker’s will. As a consequence of this, the mitigation of the speech act decreases (e.g. *we’re*

going to have to..., it is essential *that we* don't...). The speaker utters a more impositive instance of warning to secure the addressee's cooperation. Furthermore, since there are other beneficiaries apart from the addressee (i.e. the speaker), the convention of politeness (see section 5.1) is also brought to bear and, accordingly, the addressee's optionality is reduced. He is expected to carry out the proposed action not just because it is beneficial to him, but also because, in accordance with the politeness convention, he should attempt to change any state of affairs which is costly to others including his interlocutor. Finally, if the speaker has some power over the addressee, as in (9), where the speaker is the club manager, the speech act may be half way between a warning and an order. Orders do not prototypically have the speaker as the agent. Nevertheless, the utterance of a sentence in which both the speaker and the addressee are presented as the agents may simply be an instance of a polite or persuasive order. The club manager in example (9) could have uttered a sentence like (10) below:

(10) "We are going to have to train longer hours, if we want to beat Arsenal."

Upon hearing this utterance, the coach and the players would very likely understand it as an order from the club manager. It is the coach and the players who are going to have to work longer hours, not the club manager. In cases like this, the use of the first person plural is only a politeness device which softens the force of the act.

Time of the Action. Warning₂ prototypically refers to a non-past action:

(11) "Look, *you guys keep up your talking* and Vernon's gonna come right in here..." (TBC)

(12) "It is easy to be confused," warns Weiner, "*so be aware that the group soliciting you may not be the one you know and trust.*" (BNC)

(13) "*Stop eating now* or you won't be hungry for dinner." (BNC)

In this respect it differs from warning₁ which is not restricted to non-past tenses, due to the fact that it does not put forward a preferable course of action, but only informs the addressee of a negative or costly state of affairs. Example (14) illustrates this:

(14) This house was built over a fault (to warn the addressee against buying it).

Cost-Benefit. The vast majority of the warnings in this corpus (i.e. one hundred and thirty eight out of one hundred and fifty instances) constitute attempts to help the addressee to avoid a cost (see examples 1, 2, 3, 7, 12, 13, and 14 above). In a small number of cases the avoidance of cost applies to both the addressee and the speaker (four entries); in another four cases, it applies only to a third party; and finally, in the other four cases, it applies to the addressee, the speaker, and a third party. As can be expected and as I shall attempt to show below, the existence of other beneficiaries together with the addressee, or the absence of the addressee as the beneficiary of the proposed action, gives way to less prototypical instances of warning. Let us see some examples:

(15) Larrain warned Paul: “What we have experienced here in Rome is impressive, but unless we are attentive to our own signs of the times in Latin America, the Council will just pass us by.” (BNC)

(16) “Every high-rise between the beach and the four-lane highway to the west is going to have to come down,” Arthur warned, “or the Marines making the landing will be too exposed.” (BNC)

(17) “There is a psychic cost to be born if we ask our troops to continue military operations when it’s clear we’ve won,” he warned. (BNC)

In example (15) the avoidance of cost applies to both the speaker and the addressee. In (16) it applies to a third party (i.e. the Marines). Finally, in (17) not only the troops, but also the speaker and the addressee (i.e. commanders) will benefit from avoiding the psychic problems of the troops and the resulting loss of the troops’ morale. Since in these examples, the beneficiary of the action includes other people together with the addressee (examples 15 and 17) or is a person altogether different from the addressee (example 16), the significant degree of optionality, which, as shall be shown, characterizes the act of warning, is reduced by the activation of the convention of politeness. Given that the welfare of others is involved, the addressee is expected to perform the proposed action. In the case of example (16), in which the addressee is not the person who benefits from avoiding the cost, the warning reading shades into that of an order. The mixed nature of (16) is aided by the fact that it has been uttered by a person with authority (i.e. commander Arthur). But even if this were not the case, -let us imagine that it had been uttered by a soldier to his colleagues- the fact that the beneficiary is a third party gives the speaker moral authority to perform an order, which is also a warning, since the point of the act is to prevent a cost. Let us capture this correlation between the variables of optionality and cost-benefit as the first of the conventions of the ICM of warning.

Convention 1: *When the person who is to avoid a cost is not only the addressee, but also the speaker and/or a third party, the optionality of the act*

decreases in accordance with the convention of politeness; when, it is not the addressee, but just a third party who will avoid a cost, the optionality decreases and the speaker appears as if endowed with a kind of moral authority which makes the interpretation of the act as a case of ordering also possible.

Cost-benefit is a scalar parameter. The relative amount of cost which is to be avoided in each particular interaction has some influence on the workings of other variables of the ICM of warning (i.e. optionality and mitigation). Let us see each of them in turn.

Optionality. The degree of optionality of warnings prototypically rates high. The addressee is informed of a potential cost and is told how to avoid it, but he is free to follow or ignore the speaker's suggestion. There are, however, at least two factors which may bring about a reduction of optionality. The first of them has already been considered in relation to examples (15)-(17) and captured in convention 1. The second factor is the amount of cost which needs to be avoided. A tendency has been observed in the data to the effect that the greater the cost to be avoided, the more the optionality of the act is reduced. Look at the following examples:

(18) "The gas tank's gonna explode," Cristalena warned, pulling on Amelia's sleeve. "Stay back, Amelia." (BNC)

(19) "Now," he warns, "whatever we spend has got to be earned. The club has got to be run as a business as well as anything else and at the moment, *we've got no choice but to sell.*" (BNC)

Both in (18) and (19) the cost to be avoided is substantial. In the case of (18), the addressee may avoid being injured or killed by a bomb. In (19), the speaker and the addressee may avoid losing their business (i.e. the club) and this is regarded as such a big cost that the speaker himself acknowledges their lack of optionality (i.e. *we've got no choice but to sell*). It is important to emphasize the particular nature of the reduction of optionality motivated by the need to avoid a great cost. Let us recall that the reduction of optionality motivated by the existence of a beneficiary different from the addressee is of an altruistic, selfless nature; it is the result of complying with the convention of politeness, according to which, one is expected to help others. In contrast to this, the reduction of optionality which stems from the addressee's need to avoid a great cost is of a more selfish nature. The addressee realizes that it is essential for him to carry out the proposed action in order to avoid a considerable cost. It should also be noted that, in these cases, the lack of optionality is self-imposed. In other words, the lack of optionality does not originate in the speaker, but rather it is the addressee who imposes upon

himself the obligation to do as told simply because not doing so would be to his own detriment.

Convention 2: *The greater the cost to be avoided, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Addressee's Will. The corpus shows that the degree of addressee's will very much depends on the features of each particular interaction. Since it is to his benefit (i.e. he will avoid a cost if he does as told), he is usually willing to take the warning into consideration. However, as was the case with advising, sometimes the addressee may have a different idea of what is beneficial to him or about which is the best way to avoid a given cost. In these cases the degree of addressee's will is lower:

(20) The level of violence will be such, President De Klerk predicts, that protest action is tantamount to resuming the arms struggle. "It could put the very peace process," he warns, "in jeopardy". To this ANC leader, Nelson Mandela has a simple answer. "*We don't have the vote,*" he says. "*When it comes to making our grievances known, he says, we have no other options.*" (BNC)

Because he thinks it is not a good solution to the problems of black people, Nelson Mandela puts forward an argument against De Klerk's warning. In other words, the degree of addressee's will is at a minimum.

Mitigation. In order to be distinguished from more impositive directive acts like ordering, warning, as was the case with advising, displays some degree of mitigation. However, because the aim of warning is to avoid a cost, it prototypically displays lower degrees of mitigation than the act of advising - which characteristically seeks a benefit. Avoiding a cost is generally more basic to the well-being of a person than obtaining a benefit. Let us explain this in some detail. Mitigation very frequently involves implicitness and also very often makes use of elements which, through an increase in optionality, lead the addressee to believe that the carrying out of the action is not essential. When the object of the speaker is to help the addressee to avoid a potential cost, it is necessary to minimize the use of mitigating devices, simply because they are not likely to trigger a quick reaction on the part of the addressee.⁵⁹ As

59. In this connection, Wunderlich (1977: 34) observes that warnings may be more effective if the imperative used to put forward a course of action for the addressee is followed, rather than preceded, by other sentences justifying the proposed action: "Normally, it does not matter if positive things happen a bit later than planned, but a delay in warding off a danger is always bad. For the same reasons, the warning is sometimes more effective if one starts with an imperative sentence and then continues with an explanation of what will happen if you do this or that."

shall be illustrated in section 7.2, when dealing with the realization procedures of warnings, most instances of this speech act type are mitigated, though slightly, for the reasons just mentioned. Furthermore, there are several occasions on which the mitigation of warnings needs to be reduced to a minimum or even dispensed with altogether.

The first factor which may bring about a reduction in the mitigation of warnings is the existence of a significant cost. More specifically, it has been observed that the greater the cost to be avoided, the lower the degree of mitigation in the warning tends to be. Lack of mitigation gives way to more impositive acts which are likely to result in a quicker reaction on the part of the addressee. The speaker's decision to minimize the amount of mitigation of his act is thus motivated by an altruistic desire to help the addressee whatever the threat to him might be. In this way, the imposition of unmitigated warnings is different in nature from that of orders, in which case, it is due to the speaker's selfish desire to obtain a benefit for himself. The following example illustrates the lack of mitigation originated in the existence of a significant cost:

(21) "Don't do anything there," he warned. "Too risky. Too many people around. Get him out on some pretext one night. Say you've something important to tell him. Anything. But be discreet and don't get caught." (BNC)

The addressee's well-being is at risk. Therefore, the speaker's warning is hardly mitigated. It consists of a series of imperatives and only two declarative sentences justifying them (i.e. *Too risky. Too many people there*).

Convention 3: *The greater the cost to be avoided, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning, and vice versa.*

A second factor which may bring about a reduction of mitigation will be explained below when dealing with the variable of social distance.

On the contrary, there are also situations which demand an increase in the degree of mitigation of the warning such as when the potential cost to the addressee, which the speaker wants to prevent by means of a warning, originates in the speaker himself. Example (22) illustrates a situation of this kind:

(22) -Jules: Man, get outta my face with that shit! The motherfucker who said that never had to pick up itty-bitty pieces of skull with his fingers on account of your dumb ass.

-Vincent: I got a threshold, Jules. I got a threshold for the abuse I'll take. And you're crossin' it. I'm a race car and you got me in the red. Redline 7000, that's where you are. Just know, it's fuckin' dangerous to be drivin' a race when it's in the red. It could blow. (PF)

Two friends, Jules and Vincent, are holding a conversation. Jules is pulling Vincent's leg to the point of upsetting him. The latter realizes that he is extremely upset and that this can lead him to attack Jules in order to force him to stop bothering him. Vincent realizes that he can end up harming his friend and warns Jules so that he can have a chance to avoid this. If Vincent were to do so in an unmitigated harsh manner, his utterance could be taken as a threat (cf. *Stop pulling my leg or I'll kill you*). Addressing his interlocutor in this way could put their friendship at risk, which is not the speaker's objective. He only wants Jules to stop bothering him. By maximizing the mitigation of his speech act -through implicitness- Vincent is softening its force and this, together with the assumption that they are friends, favours a warning reading which allows the speaker to achieve his goal without putting their friendship in danger. In fact, by telling Jules how to avoid a potential danger, Vincent is showing concern for him.

Convention 4: *The degree of mitigation of a warning tends to increase on those occasions in which the cost to be avoided originates in the speaker. Otherwise, the speech act will tend to be interpreted as a threat rather than as a warning.*

Power. Just as was the case with advising, warning involves knowledge authority.

(23) Then he warned me: "I know it's hard to raise a family if your wife has a strong career interest." He explained that his wife was also a professional and they had had to make compromises. (BNC)

(24) The depressed property market helped swell complaints to Ombudsman for Corporate Estate Agents, David Quayle, by half said his annual report yesterday. He warned: "Buyers should not let greed rule their emotions. There is no guarantee of success until contracts are exchanged." (BNC)

First-hand life experience -as in example (23)-, knowledge acquired by means of training and education -as in example (24), or any other kind of knowledge relevant to a particular situation, are always present in the examples of warning that make up this corpus. Other than knowledge authority, no special kind of power is needed in order to warn someone of a potential cost. As a matter of fact, if the speaker has institutional or physical power over the addressee, his warning will have to be conveniently mitigated to prevent it from drifting towards other illocutionary interpretations like those of ordering or threatening. Look at the following example:

(25) Teacher talking to students in detention.

-Bender: Yeah, ... I've got a question. Does Barry Manilow know you raid his wardrobe?

-Teacher: I'll give you the answer to that question, Mr. Bender, next Saturday. Don't mess with the bull young man, you'll get the horn. (TBC)

In this case, as in example (22) above, the potential cost to the addressee originates in the speaker himself. If the student keeps bothering his teacher, the latter can put him on detention again. Moreover, in example (25) the speaker has institutional power over the addressee (i.e. teacher-student). Only the mitigation of his utterance, through the use of figurative language, saves it from being a clear example of the act of threatening. Compare (25) with (26) below, in which the lack of mitigation activates a straightforward reading of the utterance as an instance of threatening:

(26) Teacher to student: "If you keep bothering me, I'll put you on detention."

Convention 5: *The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning in order to prevent it from being understood as an order, or -in those cases in which the cost originates in the speaker himself- as a threat.*

Speaker's Will and Social Distance. Given that the benefit (i.e. avoidance of cost) brought about by the act of warning is to the addressee, the degree of speaker's will is expected to be lower than in other directive acts like ordering, requesting, threatening, or begging, which seek a benefit to the speaker. The instances of warning in the corpus corroborate this hypothesis: none of them makes reference to the speaker's wanting the addressee to carry out the proposed action. This low degree of speaker's will is probably the reason why the act of warning is not usually performed by means of expressions like (27) below, which are, on the contrary, very common in the production of other directives:

(27) I want you to be careful.

(28) Be careful.

Example (28) qualifies as a more conventional realization procedure for warnings than (27). The reason for this seems to be the following. In (27) the speaker's will variable is overtly instantiated (i.e. *I want...*). Since the speaker

bothers to make his wanting explicit, it is easily inferred that he must benefit in some way from the carrying out of the action. Thus, there are two beneficiaries involved: (1) the addressee will benefit because he will avoid a cost, (2) the speaker will benefit because he wants the addressee to avoid the cost. The fact that the speaker also benefits from the addressee's action points to an interpretation of the utterance as a request, while the fact that the addressee will manage to avoid a cost enables an alternative interpretation of it as a warning. On the contrary, in example (28), where the speaker's will variable is not activated, the understanding of the example as a case of warning is more straightforward.

As was suggested in the description of the ICM of advising (section 6.1), the degree of speaker's will increases as the social distance between the speakers diminishes. This is also the case with warnings. Moreover, the corpus data reveal that, just as was the case with advising, this increase in the degree of speaker's will brings about a reduction in the degree of mitigation of warnings. Such a reduction is due to the following reason: the higher the degree of intimacy between two people, the higher the desire to prevent the other from suffering a cost. Lower levels of mitigation give way to more impositive speech acts, which are more effective in getting someone to do something. For this reason, they are preferred when the degree of speaker's will is high. Let us summarize these insights as convention 6.

Convention 6: The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, and therefore, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning.

On the contrary, larger social distances produce lower degrees of speaker's will, that is, the speaker does not care so much about what may happen to someone who is not an intimate. Moreover, large social distances also require higher degrees of politeness (i.e. people tend to be more tactful and polite with strangers, while politeness among close friends is usually taken for granted). For these two reasons, warnings uttered to non-intimates have a tendency to display higher degrees of mitigation. Compare the following two examples:

(29) An insane person has threatened to bomb a train in New York City unless a policeman stands naked in the middle of Harlem wearing a sign that says "I hate niggers." A coloured person, unaware of the situation, sees the policeman and tries to talk him into leaving the place in order to prevent him from getting killed:

Not to get too personal, but a white man standing in the middle of Harlem wearing a sign that says "I hate niggers" has either got some serious personal issues or not all his dogs are barking. Hey, I'm talking to you. Now you've got about 10 seconds before those guys see you and when they do, they will kill you. You understand? You are about to have a bad day. (DH)

(30) Conversation between two friends: “Whoa, don’t you dare, girl,” Chiky warned. “Let the guy do the chasing. It’s beneath your dignity to bum calls from him.” (BNC)

These two examples reflect the tendency found in this corpus for social distance to influence the degree of mitigation of warnings. Example (29), which is uttered to a stranger, is highly mitigated through the use of implicitness and tentativeness. On the contrary, the utterance in (30) is addressed to an intimate; hence its lack of mitigation. Things, however, are even more complicated, since the higher degree of mitigation which characterizes warnings addressed to strangers is usually reduced if the cost to be avoided is considerable. Thus, in the situation depicted in (29) above, the speaker ends up uttering the following sentence:

(31) Get a move or you are gonna be dead soon, man. (DH)

Since the cost to be avoided was important (i.e. the addressee’s death) and since a mitigated type of warning had proved to be no use in making the addressee react, the speaker turns to the use of a more impositive instance of warning. The following convention attempts to capture these observations regarding the influence of a large social distance on the degree of mitigation of warnings:

Convention 7: The larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning, except when the cost to be avoided is considerable.

Formality. As was the case with acts of advising, the corpus does not provide us with enough data to determine the influence of the formality of the context in the performance of warnings. My hypotheses, however, are that (1) it is possible to perform this act regardless of the degree of formality of the context, (2) higher degrees of formality will probably trigger higher degrees of mitigation. Let us consider the following examples:

(32) During a formal meeting. A business man addresses his colleagues:

(a) Don’t sell your shares or you’ll lose everything.

(b) If I were you, I wouldn’t sell your shares. You may lose everything.

(c) It would be wiser not to sell your shares if you don’t want to lose everything.

Several native informants agree that either (b) or (c) would be more appropriate instances of warning than the less mitigated (a) in the context

under consideration. Some of these informants, however, pointed out that if the situation is one of crisis (i.e. the speaker is certain that the addressees will lose everything they have if they sell their shares and prompt action is needed), then (32a) would also be appropriate. This largely confirms my previous hypotheses. The fact that in a situation of crisis (32a) is also perceived as a good instance of warning is not a counter-example because it is in accordance with our convention number 7: the greater the cost to be avoided, the more marked the tendency to reduce the mitigation of the warning.

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF WARNING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the addressee Others: speaker and addressee
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically high
<u>Addressee's Will</u>	Varies with each particular type of interaction
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Prototypically warnings involve an avoidance of cost to the addressee. Others: to the speaker and the addressee, to a third party, or to the speaker, addressee and third party.
<u>Optionality</u>	Prototypically high See conventions 1, 2
<u>Mitigation</u>	Prototypically warnings display some mitigation See conventions 3, 4, 5
<u>Speaker's Will</u>	Varies with each particular type of interaction
<u>Power</u>	Knowledge authority
<u>Social Distance</u>	Warnings can be performed whatever the social distance that holds between the speakers See conventions 6, 7.
<u>Formality</u>	Warnings can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context.

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF WARNING

Convention 1: *When the person who is to avoid a cost is not only the addressee, but also the speaker, or the addressee, the speaker and a third party, the optionality of the act decreases in accordance with the convention of politeness; when, it is not the addressee, but just a third party who will avoid a cost, the optionality decreases and the speaker appears as endowed with a kind of moral authority which makes the interpretation of the act as a case of ordering also possible.*

Convention 2: *The greater the cost to be avoided, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The greater the cost to be avoided, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning, and vice versa.*

Convention 4: *The degree of mitigation of a warning tends to increase on those occasions in which the cost to be avoided originates in the speaker. Otherwise, the speech act will tend to be interpreted as a threat rather than as a warning.*

Convention 5: *The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning in order to prevent it from being understood as an order, or -in those cases in which the cost originates in the speaker himself- as a threat.*

Convention 6: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, and therefore, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning.*

Convention 7: *The larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of warning, except when the cost to be avoided is considerable.*

7.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Warning

Those instances of warning in the corpus are mainly performed by either imperative or declarative sentences:

Imperative-based warnings	89 occurrences
Declarative-based warnings	60 occurrences
Interrogative-based warnings	1 occurrences
Total number	150 occurrences

The scarce number of interrogative-based warnings may be related to the fact that by means of this speech act the speaker attempts to help someone else to avoid a cost (see section 7.1). This characteristic of warnings makes them largely incompatible with the nature of interrogative sentences. If one wants someone else to avoid a potential cost, one either informs him about it by means of a declarative sentence, or directs him to do something that will help him avoid it by means of an imperative sentence. Questioning someone about the avoidance of a future cost is not very explicit and, therefore, a potentially misleading way of warning. This does not mean that it is completely impossible to warn through the use of interrogative sentences. Consider a situation in which there are two people in a car. The one who is not driving realizes that a light symbolizing an oil lamp has suddenly started flashing on the control panel of the car. He says to the driver: *Is the car losing oil?* In the specified context, such an utterance could be perfectly well understood as a warning to the addressee that something might be wrong with his car and that it would be advisable to check it out in order to prevent a potential problem with the engine. However, the same objective could have been more easily and directly achieved by means of utterances like *Look, the car is losing oil* or *Stop the car, it is losing oil and it may burn*. Sentences of this kind would very likely have resulted in a more immediate response from the driver and would have been more effective in helping him to avoid the specified cost. This may be the reason why in the present corpus very few examples of warnings take an interrogative form.

7.2.1. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Warnings

Imperatives activate the agent type (i.e. addressee) and the time of the action (i.e. non-past) variables of the ICM of warning. Since these variables are shared by most directive acts (i.e. ordering, requesting, advising, begging, etc.), the use of an imperative on its own is a rather little explicit means of performing an act of warning. This may be one of the reasons why the great majority of the instances of warning in this corpus display additional realization procedures which, together with the imperative sentence type, work to activate further variables of this illocutionary ICM. In contrast to this, only ten instances of warning in the corpus are produced by sheer imperatives. In all these cases the use of a bare imperative can be explained by some of the conventions of the ICM of warning. Let us consider these cases before describing the specific realization procedures which can be used to produce more highly codified instances of warning.

Warnings realized by means of bare imperatives comply with conventions 3 and 6 of the corresponding ICM. The following are some illustrative examples:

(1) Burning heroin on silver foil, and inhaling the smoke (known as ‘chasing the dragon’) increased in the ‘80s as government warned: “Just say no.” (BNC)

(2) We chatted a bit more and then he took me out of my car. “Drive carefully,” he warned. “Don’t worry, *Tony*,” I replied, my mind on the misfortunes of his friend the Bishop. “I will.” (BNC)

According to convention 3, the mitigation of warnings tends to be reduced as the cost to be avoided becomes more important. Example (1) illustrates this tendency. Drug addiction is a relevant enough cost to justify the use of an unmitigated imperative sentence (i.e. *Just say no*). Furthermore, the speech act not only lacks overt mitigation, but as a matter of fact its impositive nature has been strengthened by the use of the adverb *just*. This adverb emphasizes the fact that the particular action expressed in the predication is exactly the one that is needed. Other options are ruled out. This amounts to a reduction of the addressee’s optionality and, therefore, to the mitigation of the act.

The bare imperative and the lack of overt mitigation in example (2), on the other hand, is explained by convention 6 of the ICM of warning: The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the greater the speaker’s wish that the addressee takes his warning into account, and consequently, the lower the degree of mitigation of the act will tend to be in order to increase its effectiveness. The use of the first name in the addressee’s reply above (i.e. *Don’t worry, Tony*) signals the existence of a considerable degree of intimacy between the speakers. This favours the interpretation of the speaker’s imperative sentence *Drive carefully* as a warning in spite of its lack of mitigation.

Warnings performed by means of isolated imperatives are just the result of the reduction of mitigation motivated by the functioning of variables like cost-benefit or social distance. Most warnings in this corpus, however, display further realization procedures which instantiate some of the parameters characteristic of the prototypical members of this illocutionary act category. As illustrated below, most of these realization procedures are the same as those found in the expression of advising (i.e. use of satellites of reason or condition, use of quotations or sayings, etc.). For a cognitive analysis like the one pursued here, this use of similar realization procedures is neither arbitrary, nor completely unpredictable, but is rather found to be motivated by the great similarity of the meaning conditions that make up both ICMs. Let us recall that, with the exception of the cost-benefit variable, the rest of the parameters rate similarly for both illocutionary categories. It comes as no surprise that the realization procedures used in the expression of both speech act types do not differ too much.

Use of Satellites of Reason

By appealing to the addressee's rational capacities, this type of satellite acknowledges the addressee's freedom of action (i.e. activate the variable of optionality). Such increase in the optionality of the act softens its force thus instantiating the variable of mitigation at the same time. By way of illustration consider examples (3) and (4) below:

(3) But he warns: "Never observe how much better a problem was tackled in the Services. *It is irrelevant, irritating, and boring.*" (BNC)

(4) "Keep your shares, *because he won't change his mind regarding the investments,*" warned Kevin Griffiths. (BNC)

Use of Condition Satellites

Consider the following instances of warning, both of which display a condition satellite:

(5) "*If you don't want to lose your son,* talk to him." (BNC)

(6) "Follow me *if you want to stay alive,*" the old man warned. (BNC)

Condition satellites used to activate the mitigation variable of warnings take up the form of subordinated clauses as in (5) and (6). The use of these condition satellites constrains the scope of the impositive action expressed by means of the imperative: the action suggested needs only be carried out by the addressee if he wants the state of affairs expressed by the condition satellite to hold. For instance, in example (6), the addressee is only asked *to follow the speaker* if he wants *to stay alive*. The addressee is thus given the freedom to decide if he wants a certain state of affairs to take place and, therefore, the imperative is not felt as so impositive. The addressee only needs to decide that he is not interested in the occurrence of the state of affairs to avoid carrying out the action expressed by means of the imperative. Optionality is increased, the force of the act is softened, and as a result, the parameter of mitigation is instantiated. In this fashion, condition satellites manage to activate the variables of optionality and mitigation of the ICM of warning. A particular type of condition satellites is illustrated below:

(7) "Don't eat that or you'll find out the hard way what it means to be at the edge of death." (BNC)

(8) "Stay still, or you'll get hurt." (BNC)

In examples (7) and (8), an imperative sentence is coordinated with a declarative sentence. As Dik (1997: 199) points out, even though such coordinations seem to be heterogeneous as to illocution, the overall meaning is idiomatic in the sense that these examples cannot simply be paraphrased as *Do X and/or Y is the case*. They seem to require conditional paraphrases like the following two respectively:

-Don't do X, if you don't want Y to happen.

-Do X, if you don't want Y to happen.

In both cases X stands for a certain future action and Y for a negative future state of affairs.

What the coordinated sentences in (7) and (8) and these condition paraphrases have in common is the fact that they increase the speaker's optionality by presenting him with a choice. In section 8.2., it will be shown that coordinated sentences of the form of (7) and (8) are also found as realization procedures for another type of directive illocution: the act of threatening. However, when used in the expression of threats, the second coordinate clause prototypically displays a first person subject referring to an agent which has control over his actions (e.g. *Shut up or I'll hit you!*). I discuss further differences in the form of alternative coordination in its use as a realization procedure of either a warning or a threat in section 8.2.

There is a particular aspect of the use of satellites of reason and condition as realization procedures of warnings that needs some explanation. In the description of the ICM of warning I made passing reference to a study by Wunderlich (1977) in which it was claimed that those imperatives used in the expression of warnings are preferably followed, rather than preceded, by other sentences justifying the proposed action. Let us now consider this proposal in some detail. According to Wunderlich (1977: 34), this formal feature makes the warning more effective: what is important when there exists a potential cost is to get the addressee to avoid it. Justifications can be given afterwards.

Our data suggest that the postposition of justifications is (1) neither a necessary feature of warnings, as Wunderlich (1977: 34) himself recognizes, (2) nor an exclusive characteristic of the act of warning. That is to say, there are warnings which display preposition of justification, and there are other speech acts, different from that of warning, which may also display postposition of justifications (e.g. advising). Here are some examples:

(9) "*Short lets are forbidden in some areas -and short can mean as long as three months.* Ask before you buy. Take a good look round before buying and take care." (BNC)

(10) "*Super-sleek hair needs a good cut, the right haircare and styling products, and blow-dry know-know.*" Keep split ends at bay with trims every

four to six weeks. Next, choose nourishing haircare. Finish with a non-rinse product. Before blow drying, slick on a styling product.” (BNC)

(11) “Careful, Pete,” Evans warned quietly. “*You don’t want to draw any attention to your friends.*” (BNC)

(12) “Get it down, you lad,” he advised Mr. Cottle. “*Else you’ll never get a girl, looking like a beanpole.*” (BNC)

Examples (9) and (10) are instances of advising and warning which display preposed justifications, while (11) and (12) are instances of warning and advising with postposed reason or condition satellites. Since it is clearly not the type of illocutionary category which determines the use of postpositions, I have looked for other reasons which may motivate this formal feature. My findings can be summarized briefly by saying that those instances of either warning or advising which display postposition also display some of the following characteristics:

(1) The benefit to be achieved or the cost to be avoided by the addressee are important. Thus, a warning like (13) below, which attempts to prevent some substantial physical harm to the addressee, starts with the imperative, which is then followed by the reasons why the addressee is asked to carry out the proposed action:

(13) “*Don’t touch that damn thing,*” he warned. “Who knows what they might have put in there? What we want to do is get that downtown to the NYPDs bomb disposal people...” (BNC)

Certainly, the warning, though possible, would not be so effective with the imperative in final position: “Who knows what they might have put in there? What we want to do is get that downtown to the NYPDs bomb disposal people. *Don’t touch that damn thing,*” he warned.

(2) Postposition is also preferred when immediateness of action is needed in order to avoid a cost or to obtain a benefit:

(14) “*Don’t fight him,*” she warned. “When he wants line, give him line. Then you take it back and tug him in a bit each time he eases off. There’s a rhythm you’re looking for.” (BNC)

If the explanations had preceded the imperative, the addressee would have probably lost the fish he had just caught. Hence their postposition.

(3) Finally, I have observed the fact that small social distance between the speakers also calls for postposition of justifications. This is connected to

conventions 4 and 6 of the ICMs of advising and warning respectively: the smaller the social distance, the greater the speaker's wanting the addressee to avoid the cost or to obtain the benefit. Since imperatives are inherently impositive, starting the speech act with them is felt as a more effective way of getting the addressee to carry out the proposed action and, therefore, to help him achieve a benefit or to avoid a cost. In fact, all instances of warning and advising in the present corpus in which the social distance between the speakers is small display postposition of justifications.

Use of Quotations and Sayings. Just as was the case with the act of advising, it is not strange to find quotations and popular sayings in the expression of warnings. This should come as no surprise given that warning shares with advising the feature of knowledge authority and saying are widely accepted knowledge. Let us illustrate this with the following example:

(15) "You watch for him," he warned them. "I knew his father. A bad sort. *Like father, like son, that's what they say.* Just be careful." (BNC)

7.2.2. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Warnings

Use of Level Two Deontic Objective Mood Operators

Those deontic mood operators that have been shown to function as realization procedures for ordering (e.g. *have to, must*, etc.; see section 4.2) and advising (e.g. *have to, should, ought to*, etc.; see section 6.2) are also found in the expression of the act of warning. Nevertheless, the meaning differences captured in the propositional ICMs of these three illocutionary categories have a subtle, though interesting, formal correlate in the different uses of deontic modality. In section 6.2.2 I addressed the differences in the use of deontic modality between the acts of ordering and advising. I shall now focus on the special traits of those realization procedures for warnings which involve level two deontic objective modality.

The following are some representative examples of declarative-based warnings which contain a level two operator of the type under scrutiny:

(16) And he warned: "There *will have to be work done* at Crowtree to bring it up to Premier League standard -showers, facilities and some other things." (BNC)

(17) "I think *you've got to be* very careful not to swallow an alarmist lie in relation to the term *yardie* or indeed to make any exaggerated statements about their impact on crime in Britain," he warned. "We don't know the extent of imported Jamaican crime is the true answer. It must be looked at coolly and

calmly where there is evidence. I have to see more research to be convinced...” (BNC)

(18) He warned: “Buyers *should not* let greed rule their emotions. There is no guarantee of success until contracts are exchanged.” (BNC)

(19) Taylor warned: “We *have to be* careful of Norway. They have strung together some good results recently and on the same night they beat Italy 2-1 and in the European Championships their under-21 side won 6-0.” (BNC)

Comparing the use of deontic modality in the expression of warning with its use in the performance of ordering and advising, I have observed the following:

(1) Warnings, like orders, have a tendency to make use of mood operators which belong to the leftmost extreme of the scale of deontic objective modality (see section 6.2.2). In this corpus I find ten instances of warning displaying operators which convey a high degree of obligation (e.g. *have to* as in examples 16, 17, and 19 above). In contrast, there is only one example of warning (i.e. 18 above) with a softer mood operator (i.e. *should*). The preference of warnings for this type of operator is not arbitrary. Since the point of warnings is the avoidance of cost, the speaker feels that it is essential that the addressee should take his instructions into account. Therefore, the use of impositive devices, like mood operators (*have to*), are felt as more effective in obtaining the addressee’s compliance than the use of softer operators like *should*. Advising, on the contrary, results in the achievement of a benefit. This is felt as less basic to human welfare than the avoidance of a cost and, as a result, the expression of advising presented a tendency towards the use of less impositive mood operators like *should*. Let us emphasize the idea that we are dealing with tendencies rather than with strict rules. As shown in section 6.2.2, it is also possible to find instances of advice which contain mood operators like *have to*, but the tendency is for advice to make use of softer operators like *should*. In the case of warnings, the number of examples which involve strong mood operators (*have to*) is overwhelmingly higher than that where softer operators like *should* are used.

(2) Now, we may wonder if there is any formal difference in the use of these operators which may aid in the interpretation of a given utterance as either an order or a warning. Once more, the present corpus reveals a recurrent pattern which may help distinguish these two speech act types when they are both realized by means of the operators under consideration. Interestingly enough, this is again a case of semantically motivated linguistic behaviour. The reason why warnings make use of operators which convey obligation is to increase the chance of getting the addressee to avoid a potential cost. In other words, the impositive character of warnings is altruistic, as opposed to that of orders which is in the speaker’s self-interest. Moreover,

a person who utters an order makes use of his power to constrain the addressee's optionality. On the contrary, warnings do not seek to reduce the hearer's freedom of action, as shown section 7.1. This feature, which distinguishes warnings from orders, motivates the tendency of the former to be mitigated, because in so doing, the optionality of the addressee is made manifest. Thus, as can be seen in examples (16), (17), and (19), the use of impositive mood operators in the expression of warnings is accompanied in most cases by mitigating devices such as the use of reason satellites, passive voice, and mood operators. In example (16) we find the use of a level two deontic objective mood operator (e.g. *will have to*) whose impositive force is mitigated by means of the passive construction (i.e. *There will have to be work done...*) and the satellite of purpose (i.e. *to bring it up to Premier League...*). In (17), the mitigating effect is achieved by means of the expression of uncertainty (i.e. *I think*) and the discourse satellite of reason (i.e. *We don't know the extent of imported Jamaican crime...*). Finally, in (19), the second person plural subject and the discourse satellite of reason fulfil the same function.

Use of Declarative-Based Stock Expressions

In my analysis of advising I observed the recurrent use of conventionalized stock expressions like *It is a good idea that you do X*, *The best solution is to do X*, etc. With respect to warnings, I have only found one such expression:

(20) "United can rule for the next ten years," he warns, "*it's essential we don't get too carried away by this success.*" (BNC)

As was the case with the use mood operators, these expressions constitute stronger, more impositive attempts to get the addressee's compliance than those used in the performance of advising. If a future act is presented as *a good idea or a good solution*, the addressee's freedom is not affected. He can simply disagree with the speaker's opinion and do just the opposite of what has been suggested. However, if a future action is presented as *essential*, the addressee would probably be more inclined to do as told, or in any case to inquire about the reasons why it is essential, before he refuses to carry out the action. The use of more impositive formulas is, once more, due to the fact that the objective is to avoid a cost to the hearer.

Use of Level Two Condition Satellites

Condition satellites found in declarative-based warnings present the action which should or should not be carried out by the addressee if he wants to

prevent a negative state of affairs from taking place. The negative state of affairs is expressed in the main clause. Let us see some examples:

(21) “Darling, I’ll never do that to you,” Dot said sweetly, too sweetly. “*If you do*, you’ll never win,” he warned her solemnly. (BNC)

(22) ...suspensions to four jockeys after an eight-race card punctuated by interference and other riding problems. “*If the interference keeps going*, the penalties will have to be reviewed,” Railton warned last night. (BNC)

(23) “You keep watering the flowers, they will die.” (BNC)

Subordinated (examples 21 and 22) and juxtaposed (example 23) clauses may function as condition satellites which activate the optionality and mitigation parameters characteristic of acts of warning. They lack, however, the impositive nature of imperative-based warnings (section 7.2.1) or warnings which include deontic mood operators (see above). Compare:

(24) Go or you’ll get hurt.

(25) You have to go or you’ll get hurt.

(26) If you go, you won’t get hurt.

We have seen that the impositive nature of warnings like (24) and (25) is an effective means of provoking the addressee’s compliance and, as a result, the desired avoidance of cost. When the cost involved is not significant (as in example 23), it is not immediate (as in 22), or it is not bound to materialize (as in 21, where the addressee has already communicated his intention of not carrying out the action that may bring about the cost -i.e. *Darling, I’ll never do that to you*), then less impositive realization procedures, like (26), are also good means of performing a warning.

7.2.3. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Warnings

The present corpus contains only one instance of an interrogative-based warning:

(27) We see Andrew and his father. Andrew is clearly a jock.

-Andrew’s father: Hey, I screwed around... guys screw around, there’s nothing wrong with that. Except you got caught, Sport. You wanna miss a match? You wanna blow your ride? Now no school’s gonna give a scholarship to a discipline case. (TBC)

In section 7.2 I already offered an explanation of why warnings are not generally realized by means of interrogative sentences. Presenting a certain course of action -by means of a declarative sentence- or directing the addressee to perform a certain action -by means of an imperative sentence- are more effective ways of getting him to carry out the action which will allow him to avoid a potential cost than questioning him about such action. There are, however, certain reasons which may lead the speaker to perform a less explicit act of warning like the one in (27). In the situation described in this example, what the addressee should do in order to avoid a cost is contextually clear, that is, he should behave himself better at school or at least he should avoid being caught when he misbehaves. The addressee overtly acknowledges that he already knows what he should do (*Yeah, Mom already reemed me, alright?*). In a context like this, a mere hint to the potential cost, in the form of an interrogative sentence (i.e. *You wanna miss a match?...*), suffices to activate a warning reading. A more explicit warning could have been *Behave yourself at school if you don't want to miss a match* or *If you don't behave yourself at school, you will miss a match*. However, since it is mutually manifest to both the speaker and the addressee that the latter already knows which course of action is advisable, the former can produce a more implicit, but also more economical warning by merely hinting at the existence of a cost. Risselada (1993: 91) has similarly pointed to mutually manifest knowledge as one of the reasons that lead to the performance of an implicit speech act.

Another reason which may lead to the performance of an implicit interrogative-based warning is the need to be polite or to minimize the degree of pressure exerted on the addressee. Although the corpus contains no examples of this, let us consider a situation in which there exists an asymmetrical power relationship between the speakers, for example, a boss and his employee. If the speaker (the employee) wants to warn the addressee (the boss) about something, he will probably like to do so in a mitigated way in order to increase the politeness of his act and to prevent it from being felt as impositive. Moreover, being in a position of inferiority, he would very probably like to protect himself by uttering an implicit warning. In this way, he could always deny having uttered a warning if, by any chance, it did not prove effective or if it proved to be wrong. In a situation like this, interrogative-based warnings are useful. Consider the following example:

(28) A is B's boss. A is about to lose a million pounds contract with a Japanese multinational because he is failing to observe certain formal procedures. B attempts to warn him by saying:

-Is it not time to offer our Japanese colleagues a copy of the contract?

-Did our Japanese colleagues say that they would like a copy of the

contract?

Interrogative sentences like those in (28) point the addressee in the right direction to avoid the potential cost, but in no way are they felt as impositive. Unlike imperative-based warnings, they do not present the addressee as the agent of the future action; and unlike declarative-based warnings, they do not even present a certain action for consideration. They merely question it and by doing so they bring it into the addressee's consideration. In sum, they constitute highly implicit, tentative, and little impositive -therefore polite- instances of warning.

SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF WARNING

Agent Type	Imperative sentence type
Time of the Action	Imperative sentence type
Agent's Capability	
Addressee's Will	
Cost-Benefit	The use of isolated imperative sentences point to the existence of a significantly high cost, reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), condition satellites (<i>If you don't want X to happen...</i>), alternative coordination (<i>Do X, or Y will happen...</i>), mitigated level two deontic mood operators (<i>have to...</i>), use of declarative-based stock expressions (<i>It is essential that...</i>)
Optionality	Reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), condition satellites (<i>If you don't want X to happen...</i>), alternative coordination (<i>Do X, or Y will happen...</i>), mitigated level two deontic mood operators (<i>have to...</i>)
Mitigation	Reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), condition satellites (<i>If you don't want X to happen...</i>), alternative coordination (<i>Do X, or Y will happen...</i>), mitigated level two deontic mood operators (<i>have to...</i>)
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence type, the use of isolated imperative sentences point to a high degree of speaker's will
Power	Use of quotations and sayings
Social Distance	The use of isolated imperative sentences point to a small social distance between the speakers
Formality	Use of mitigating strategies

8. THE ACT OF BEGGING

8.1. The ICM of Begging

Leech (1983: 217) associates the act of begging with that of requesting and differentiates both from other directives, like ordering, on the basis of their conditional nature. While in the case of the so-called *unconditional* directives (i.e. ordering) uptake by the addressee is taken for granted, in the case of *conditional* directives, like requesting and begging, the speaker's intention is not expected to come about unless the addressee indicates agreement or compliance. As argued in section 4.1, the unconditional nature of orders stems from the speaker's superiority over the addressee, which minimizes the degree of optionality of the act. Furthermore, according to Leech (1983: 219), the difference between requests and beggings is also connected with the degree to which the speaker is an inferior to the addressee and, as a consequence, is less likely to achieve his goal.

In the following, I shall attempt to prove that the difference between the categories of begging and requesting involves the workings of yet another variable, speaker's will, which tends to take on higher values in the case of the former and is responsible for the particular nature of the realization procedures used in the expression of this illocutionary category.⁶⁰ Moreover, the present corpus partly contradicts Leech's observation to the effect that the speaker uttering a begging is in an even more disadvantageous position towards the addressee than when uttering a request. On the contrary, it seems that the higher degree of speaker's will characteristic of beggings creates the illusion of

60. Verschueren (1985: 153-4) presents the acts of begging and pleading as displaying the highest degree of speaker's will of all the members of the category of directive illocutions. According to the evidence drawn from the present corpus, threats equal beggings in the rating of this particular parameter. Nevertheless, these two speech act types represent two radically different solutions in terms of politeness to the problem of getting the addressee to do something: threats make use of coercive means whereas beggings use persuasion and a maximum exploitation of the convention of politeness.

a weaker speaker. This makes the speaker's dependence on the addressee appear as greater even though, in actual fact, it is exactly the same as in the case of requesting (i.e. the addressee has the *ad hoc* power which stems from his being the person who is able to bring about the state of affairs desired by the speaker).

Finally, it will be shown how the higher degree of speaker's will in beggings triggers off further differences with other directives in relation to the parameter of optionality. Even though beggings involve a greater choice on the addressee's part than some other directives such as ordering or threatening, they also count as stronger attempts to reduce the addressee's optionality than other acts, like requesting or suggesting. I illustrate all these facts in more detail in the ensuing description of the ICM of begging.

Agent Type and Time of the Action. Beggings share with other directives (e.g. ordering, requesting, advising, warning, etc.) the fact that they present the addressee as the agent of a non-past action. The following example of a prototypical instance of begging illustrates this:

(1) -MO6: Don't castigate me.

-MO1: Could be worse ... it could be the Sun who knows?

-MO6: Oh no. No, please, don't do it, please. I'll lose all my credibility.
(BNC)

Agent's Capability. As is the case with any directive act, the speaker who utters a begging does so under the assumption that the addressee (i.e. the agent) is capable of performing the action expressed in the predication.

Addressee's Will. The corpus contains instances of beggings which display opposite values for the addressee's will parameter. Look at the following two examples:

(2) "You," Escobar indicated another man with his riding crop, "set the bastard on fire." "Oh, Jesus, no, Don Pablo," the man begged. "He is my neighbour!" "*You want to get up there with him? Torch him, I said.*" Escobar replied. Weeping hysterically, the man stumbled towards Diego, whose body was now flip-flopping... (BNC)

(3) "Madame Craig, please help me! You must help me!" she begged in a voice cracking with grief and fatigue. Melissa put an arm round her and, at a sign from Madame Delon, led her into the salon, pushed her gently on to a

couch and sat down beside her. “*Yes, of course I will help you if I can,*” she promised. (BNC)

The sentences in italics in each example indicate the degree of addressee’s will. While example (2) presents a situation in which the addressee is not willing to grant the speaker’s begging; the addressee’s will in example (3) is strong. The problem with the variable under scrutiny is that, on most occasions, it is impossible for the speaker to know in advance the degree of addressee’s will to bring about the specified state of affairs. Because of this, unless the addressee’s willingness to cooperate is made manifest in advance, the speaker seems to work, by default, under the assumption that the degree of addressee’s will is low. This explains the significant insistence and mitigation of examples like (3). Even though it turns out that the addressee is willing to help, the speaker has uttered an instance of begging whose insistence seemed to presage a negative attitude from the addressee. The fact that the speaker functions with this kind of default working assumption is confirmed by those cases of begging which take place in contexts in which it is mutually manifest to both participants that the addressee is willing to cooperate. In these contexts, the default assumption is overruled and the expression of the act of begging displays lower degrees of insistence and mitigation. Let us compare examples (2) and (3) above -in which the addressee’s disposition is unknown and, therefore, the default assumption is at work- with example (4) below -where the addressee has already previously expressed his wanting to help the speaker:

(4) ...told Elrick-Ann, and he cried tears, and *Elrick-Ann patted his shoulder and told him he’d just left it too long, he should have mentioned it to her sooner.* “Don’t tell anybody about me going,” he begged. He was always scared somebody from the city would come looking for him. If they knew about the farm, they might hunt for him. Elrick-Ann said she wouldn’t tell. (BNC)

From the sentence in italics it can be inferred that the speaker was aware of the positive disposition of the addressee. As a result, the ensuing act of begging is clearly less insistent (i.e. there are no repetitions as in 3), less mitigated, and much less expressive (i.e. there are no exclamations as in 2). Since the speaker knows that he can count on the addressee’s cooperation beforehand, he does not need to invest time and effort in the production of such persuasive devices. A much more economical imperative (i.e. *Don’t tell anybody about me going*) is enough to convey the begging.

Cost-Benefit and Speaker’s Will. Like orders, requests, and threats, beggings prototypically result in a benefit to the speaker and a cost to the

addressee. In this respect they differ from acts like advising or warning, which, on the contrary, seek a benefit to the addressee. The benefit to be obtained is, moreover, subjectively perceived as *highly important* by the speaker. This difference in degree sets beggings apart from some neighbouring directive types (e.g. orders, requests) and brings them closer to others like the act of threatening. The subjective perception of a certain action or state of affairs as highly beneficial or desirable to oneself explains the characteristically extreme degree of speaker's will of beggings and threats. This explains the use of impositive sentence types, like unmitigated imperatives, as well as the insistent repetition of those sentences, and the use of expressive exclamations which, as will be shown in section 8.2, are usually involved in the performance of beggings. The speaker wants to make clear what his wishes are and wants to convey that they are very important to him. Example (5) below illustrates a prototypical instance of begging which displays the variables of cost-benefit and speaker's will optimally:

(5) "I need you, I need somebody." He clutched at her arms and she held him tightly like one holding a child. "Don't leave me, Eva. Never leave me!! Promise me you won't. Promise me!" "I promise," she whispered. "If you leave me it's all over." (BNC)

The benefit which the speaker believe she will obtain by getting Eva, the addressee, to stay with him is significantly important to him. To such an extent is it important that, if Eva leaves him, he does not feel capable of carrying on with his life (i.e. *If you leave me, it's all over*). Consequently, his wanting Eva to stay (i.e. degree of speaker's will) is at a maximum and he overtly expresses it through the use of repetitions, exclamations, and imperatives.

Less prototypical members of the begging category display different ratings in connection with these two variables. Let us see two more examples:

(6) With all his strength he tried to maintain the grip, at the same time sensing without really noticing that they were no longer alone in the grotto. "Hang on, Fritz, hang on," he begged desperately. But even as he spoke he felt the hand slipping away from him, leaving the limp white glove clasped in his own. Then he heard a piercing scream echoing down the deep well. (BNC)

(7) She was unbuttoning her sweater, undoing her bra, wriggling out of her skirt. "Don't do this," he begged. "Someone might come in." She ran over to the door, neat bosom bouncing, locked it, took the key and threw it from the open window. He heard the faint dry sound of its landing two floors below. (BNC)

In example (6), both the speaker and the addressee will benefit from the carrying out of the specified action. The addressee will save his life and the speaker will avoid the loss of someone who is close to him. This example constitutes a mixture or boundary case between the acts of warning and begging. The speaker will obtain a benefit which he deems important (i.e. to save his friend's life). Hence the begging reading. But at the same time, the addressee will avoid a cost to himself, which enables the warning reading.

In example (7), we do not find the insistence which characterizes prototypical beggings. From the context of the utterance it is inferred that the degree of speaker's will is lower than in the case of prototypical beggings. This accounts for the smaller force of the speech act which could easily be taken for a simple request.

Optionality. Because the addressee has a certain superiority over the speaker (see discussion of the power parameter below), his freedom to decide whether he wants to comply with the speaker's begging is, in principle, high. Beggings constitute attempts to restrict that initial high degree of optionality, while at the same time acknowledging it. This explains the simultaneous use of both impositive devices (e.g. imperatives, repetitions, etc.) and mitigating devices (e.g. adverb *please*, reason satellites, etc.) in the realization procedures for beggings, which are described in section 8.2. When someone begs someone else to do something, he seems to mean:

"I really want you to do this (i.e. strong will), I know you have the power to decide for or against doing it (i.e. high optionality), I acknowledge your power (i.e. use of mitigation), but I have to keep trying hard to get you to do it because I really want to achieve my goal (i.e. attempt to reduce the addressee's freedom of choice by reiterating the speaker's wishes and by doing it in an overt unambiguous way)."

Note that the way in which beggings qualify as attempts to reduce the level of optionality for the addressee is an exploitation of the convention of politeness, as in the case of requesting (see section 5.1). In both cases, the speaker informs the addressee of the existence of a negative state of affairs in the hope that the latter will do something to alter it in order to comply with this convention. The difference between both speech acts is that requests exploit the convention in a very subtle way and, hence, the degree of optionality remains high. On the contrary, beggings inform the addressee in a highly explicit and insistent way about the kind of action that he should perform in order to change the negative state of affairs. As a result, the addressee has very little chance to refuse to comply with the speaker's wishes without directly confronting the principles of social interaction included in the convention of politeness.

To sum up, the degree of optionality characteristic of beggings is prototypically high -due to the addressee's *ad hoc* power over the speaker- and in principle, it is only constrained by the requirements of social interaction captured by the convention of politeness. Nevertheless, as is the case with other directives, the degree of optionality of a certain instance of begging may also be influenced by the particular ratings of other variables. We shall now concentrate on two of these cases of interplay as we discuss the parameters of power and social distance in relation to the act of begging.

Mitigation. Due to the addressee's *ad hoc* power over the speaker and due to the fact that beggings involve a cost to the addressee, they prototypically display some significant degree of mitigation (see examples 1, 2, and 3 above). There are, however, several factors which bring down the necessary levels of mitigation in the performance of beggings. Let us consider them in turn.

First of all, the relationship between the parameters of mitigation and social distance has been considered. It has been observed that the mitigation of beggings decreases significantly as the degree of intimacy between the participants increases. The following examples are representative of this tendency:

(8) “Gil,” he begged, “you’ve got to help me.” (BNC)

(9) The emotional scars were evident even in the smallest survivors. Bonitta Hammett, entering the first grade, was clingy and anxious. “Carry me, carry me,” she begged her mother. (BNC)

In both cases, the small social distance between the participants justifies the low degree of mitigation in the performance of the speech act. I have already referred to this convention in my discussion on the ICM of requesting (see section 5.1). In intimate contexts politeness is taken for granted because it is assumed that people have more respect for those who are close to them. Thus, when the degree of closeness between the participants is high, lack of mitigation does not result in imposition and impoliteness as it does in contexts where the social distance is larger.

There is only one exception to this tendency, namely, those occasions on which it is obvious to the speaker that the addressee's will is weak. When the speaker has reasons to believe that the addressee is not willing to cooperate, he seems to resort once more to the use of mitigating devices as a way of talking the addressee into compliance (i.e. as a means of persuasion). Look at the following examples:

(10) Daughter to her alcoholic father: “Please Daddy, don’t go to the pub over the road. Please, please.” (BNC)

(11) Mr Parker has been charged with a murder he has not committed. He meets his wife for an interview. She is still not convinced of his husband’s innocence. He wants to see his daughter: “How’s Lori? Can I see her? Please? Please! Priscilla!” (BNC)

Both in (10) and (11), the speakers have reasons to believe that the addressee will have a negative disposition towards their wishes and, as a result, in both cases the use of mitigation increases considerably (see the reiterative and insistent use of the adverb *please*). It goes without saying that the opposite also holds: if the speaker knows in advance that the addressee’s will is going to be strong, then the need for mitigation decreases. Example (4) above illustrates this. I shall capture all this information on the interplay between the variables of mitigation, social distance, and addressee’s will in the first of the conventions of the ICM of begging:

Convention 1: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of begging, and vice versa, except on those occasions when the speaker has logical grounds to expect that the degree of addressee’s will is going to be high.*

Together with social distance and speaker’s will, another factor which may influence the degree of mitigation of the act of begging is the identity of the beneficiary of the specified action. It has already been explained that beggings prototypically have the speaker as the beneficiary, however, there are some entries in this corpus which present both the speaker and the addressee, or the speaker and a third party as the recipients of the benefit. In both cases, the degree of mitigation required decreases. In example (6) the speaker and addressee are the beneficiaries of the action. In such cases, the interpretation of the utterance was shown to shade into that of warning or advising, thus resulting in a highly peripheral instance of begging. In example (12) below we find both the speaker and a third party as beneficiaries:

(12) A woman’s 12-foot pet python grabbed her hand, swallowed it and began working its way up her arm. But the owner begged rescuers: “Don’t kill my snake! Don’t kill my snake.” (BNC)

The main beneficiary in (12) is a third party different from the speaker and the addressee (i.e. the snake). Only the use of the first person possessive pronoun (i.e. *my*) indicates that the speaker will also obtain some benefit. In spite of this, the fact that the speaker is acting for the sake of someone else’s welfare endows him with a kind of moral power (see section 4.1) which justifies the lack of mitigation which would otherwise be required in the performance of the act of begging.

Convention 2: *The need for mitigation in the performance of the act of begging decreases on those occasions when the beneficiary of the specified state of affairs is not only the speaker, but also the addressee and/or a third party.*

Power. Like orders and threats, beggings also involve a peculiar type of power asymmetry. Nevertheless, unlike those other directives, in the performance of the act of begging it is the addressee rather than the speaker who occupies the position of authority. Just as was the case with requests (see section 5.1), the addressee's authority need not be institutional. The addressee just happens to be the person who can fulfil the speaker's wishes, and this endows him with power in relation to the speaker (i.e. *ad hoc* power). Consider the following example:

(13) "The only way you can help is by getting yourself where you belong, in the big house." She looked so stricken at this that he wished he hadn't said it. "Please, Sam," she begged. "Give me time to make up my mind. I promise I'll do everything I can to help the rest of you..." "But what about you?" exclaimed Sam in exasperation. "Please, Sam. Just leave me alone for a little. I'll talk to you tomorrow, I promise." (BNC)

In example (13) Sam (i.e. the addressee) has the power to bring about the speaker's desired state of affairs. Hence his superiority.

The addressee may also display some other kind of authority over the speaker (e.g. physical, institutional, etc.). It is only logical to expect that the higher the authority of the addressee, the greater his freedom to comply or not with the speaker's begging, and the higher the degree of mitigation which will be needed in the performance of the speech act. The following piece of begging illustrates this:

(14) "It is the highlight of the year. I've got to go! Anyway, I'll be with Chiku and Travis, so I'll be perfectly safe." "It's too dangerous," her father answered, but a lot less firmly. "Please," Sharon begged. "I promise, I won't go anywhere unless one of them is with me. I'll be very careful. And after all, I have to cancel a date tonight." "*I'll think about it,*" he answered. (BNC)

The addressee's power in (14) is also institutional, since he is the speaker's father. Because of this, the speaker conveniently mitigates his act (note the use of *please*, reason satellites, etc.) and, as can be seen by the reply in italics above, the addressee still does not feel forced to take into consideration the speaker's petition at all (i.e. optionality rates high).

Convention 3: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, (1) the higher the degree of optionality, and (2) the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of begging, and vice versa.*

Social Distance. It is possible to perform beggings independently of the social distance that exists between the speakers: they can be addressed both to intimates and to strangers. However, the specific rating of the social distance parameter in a particular interactional exchange usually influences the working of several other variables of the ICM of begging, and for this reason, it deserves further attention. We have already seen how social distance interplays with the required degree of mitigation in beggings. Let us now concentrate on the influence that it exerts on the parameters of addressee's will and optionality.

Small social distance prototypically correlates with a higher degree of addressee's will: the closer we are to someone the more we tend to worry about his welfare and the more predisposed we are to grant his wishes. As a consequence of this, the degree of optionality decreases too. The addressee feels more compelled to help people who are his intimates. The opposite holds when the social distance between the participants is larger. Examples (15) and (16) below illustrates this:

(15) "I'm alone in times like these. And I've been scared so long." "Just rest easy. You'll be all right. Don't worry." "I thought you'd understand. Don't tell the others I came in here," she begged. "I'm ashamed of being so scared." "*No one will ever know,*" he told her. "I don't mind so much if I cry before you, but I could never cry before them," she whispered. (BNC)

(16) The manager was a small Hungarian with the cosmopolitan air restaurateurs have the world over and full of a nervous, twitching charm. "Just a little notice, gnädige Frau," he begged. "I shall have to get extra waiters, order the food, prepare the wine, get musicians." "We have our own musicians," Frau Nordern said. "Oh!" the manager's face fell as he saw that part of his commission disappear. (BNC)

The sentence in italics in example (15) shows how the degree of addressee's will is high. In (16), the larger social distance between the speakers motivates lower degrees of addressee's will and higher levels of optionality. As a result, the addressee feels free to refuse to comply with the speaker's wishes. Convention 4 captures these correlations:

Convention 4: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, (1) the higher the degree of addressee's will, and (2) the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Nevertheless, the analysis of the corpus suggests that there is at least one exception to the tendency stated in convention 4. Consider the piece of begging in (17) below:

(17) In abject misery, she lowered her head. *“Please, don’t say that,”* she begged, *“don’t ask me.”* “Why shouldn’t we be married?” He drew a sharp breath, as a new and appalling idea struck him. “Do you mean there is another man?” (BNC)

The social distance between the speakers is small. Therefore, according to the previous discussion, a high degree of addressee’s will and, therefore, a low degree of optionality should be expected. However, in (17) the addressee refuses to comply with the speaker’s wishes. The reason for this is that compliance with the speaker’s desires results in a great cost to the addressee. On occasions like this it is possible to observe lower degrees of addressee’s will and higher degrees of optionality in the performance of beggings.

Convention 5: *The greater the cost of the specified action, the lower the degree of addressee’s will and the higher the degree of optionality regardless of the social distance that holds between the speakers, and vice versa.*

Formality. I have only found one instance of begging performed in a formal context in the corpus:

(18) They told the members that this was only the first of several votes on the budget. “Let the process go forward,” they begged. *“And then, specific problems about Medicare, for instance, could be addressed as the Congressional committees worked out the details of the spending cuts and tax increases.”* (BNC)

The first noticeable difference between this piece of begging and all the other instances analyzed in this section is its lack of insistence. The high degree of speaker’s will that characterizes beggings is partially conveyed by means of the use of an unmitigated imperative sentence. However, no repetitions or exclamations are used in order to emphasize the speaker’s desire that the specified state of affairs is brought about. On the contrary, the speaker’s strategy to achieve his goal seems to be that of negotiation (see sentence in italics). Formal contexts are highly structured and governed by strict rules which are generally not related to subjective emotions, but rather to rational regulations. Because of this, it would make no sense to use the strategy of insistence typical of central instances of beggings. Whining about how much something is desirable to oneself will not get the speaker very far

into gaining compliance in a formal setting. Such a behaviour would be felt as inappropriate. This also explains why the present corpus contains so few instances of beggings in formal contexts, and why the one that has been reproduced above is actually a boundary case between the acts of begging and negotiating:

Convention 6: *The more formal the context, the more the insistence of beggings tends to be replaced by negotiation.*

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF BEGGING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the addressee
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	The speaker works under the assumption that the addressee is able to carry out the specified action
Addressee's Will	In actual fact it depends on the nature of each particular interaction, but by default the speaker assumes that the addressee's will is weak See conventions 4, 5
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Prototypically beggings bring about a benefit to the speaker. Less prototypically they may bring about a benefit to the speaker and the addressee or a third party. Prototypically beggings result in a cost to the addressee
<u>Optionality</u>	Prototypically the degree of optionality of beggings is high, but it may be influenced by the ratings of other variables (i.e. social distance, addressee's will, degree of cost) See conventions 3, 4, 5
Mitigation	Prototypically beggings display some degree of mitigation, which may decrease depending on the ratings of the social distance and cost-benefit variables. See conventions 1, 2, 3
<u>Speaker's Will</u>	Prototypically very high
Power	The addressee displays <i>ad hoc</i> power See convention 3
Social Distance	Beggings can be performed whatever the social distance between the speakers See conventions 1, 4
Formality	Beggings do not prototypically take place in formal contexts. See convention 6

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF BEGGING

Convention 1: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of begging, and vice versa, except on those occasions when the speaker has logical grounds to expect that the degree of addressee's will is going to be high.*

Convention 2: *The need for mitigation in the performance of the act of begging decreases on those occasions when the beneficiary of the specified state of affairs is not only the speaker, but also the addressee and/or a third party.*

Convention 3: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, (1) the higher the degree of optionality, and (2) the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of begging, and vice versa.*

Convention 4: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, (1) the higher the degree of addressee's will, and (2) the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 5: *The greater the cost of the specified action, the lower the degree of addressee's will and the higher the degree of optionality regardless of the social distance that holds between the speakers, and vice versa.*

Convention 6: *The more formal the context, the more the insistence of beggings tends to be replaced by negotiation.*

8.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Begging

In the previous description of the ICM of begging, I have attempted to capture its similarities with several other directives, while at the same time suggesting that it is precisely this combination of features which makes of beggings a fairly singular category. Beggings were shown to be similar to threats in displaying high degrees of speaker's will. They were like requests in being uttered by a powerless speaker and in exploiting the convention of politeness. Finally, they resemble threats, requests, and orders in pursuing a benefit to the speaker and involving a cost to the addressee. I shall attempt to demonstrate that the nature of the realization procedures for this speech act type reflect the peculiarities of this conceptual category. The expression of beggings is mainly characterized by a mixture of realization procedures which have already been shown to be involved in the performance of such directives as orders, requests, and threats. The combination of the mitigation of requests with the imposition and harshness proper of orders and threats, together with some new special traits, like repetitions and exclamations, returns by linguistic alchemy a new type of realization procedure which is well-adapted for the production of beggings.

The distribution of the realization procedures for begging by sentence type is the following:

Imperative-based beggings	95 occurrences
Declarative-based beggings	7 occurrences
Interrogative-based beggings	3 occurrences
Total	105 occurrences

8.2.1. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Begging

According to the corpus, the most numerous group of realization procedures for the directive act under scrutiny is clearly the one which has the imperative sentence as its foundation. A closer look at this group of realization procedures reveals that the use of isolated unmitigated imperatives is scarce in the expression of beggings (only five out of ninety five entries) and that this is motivated by certain special ratings of some of the variables that make up the ICM of begging. I shall deal with these cases of bare imperatives at the end of this section. Let us first concentrate on the description of the formal characteristics of the rest of the imperative-based occurrences which activate the meaning conditions of prototypical instances of beggings.

The data in the corpus show a vast array of realization procedures accompanying the imperative sentence in the expression of beggings. Most of them are already familiar as they were also involved in the production of orders, threats, and requests: use of hedges (e.g. *just*), use of quantifying term operators (e.g. *a little*), intonation, vocatives, reason satellites, purpose satellites, use of the adverb *please*, beneficiary satellites, etc. Others appear now for the first time, as is the case with repetitions. It is possible, however, to divide this long list of apparently unconnected linguistic tools into two groups, which shall be defined and exemplified below:

Group One Realization Procedures for Begging

The first group includes those realization procedures which are used in order to overcome the opposition of an addressee who has a special kind of superiority over the speaker and from which a costly action is requested. The speaker attempts to achieve this goal through the use of persuasive strategies like the minimization of the cost, the mitigation of the force of the act, or the exploitation of the convention of politeness (i.e. the speaker presents a state of affairs which is negative for him and expects the addressee to do something to alter such a state of affairs). However, as I argue below, Ruiz de Mendoza's (1999) initial convention of politeness should be extended in order to account

for all the peculiarities of the realization procedures for begging included in this group. I shall also account for the fact that within this first category of realization procedures for beggings there are linguistic devices which are also frequent in the performance of requests. Group one includes the following realization procedures:

(a) use of adverb *please*

E.g. "You are driving me mad. *Please*, stop this," begged Lady Rice. (BNC)

(b) use of reason satellites

E.g. "Get a doctor," Eva begged, "*he's bleeding*." (BNC)

(c) use of purpose satellites

E.g. "Then set the old one on top of a new one *so it can go on burning when the first is finished*," begged the doctor. (BNC)

(d) use of beneficiary satellites

E.g. "Come to the meeting, please, do it *for me*," she begged. (BNC)

(e) use of vocatives, including:

-vocatives indicating small social distance (use of first name, endearment terms...)

E.g. "Jesus, Jesus, forgive me, *Diego*," he begged his neighbour. (BNC)

E.g. "Oh *honey*, please don't cry!" she begged. "I'm so happy. I can't bear to think of you not being." (BNC)

-vocatives indicating acknowledgement of the addressee's power over the speaker

E.g. "No, please, *master*," she begged, trying to pull away, but he held her hand firmly. (BNC)

(f) use of quantifying term operators

E.g. "Just *a little* notice, gnüdige Frau," he begged. (BNC)

(g) use of hedges

E.g. "*Only* don't tell ma," she begged, "she'll be angry with me." (BNC)

Group Two Realization Procedures for Begging

The second category (henceforth *Group two*) includes realization procedures which activate the high degree of speaker's will which characterizes the act of begging. Those realization procedures in group two partly resemble some of those included in group one with respect to the fact that they also take advantage of the convention of politeness. Group two

realization procedures, however, constitute extreme exploitations of the convention of politeness. They not only communicate the existence of a negative state of affairs which the addressee is expected to alter by virtue of the convention of politeness; but they also put emphasis on how important it is for the speaker that the state of affairs is altered, which leaves the addressee very little chance of refusal to do as told without conflicting with the convention.

(a) marked preference for the imperative sentence -as it is also the case with orders and threats.

(b) use of illocutionary force strengtheners

E.g. “Please *do* stop,” I begged at last. “We can’t go on like this, I’m running out of Kleenex.” (BNC)

(c) a certain type of persuasive intonation

E.g. “Madame Craig, please help me! You must help me!” she *begged in a voice crackling with grief and fatigue*. (BNC)

(d) use of repetitions

E.g. “What are you talking about? *Stop it*. Just *please stop it*. *Please...* (DOA)

(e) use of exclamations

E.g. “*Oh no, Lord*, please, don’t let this go weird,” I begged. (BNC)

As shown below, the number of realization procedures of each group that may enter the production of a given instance of begging is determined by the values taken on by the attributes of the ICM in each particular interactional exchange. However, what is an almost invariable characteristic of the expression of the act of begging is the combination of realization procedures of those two groups described above. As a matter of fact, over two thirds of the imperative-based beggings in this corpus display such combination of realization procedures. Let us illustrate this with two examples of prototypical beggings:

(1) “And I remember my mother crying. She says: ‘Oh, please, don’t leave me. Don’t go to England. Don’t go to England.’ And I didn’t.” (BNC)

(2) “Please, Cross, in the name of God,” Dot begged without turning to look at him. “Be gentle with Myrtle. She’s been waiting on me night and day. She’s all I got. Don’t insult her.” (BNC)

Example (1) combines the use of the mitigating adverb *please* and beneficiary satellites (i.e. *me*), with the use of repetitions (i.e. *Don’t go... Don’t go...*) and exclamations (i.e. *Oh*). Again, example (2) mixes the use of

mitigating devices like the adverb *please*, the use of the addressee's first name, or the inclusion of reason satellites (i.e. *She's been ... She's all I got*), with exclamations (i.e. *in the name of God*), and the repetition of similar notions (i.e. *Be gentle..., Don't insult her*).

Let us once more emphasize the fact that this combination of realization procedures is not a random phenomenon. Its motivation can be straightforwardly determined by looking at the information contained in the ICM of begging described in section 8.1. Beggings are uttered by powerless speakers (i.e. their addressees' are endowed with *ad hoc* power) who at the same time have a great desire to achieve their goal (i.e. speaker's will rates high). Moreover, the bringing about of the specified action results in a cost to the addressee. In short, the speaker needs to get the addressee to carry out a costly action and, because of the addressee's superiority, he cannot make use of imposition or coercion, as is the case in the performance of orders and threats respectively. Consequently, the speaker opts for the use of persuasive, rather than impositive, strategies. These facts motivate the speaker's attempts to minimize the cost involved in the action, to mitigate the force of the act, and to exploit the convention of politeness in his own interest by means of those realization procedures included in group one. In this respect, beggings could resemble requests. However, the explicitation of another of the characteristic attributes of the ICM of begging (i.e. speaker's strong will) helps to differentiate these two speech act types. Such explicitation can be achieved by means of the use of exclamations, repetitions, and a special type of intonation. The speaker's strong will is, therefore, the motivation underlying the use of the realization procedures contained in the second group described above.

As was pointed out above, the possible combinations of group one and group two realization procedures is limitless. Nevertheless, in the analysis of the corpus it has been observed that the relative weight attached to the use of realization procedures of either of the two groups is again semantically motivated by the particular ratings of the attributes of the ICM of begging in each particular interactional exchange.⁶¹ Let us see some examples:

(3) He starts to put on his pants. They're inside out. He tries to turn them around.

61. I am not considering here the obvious cases in which the non-explicitation of one or more of the parameters of an illocutionary ICM is motivated by the fact that they are already manifest from the context of the utterance or from background information. To give just one example, if it is already manifest to both participants that the degree of speaker's will is high, he need not invest time and efforts in activating this parameter through the use of the realization procedures in group two.

-Dorothy: Don?

-Don: *No.*

-Dorothy: Don. Hold me. I'm scared. Hold me. Please. (BV)

The conversational exchange reproduced in (3) displays two special traits. On the one hand, there exists a high degree of intimacy between the speakers (i.e. the social distance variable rates low). On the other hand, the addressee's negative disposition towards the speaker's wishes has been overtly communicated in a previous conversational turn (see the addressee's reply in italics). In order to overcome the addressee's negative attitude, the speaker mainly makes use of realization procedures belonging to group one. Thus, the presence of mitigating adverbs like *please*, and the use of reason satellites which justify the speaker's asking the addressee to perform a costly action. In the same vein, the use of vocatives underlying the social closeness between the speakers like the addressee's first name also counts as an attempt to overcome the addressee's lack of will through an exploitation of the convention of politeness. Let us remind the reader that this convention states that people are expected to change those states of affairs that are negative to others. If this convention is considered in relation to the variable of social distance, we observe a greater compromise on the part of the addressee to change the negative state of affairs. As mentioned in section 5.1, it is necessary to extend this convention in order to include these observations which arise from the analysis:

CONVENTION OF POLITENESS II

If it is manifest to the addressee that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to the speaker, and if the addressee has the capacity to change that state of affairs, then the addressee should do so.

[Correlation with social distance] *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the more the addressee is expected to change the specified state of affairs affecting the speaker.*

In example (3) above, the overt explicitation of the participants' closeness -through the use of the first name vocative (i.e. *Don*)- constrains the addressee's freedom to refuse to bring about the speaker's desired state of affairs in accordance with the convention of politeness .

As opposed to the three group one realization procedures described above, example (3) only displays one realization procedure belonging to group two, namely the use of repetitions (i.e. *Hold me, bold me*). The speaker's preference for group one realization procedures in the performance of his

begging can be put down to the fact that he knows in advance that the degree of addressee's will is low. Moreover, it is interesting to note that even the use of repetitions (i.e. group two realization procedure) helps, in an indirect way, to activate the convention of politeness and, hence, to overcome the addressee's lack of willingness to grant the speaker's desire. The rationale behind this observation is the following. Through the use of repetitions, the speaker makes his high degree of will explicit. If, in accordance with the convention of politeness, people are expected to change those negative states of affairs which affect others, it is only natural that the higher the desire of others to get a certain state of affairs changed, the higher our commitment should be to bring about such a change. The more the speaker desires something, the bigger the addressee's *faux pas* will be if he refuses to grant his wish. Let us capture these insights in a new extension of the convention of politeness:

CONVENTION OF POLITENESS III

If it is manifest to the addressee that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to the speaker, and if the addressee has the capacity to change that state of affairs, then the addressee should do so.

[Correlation with social distance] *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the more the addressee is expected to change the specified state of affairs affecting the speaker.*

[Correlation with degree of speaker's will] *The higher the desire of the speaker to have a negative state of affairs altered, the higher the addressee's commitment should be to bring about such a change.*

Now, consider the following example, which illustrates some of the reasons which may motivate the lack of group one realization procedures in the performance of a begging:

(4) After a while Bathsheba said goodnight to her farm workers, and closed the sitting-room door and windows. Now she and Boldwood were alone. Kneeling in front of her, he took her hands. "Tell me, tell me what you've decided!" he begged. (BNC)

In example (4) the social distance remains small. Nevertheless, unlike in (3), the addressee's disposition towards the speaker's wishes seems to be more positive. As a matter of fact, Bathsheba seems to be preparing the scene for a personal conversation with Boldwood. She is creating a very private atmosphere (i.e. *said goodbye to her farm workers, closed the sitting-room door and windows*). Therefore, the speaker can easily infer that she is going to talk

about something important, such as his wedding proposal. Since the addressee's attitude seems to be one of cooperation, the speaker does not need to invest efforts on the mitigation of his act by means of group one realization procedures. All he needs to express is his great desire to obtain an answer from the addressee and, therefore, he makes use of group two devices like repetitions or the use of a particular intonation.

Examples (3) and (4) illustrate two extreme instances of beggings, each of which, due to the reasons suggested above, makes a more marked use of either group one or group two realization procedures. The corpus also contains some instances of beggings which display no realization procedures of either group. In other words, some beggings are performed by means of bare imperative sentences. I shall devote the rest of this section to the discussion of some of these instances:

(5) (...) and Elrick-Ann patted his shoulder and told him he'd just left it too long, he should have mentioned it to her sooner. "Don't tell anybody about me going," he begged. (BNC)

(6) "Eva, Eva," he cried and cradled her head in his arms. He looked up at the looming circle of dark faces for the first time, his eyes pleading for help. "Get a doctor," he begged. "Better get the police," someone said roughly. (BNC)

(7) Abasio returned to his home in Fantis. "Where the hell you been!" CummyNup cried from behind the protective wire barrier at the top of the stairs leading to Abasio's rooftop shack. "Don't shout," begged Abasio, tottering on the rickety landing. (BNC)

It has been repeatedly pointed out that imperative sentences are very little specified regarding their illocutionary value (i.e. they merely present a future action for its realization by the addressee). If deprived of the narrators' categorization, the illocutionary interpretation of examples (5) to (7) would be opened to that of several types of directives other than beggings, such as ordering, requesting, threatening, warning, or advising. The reason for this is that there is nothing in their formal expression which activates or points to the variables of a particular illocutionary ICM. Yet, there is a difference between examples (5) and (6), on the one hand, and example (7), on the other. In (5) and (6) the use of a bare imperative seems to be semantically motivated by certain special ratings of some of the variables included in the ICM of begging. However, (7) is simply a very little codified instance of begging, which relies on the speaker's inferential capacity for its correct understanding. Let us explain this further.

In (5), the degree of addressee's will is high, which is mutually manifest to both participants. Likewise, it is mutually manifest to both interactants that

the speaker's will is also strong. We know all this from the text. The addressee has a positive and sympathetic attitude towards the speaker (i.e. *Elrick-Ann patted his shoulder*) and we are told that the speaker has already informed the addressee about his problem (i.e. *and told him he'd just left it too long, he should have mentioned it to her sooner*) and, consequently about how important it is to him. Because the degree of addressee's will is manifestly high, the speaker does not feel the need to use group one realization procedures in order to persuade the addressee into compliance. And because it is mutually manifest that the speaker's will is strong, there is no need to use group two linguistic devices either. The utterance of a simple imperative sentence in that context is enough to convey the act of begging. In (6) the speaker's strong will is again obvious from his behaviour (i.e. *'Eva, Eva,' he cried and cradled her head in his arms*). The speaker cares about the person he is holding in his arms and, therefore, his desire that a doctor is fetched to help her is apparent. The use of group two realization procedures, which make the speaker's high degree of will explicit, is not necessary in this context. It should also be taken into account that, in the instance of begging under consideration, the benefit is not only to the speaker, who wants to the addressee to get well, but also, and more importantly, to the addressee herself, whose life is at risk. As was captured in convention 2 of the ICM of begging (see section 8.1), the existence of a beneficiary different from the speaker motivates a reduction in the need of mitigation. As a result, example (6), in its context of utterance, is a good example of begging in spite of the lack of overt realization procedures instantiating the variables of the corresponding ICM. Finally, as regards example (7), none of the explanations offered for the lack of codification of the acts of begging in (5) and (6) apply. The narrator has categorized Abasio's act as a begging and, since he is assumed to have some kind of omniscient knowledge of the characters, the reader believe him. However, the implicitness of Abasio's act, together with the lack of contextual information which could bridge the gap between his expression and his actual intention, turns the example under scrutiny into a highly implicit member of the begging category.

8.2.2. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Begging

Declarative-based realization procedures for beggings also combine linguistic devices belonging to either of the two groups described in the previous section. Those variables of the ICM of begging that were activated by the imperative sentence in the previous section (i.e. addressee as agent, future action, speaker's will) are now instantiated by means of declarative sentences containing second person singular subjects and mood operators. Here are some examples:

(8) The moment Melissa entered the house, she clutched at her with both hands. “Madame Craig, please help me! *You must* help me!” she begged in a voice cracking with grief and fatigue. (BNC)

(9) A large drop of mucus formed at the tip of his flat, brown nose hovered there for a second, then dropped to his upper lip. He licked at it, unaware that he did so. “Gil,” he begged, “*you’ve got to* help me.” Eva stood in the doorway. (BNC)

(10) One man held on to the lawyer’s sleeve. “Please, Mr Jagers,” he begged, “my brother is accused of stealing silver. Only *you can* save him! I’m ready to pay anything!” (BNC)

The instances of beggings in (8) and (9) contain declarative sentences with a second person singular subject (i.e. *you*) and a level two deontic objective mood operator (i.e. *must* and *have got to* respectively). The use of this kind of obligation operator in contexts in which the speaker is powerless in relation to the addressee (see 8 and 9 above) cannot be associated with the expression of imposition -as was the case with orders (see section 4.2). Moreover, its combination with realization procedures which activate the mitigation variable (e.g. *please* in 8; a first name in 9) and others which instantiate the parameter of speaker’s will (e.g. repetitions in 8) relates them to the expression of beggings. The use of obligation operators in combination with these other realization procedures functions as just another means of pointing to the speaker’s will parameter. Such will is so high that it leads the speaker to make use of impositive devices.

Regarding example (10), I have summarized below the variables of the ICM of begging that are activated and the realization procedures that bring about such instantiation are highlighted in italics:

(1) Addressee as agent:

Only *you* can save him!

(2) Future action, and an agent’s capability:

Only you *can save* him!

(3) Mitigation:

Please, Mr. Jagers

(4*) Addressee’s high degree of optionality and superiority over the speaker:

Please, *Mr. Jagers*

(5) Speaker’s strong will:

Activated by means of intonation and also pointed to by the speaker's last sentence: *I'm ready to pay anything!*

The above list of activated and pointed to variables proves that example (10) is a highly codified instance of the begging category. A much more implicit instance of begging is illustrated in example (11) below:

(11) (...) and packed up her few belongings into a black plastic sack and put them on the front steps, and held the door open until Ayla gave in and joined her possessions. "I come to collect my letters," begged Ayla, "letters for me from my children." "Certainly not," said Sara. "I am not a forwarding agency." And she slammed the front door. (BNC)

Hardly any of the variables of the ICM of begging are instantiated in example (11). The addressee needs to infer that she is to do something (i.e. give the letter to the speaker), and that the speaker's will is strong -since the letters are from her children. Given the addressee's blunt refusal to cooperate (i.e. *Certainly not*), the implicitness of the begging may be put down to the speaker's anticipation of the addressee's lack of will triggering a higher degree of mitigation.

8.2.3. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Begging

Only three instances of interrogative-based beggings appear in the corpus. The interrogative sentence does not seem to be a good vehicle for the expression of the speaker's strong will which characterizes this illocutionary act type. Hence the small number of begging occurrences using interrogative sentences as their foundation. Let us analyze those instances in the corpus to see how they manage to convey the illocutionary meaning under consideration:

(12) Mr. Parker has been charged with a murder he has not committed. He meets his wife for an interview. She is still not convinced of his husband's innocence. He wants to see his daughter: "How is Lori? Can I see her? Please? Please! Priscilla!" (CA)

(13) Peach rubbed her aching head tiredly. "Please, can't I stay?" she begged, clinging to Jim's hand. "Don't you and Grandma want me anymore?" (BNC)

(14) (...) wrong. You may be, minister," he replied smoothly, "but I'm not. It would be a serious misuse of government time." I thought at first he was joking. But he wasn't. "Can't you see?" I begged, "that selling arms to terrorists is wrong? Can't you see that?" He couldn't. (BNC)

The anticipation of the addressee's low degree of will may explain the use of an interrogative sentence (i.e. *Can I see her?*) instead of a more explicit imperative (e.g. *Let me see her*) in example (12). Otherwise, the speaker's utterance is a highly codified instance of begging since the repetitions, intonation, and mitigating devices (i.e. *please*, first name) that it includes help to instantiate some of the most central variables of the ICM of begging (i.e. speaker's strong will and mitigation).

In (13) the parameter of speaker's will is activated non-verbally (i.e. *clinging to Jim's hand*). The actual expression of begging concentrates on the activation of the mitigation variable (i.e. *please*) and the high exploitation of the convention of politeness by means of the overt anticipation of the addressee's refusal to cooperate (i.e. *Can't I stay?*). The use of the negative modal seems to presage the addressee's lack of will, and thus exposes him as an impolite person who is not observing the convention of politeness.

Finally, in (14), the use of repetitions instantiates the speaker's will variable characteristic of beggings. The use of a highly implicit begging (cf. *Don't sell arms to terrorists*) is motivated by the existence of a large social distance between the speakers and the addressee's superiority (i.e. he is a minister).

The degree of codification of the beggings in the last three examples is in general lower than that of those presented in the two previous sections, since in all of them the addressee is asked to carry out an inferential task. Thus in (12) and (13) he is left to infer that the speaker wants him to carry out the action of granting permission. In (14) he must infer what is the precise action which the speaker wants him to carry out (i.e. not to sell arms to terrorists).

SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF BEGGING

Agent Type	Imperative sentence type, pronoun <i>you</i>
Time of the Action	Imperative sentence type, non-past verb tense
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>can</i>)
Addressee's Will	Past modals (<i>can't...</i>)
Cost-Benefit	Quantifying term operators (<i>a little...</i>), use of hedges (<i>only...</i>)
Optionality	Use of <i>please</i> , reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), beneficiary satellites (<i>for me...</i>), vocatives (indicating small social distance or the speaker's acknowledgment of the addressee's superiority), quantifying term operators (<i>a little...</i>), use of hedges (<i>only...</i>), Imperative sentence type, use of illocutionary force strengtheners (<i>do...</i>), use of persuasive intonation, use of repetitions, use of exclamations (<i>oh no!</i>)
Mitigation	Use of <i>please</i> , reason satellites (<i>because...</i>), beneficiary satellites (<i>for me...</i>), vocatives (indicating small social distance or the speaker's acknowledgment of the addressee's superiority), quantifying term operators (<i>a little...</i>), use of hedges (<i>only...</i>)
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence type, use of illocutionary force strengtheners (<i>do...</i>), use of persuasive intonation, use of repetitions, use of exclamations (<i>oh no!</i>), level two deontic mood operators (<i>must...</i>)
Power	Vocatives indicating the speaker's acknowledgement of the addressee's superiority
Social Distance	Vocatives, use of mitigating strategies
Formality	Use of mitigating strategies

9. THE ACT OF SUGGESTING

9.1. The ICM of Suggesting

The revision of the available literature on the semantics of the act of suggesting reveals marked discrepancies as regards the meaning conditions which make up prototypical suggestions. Beyond the common acceptance of the status of suggestions as members of the category of directive illocutions, different authors offer largely divergent accounts of the illocutionary act under consideration. Searle (1979: 356) defines the act of suggesting as just a weak instance of directive or, in other words, as a weak “attempt by the speaker to get the hearer to do something.” Previous accounts, like Fraser’s (1974), and some more recent proposals, such as Verschueren’s (1985) or Wierzbicka’s (1987), differ from Searle’s in one crucial aspect: unlike other directives, such as requests, orders, or threats, which count as attempts to get the hearer to carry out a future action, suggestions are understood as mere attempts to assist the hearer in the task of deciding about his future course of action. In Fraser’s own words:

[...] the use of a verb of requesting counts as an attempt to get the hearer to attempt to bring about the state specified in the proposition (e.g. the utterance of *I request that you fetch my slippers* counts as an attempt to get the hearer to try to bring the speaker his slippers) while a verb of suggesting counts as an attempt to get the hearer to recognize the action specified in the proposition to be worth consideration (e.g. the utterance of *I recommend that you take an aspirin* counts as an attempt to get the hearer to consider the relative merits of taking an aspirin, but does not count as an attempt to get the hearer to take one). (Fraser, 1974: 150)

Regarding more specific aspects of the satisfaction conditions of suggestions, Leech (1983: 217) states that the event specified in the proposition is desirable or beneficial to the addressee. On the contrary, Fraser (1974: 150) claims that the nature of the proposed action need not be positive for the addressee:

The illocutionary act of suggesting does not entail that that action specified by the speaker for the hearer's consideration be viewed or held positively by the hearer. This is certainly a reasonable conversational inference in that one supposes that a suggestion is given for benefit of the hearer. But I can suggest you stick your head in a pail of water or stop bothering me, neither of which you might hold favorably, and still have made a suggestion. (Fraser, 1974: 156)

Further discrepancies are related to the identity of the agent of the future action to which suggestions refer. Fraser (1974), Searle (1979), Leech (1983), and Verschueren (1985) coincide in viewing the addressee as the only person involved in the realization of the future action specified in the proposition. In contrast to this position, Wierzbicka (1987: 187) argues that suggestions can be used to propose a joint activity by the speaker and the addressee, as well as an individual action by the addressee. Therefore, this author concludes:

The only invariant reason for making a suggestion is the one specified in the explication: the speaker wants the addressee to *consider* whether he would want to do what the speaker puts forward as a possibility to think about. (Wierzbicka, 1987: 187. Emphasis mine)

Wierzbicka's definition of the act of suggesting constitutes an advance in comparison with the other accounts mentioned here, since it makes it possible to integrate in a single definition all the seemingly contradictory aspects of the act of suggesting which had been captured by previous theories. Thus, given that in uttering a suggestion, the speaker is only asking the addressee to consider whether he would do what is specified in the proposition, this illocutionary category may include those acts in which the agent is just the addressee as well as those in which the agent is the addressee together with the speaker; moreover, it may include those acts in which the realization of the future action brings about either a cost or a benefit to the addressee or the speaker; and it may even include acts which are intended to help the addressee and/or the speaker to avoid a cost (e.g. *Why not stay inside?* uttered in a situation in which it is freezing outside and the addressee may get cold). As a matter of fact, the meaning conditions of suggestions in the terms put forward by Wierzbicka are so generic that, thus defined, this illocutionary act runs the risk of lacking a particular and distinct identity altogether. One can confuse suggestions with requests, proposals, pieces of advice, warnings, etc. Consider the following pairs of sentences:

- (1a) Can you do the washing up, please? (Request)
- (1b) Why don't you do the washing up? (Suggestion? Mild request?)
- (2a) Let's go to the cinema! (Proposal)
- (2b) Why don't you go to the cinema? (Suggestion? Mild proposal?)

(3a) If I were you, I would go to the doctor and get that rash checked.
(Advising)

(3b) Why don't you go to the doctor and get that rash checked?
(Suggestion? Mild advising?)

(4a) Stay inside or you'll catch a cold. It is freezing outside. (Warning)

(4b) Why don't you stay inside? It is freezing outside. You may catch a cold. (Suggestion? Mild warning?)

The second sentence of each pair poses the question of whether we are facing a suggestion or just a peripheral, soft, tentative instance of a different illocutionary type.

As a whole, suggesting seems to appear more as a mode of performing any speech act (i.e. a tentative, unassuming mode) than as a proper speech act.⁶² Whenever it is possible to perform an act of requesting, proposing, advising, or warning, it is also possible to go on to perform the speech act of suggesting instead, which would consist in softening the force and increasing the tentativeness of the illocution. In the remainder of this section I analyze those instances of suggestions included in the corpus with the intention of determining whether there exist enough semantic differences between this and other speech act types to consider *suggestions* a distinct illocutionary type, or whether it would be more appropriate to regard them as simply a mode of illocutionary performance.

Agent Type. The present corpus largely confirms Wierzbicka's claims to the effect that suggestions may involve either an individual agent (i.e. the addressee) or a double agent (i.e. speaker and addressee). Consider examples (5), (6), and (7) below:

(5) He sounded as if he was trying to convince himself as much as Sharon. "Check it," Sharon suggested. "You must know someone at the police department. You're a Lawyer. Ask them." "It's crazy." But her father's voice showed that he was considering it. (BNC)

(6) "We've been here for some days and we haven't been near a beach. How about spending the rest of the afternoon in Ipanema?" he suggested. (BNC)

62. This would be a problem similar to the one posed by the alleged category of *insisting*. Ever since the inception of speech act theory, there has been an open debate as to whether *insisting* is an illocutionary category or just a mode of illocutionary performance. See Searle (1979), and Wierzbicka (1987: 339). In my MA dissertation I suggested that a certain combination of variables like a high degree of speaker's will and a low degree of mitigation, among others, accounted for the distinct nature of the category of acts of *insisting* (see Pérez, 1997b).

(7) “You can’t go inside this house,” Bailey said. “You don’t know who lives there.” “While you all talk to the people in front, I’ll run around behind and get in a window,” John Wesley suggested. (BNC)

As is the case in approximately half the entries in the corpus for the category of suggestion, in example (5) it is the addressee on his own who is presented as the agent of the future action specified in the proposition. In (6) and (7), on the contrary, both the speaker and the addressee appear as agents. It should be noticed, moreover, that when both participants are presented as agents, the suggestion need not be restricted to a joined activity, as claimed by Wierzbicka (1987: 187), but may also involve two different actions or events which have the speaker and the addressee as their agents respectively (see example (7) above), as long as the actions are related or beneficial to both agents.

Those instances of suggesting which have the addressee as their agent type share this feature with many other directives like orders, requests, warnings, threats, or beggings. On the contrary, those suggestions which put forward both the speaker and the addressee as the agents of the future action share this feature with acts like proposals.

Time of the Action. All the instances of suggestions in this corpus invariably express a non-past event in their predication. Examples (5) to (7) above illustrate this feature which suggestions share with central cases of most directive speech acts (e.g. ordering, requesting, advising, warning, begging), commissives illocutions (e.g. promising), and other illocutionary acts which find themselves in the periphery of the two previous categories (i.e. threats, invitations, offers).

Agent’s Capability. As is the case with other directive acts like ordering, requesting, advising, warning, threatening, and begging, the speaker who suggests a future action by someone else needs to work under the assumption that the recipient of his suggestion will be capable of performing such an action. In actual interaction, in those cases in which the addressee turns out not to have such capacity, the suggestion appears as little effective. See example (8) below:

(8) “Can’t you borrow some money?” “I’m already up to my neck in debt.” “And what’s left for Dot, then?” “I’m paying for the car.” “Sell it,” Myrtle suggested. “*I haven’t got the car to sell.* Gladys has it and she’s hanging on to it and I’ve got to keep up the payments,” he explained. (BNC)

Moreover, if the addressee's lack of capacity is mutually manifest to both participants, the performance of a suggestion could convey ironic or offensive overtones. Consider a situation in which it is mutually manifest to both interactants that the addressee has just been fired from his job:

(9) Why not ask your boss for a promotion this year?

An utterance like (9) in a situation like the one outlined could lead the addressee to think that the speaker is either trying to cheer him up with a bit of humour or trying to offend him with sarcasm. But the utterance does not stand a chance of being interpreted as a suggestion because the addressee lacks the capacity to carry out the suggested action and this is mutually manifest to both participants.

Addressee's Will. The corpus contains instances of suggestions in which the addressee is willing to cooperate and, likewise, it includes occurrences in which the degree of addressee's will is low. This is logical if we take into account the fact that suggestions may involve either a benefit or a cost to the addressee (see discussion on the variable of cost-benefit below). In those cases in which the suggested action is beneficial to the speaker and costly to the addressee, the degree of addressee's will tends to be low. The following conversation illustrates this:

(10) -Johnnie: He served his time for what he did. Another thing... If Lula went with him of her own volition, *there ain't much can be done about it.*

-Marietta: Don't talk down to me, Johnnie. I know what volition means, and that's why I want Salor Ripley off the planet! He's pure slime and it's leaking all over my baby. Maybe you could push him into makin' some kinda move and then kill him dead. You'd only be defendin' yourself, and with his record, nobody's fuss. (WAH)

The action that Maritta suggests should be carried out (i.e. to kill somebody) involves a benefit to her, but a cost to the addressee (i.e. Johnnie), which explains the negative disposition that the latter displays in his turn (see sentence in italics).

On the contrary, if the proposed action is beneficial to the addressee -or even to both participants if it is a joint action-, then the addressee's will clearly increases as can be seen from the sentences in italics in (11) and (12) below. In the first case, the benefit is to both participants, since the suggested joint activity (i.e. to go for a bike ride) is supposed to be entertaining for both of them. In the second example, the benefit is exclusively to the addressee who is eager to play ball with the dog:

(11) Before he had time to consider his own question, his train of thought was interrupted by Emily. “Feel like a bike ride?” she suggested. “Where?” Mungo asked. “Over the hills and far away.” “*Ok.*” (BNC)

(12) After a few minutes of silence, during which the mother and I watched Teddie play, I handed a soft foam ball to Laura. “Here,” I suggested. “Try playing catch with him.” *Laura brightened.* (BNC)

Speaker’s Will. Probably one of the most distinctive features of the act of suggesting is the low values displayed by the parameter of speaker’s will. This feature had already been pointed out by Verschueren (1985), as well as by Fraser (1974: 150) who states that, as a result of the low degree of speaker’s will, while “an ignored request runs the risk of a repetition and/or the stigma of being considered rude; an ignored suggestion runs no such risk.”

In those cases of suggestions in which the benefit is to the addressee, the ratings of the speaker’s will are thus lower than those which characterize other directives which are also intended to benefiting the addressee (e.g. advising, warning). Look at example (13):

(13) “... migraine headaches -tension, sort of.” She sighed. “I think he needs a vacation. We all do. Mom hasn’t taken any time off from the store in almost a year.” “*Well, maybe you can work on them,*” suggested Debi. “Play on their sympathies and beg to get away from it all.” “Yeah, maybe.” Robyn didn’t sound so certain. (BNC)

Debi’s suggestion is not a strong attempt to persuade the addressee to follow the proposed course of action. Other directives which also seek the benefit of the addressee, like advising (see section 6.1), display reason and purpose satellites which are stronger attempts to persuade the addressee of the benefits of the proposed action. The effort invested in the expression of such persuasive realization procedures responds to the speaker’s stronger will. For different reasons (e.g. greater involvement with the addressee, greater confidence in the effectiveness of his proposals, etc.) the person who utters a piece of advice seems to have stronger desires that the addressee follow the proposed course of action than the person who utters a suggestion.

Likewise, those cases in which the beneficiary of the suggestion is the speaker himself display lower degrees of speaker’s will than other directives in which the speaker is also the beneficiary (i.e. orders, requests, beggings). Consider example (14) below:

(14) “Come with us,” I invited. “I think you’d better stay at home,” Otley cautioned. “No fear, I’m looking forward to it.” “Have you been before?”

Tumbleweed inquired. "It's a bit wild." "No, but I'm dying to see the gypsies." "I have met one or two on my travels," he went on. "You can show us round then," I suggested. (BNC)

In (14) the speaker communicates his desire that the addressee guides them on their tour, but he does not present his wanting as something either important to him as is usually the case with requests and, especially, with beggings. If the addressee in the previous example refuses to bring about the state of affairs envisaged by the speaker, no significant reaction on the part of the latter is expected to take place.

Even in those cases in which the suggestion is a joint action, which is to benefit both participants, the degree of speaker's will is found to be lower than that of related directives like proposals. Wierzbicka (1987: 188) believes that the lower degree of speaker's will in suggestions explains the fact that they do not require a reply, while proposals always require a response from the addressee -either of compliance or refusal.

Cost-Benefit. The behaviour of the instances of suggestion in the corpus in relation to the cost-benefit variable is remarkably varied. A considerable number of these suggestions seek to cause a benefit to both the speaker and the addressee (over fifty instances):

(15) -Annie: Alright. All right, so whatta you wanna do?

-Alvy: I don't know now. You-you wanna go to another movie? (Annie nods her head and shrugs her shoulders disgustedly as Alvy, gesturing with his bad, looks at her) So let's go see *The Sorrow and The Pity*. (AH)

In some other cases, suggestions are intended to aid in the avoidance of a cost to both the speaker and the addressee (five instances):

(16) Conversation between students in detention. There is a row between Bender and Andrew going on.

-Andrew: Really! (To Claire about Bender) Buttface?

-Bender: Well, hey! What'd you do to get in here? Forget to wash your jock?

-Brian: (nervous) Eh, excuse me? I think we should just write our papers... (TBC)

There are also instances of suggestions which seek the benefit of the addressee exclusively (up to thirty instances):

(17) Or, if he did, he mumbled it so softly I didn't hear it. We all climbed on board, I offered the newcomer the co-pilot's chair. "You turn to look at the scenery," I suggested. He smiled graciously, slipped into the seat, and folded his jacket neatly onto his lap. (BNC)

and yet others which seek the speaker's benefit (ten instances):

(18) "What if you are wrong? Demanded Chiky. "Then what?" He shrugged. "I'll break both his legs." Slyly, Chiku suggested: "You could always take me to the dance, too." Sharon gave a mock frown at this. (BNC)

or the speaker's and a third party's benefit (seven instances):

(19) Claire is on the verge of tears.

-Bender. Oh, are you medically frigid or is it psychological?

-Claire: I didn't mean it that way! You guys are putting words into my mouth!

-Bender: Well if you'd just answer the question...

-Brian: Why don't you just answer the question?

-Andrew: Be honest...

-Bender: No big deal... (TBC)

or, finally, just seek the benefit of a third party (four instances):

(20) The next morning I borrowed some jeans and sandals from Elinor and wore one of Otley's tropical shirts with bananas and palm trees all over it. He bought it in the Swinging Sixties and had never worn it. "Why don't you stay at home and help Aunt Bedelia with the dandelions?" he suggested. (BNC)

In short, suggestions are very little constrained regarding the cost-benefit variable and, as illustrated, they can take on the values of most other directive types in relation to the parameter under scrutiny. This characteristic makes of the category of suggestions a highly heterogeneous group, different instances of which may closely resemble other illocutionary types as regards this meaning condition. As shown above, however, suggestions prototypically

display a low degree of speaker's will, which partially differentiates them from other illocutionary types. Furthermore, it will be shown below that low degrees of speaker's will motivate a particular behaviour of other parameters like mitigation, optionality, etc., which also help to differentiate suggestions from other illocutions, and which is a plausible argument in favour of the status of suggestions as a proper illocutionary category rather than just as a mode of illocutionary performance.

Optionality. The low degrees of speaker's will recorded in the performance of the act of suggesting correlate with a high degree of optionality. Since the speaker does not have a significant desire that the addressee carries out the specified action, he does not make use of either persuasive devices, such as those characterizing acts of requesting, begging, advising, or warning, or coercive and/or impositive strategies like those underlying the production of orders and threats. In other words, suggestions are different from other directives in not displaying any overt attempt on the part of the speaker to constrain the freedom of the addressee to decide upon his course of action.

In those instances of suggestions in which the benefit is to the addressee exclusively, the degree of optionality will be higher than that of related illocutions (i.e. advising, warning). As will be shown in section 9.2, no attempts at persuading the addressee of the benefits of compliance through the use of rational arguments -expressed via reason or purpose satellites-, which were so common in the performance of the acts of advising and warning, are found in the performance of prototypical suggestions. In other words, suggestions which have the addressee as their beneficiary display almost optimal degrees of optionality. See the following example:

(21) Joe laughs, a little maniacally, then stops abruptly.

-Joe: What am I going to do?

-Ellison: If you have any savings *you might think about* taking a trip, a vacation?

-Joe: I don't have any savings. A few hundred bucks. I've spent everything in doctors. (JVV)

It is difficult to imagine a more tentative and unassuming act than the one in italics above. It signals a possible future action, but it does not in the least present it as an obligation for the addressee to comply with.

In those cases in which the suggestion is intended to benefit the speaker and/or a third party, the optionality of the act will as always be constrained by

the convention of politeness. But it will not be consciously and overtly restricted by the speaker through the use of persuasive, coercive, or impositive devices as is the case with beggings, requests, threats, and orders. Thus, it is not strange to find suggestions expressed by means of a simple imperative sentence, which, if uttered with a non-impositive intonation, only presents a proposition for its realization in the future by the speaker. Consider example (22) below:

(22) ... he encountered resistance from first one staff officer, then another, Schwarzkopf, they explained, had worked late the previous night and was still asleep. “Well, wake his ass up,” Walter suggested. *They refused.* (BNC)

To sum up, a significant difference between suggestions and other directive illocutions resides in the unconstrained high degree of optionality of the former. Let us capture this discussion on the optionality of suggestions in the first of the conventions of the corresponding ICM:

Convention 1: *The degree of optionality of suggestions may decrease slightly as a result of the activation of the convention of politeness, or the existence of a small social distance between the speakers. Nevertheless, unlike in the case of requests or beggings, the activation of the aforementioned conventions of interaction is not consciously and overtly aided by the speaker.*

Mitigation, Social Distance, and Formality. For different reasons which will become apparent below, suggestions are prototypically little mitigated. However, certain special ratings of the variables of addressee’s will, power, social distance, or formality may trigger off somewhat higher levels of mitigation.

Most instances of suggestion involve a benefit to the addressee or to both the speaker and the addressee. In these cases mitigation is not needed since no cost is involved. Mitigation would be required if the suggestion involved a benefit to the speaker and a cost to the addressee. And certainly, those instances in the corpus which fulfil this requirement do display some degree of mitigation. Here are some examples:

(23) *Maybe we should just call the police.* (AH)

(24) *Maybe you could push him into makin’ some kinda move and then kill him. You’d only be defendin’ yourself, and with his record, nobody’s fuss.* (WAH)

(25) *Let’s head out into New Orleans. I gotta get something to eat.* (WAH)

Let us recall, however, that the use of mitigation in cases like these increases optionality, which is a central feature of the ICM of suggesting. Mitigation may also be required in the performance of suggestions in situations like the following, each will be captured by its corresponding convention:

(a) *The speaker is more powerful than the addressee.* In order to produce a non-impositive act like a suggestion, the speaker needs to communicate to the addressee that his power is not operative at the moment of the utterance. One way of doing this is through the mitigation of his act. By way of illustration consider the following example:

(26) My first venture into high society. (...) "*Perhaps you could help Cook to wash up,*" she suggested, bringing me down to earth with a bang. "Yes, Mrs. Gindewood-Gryke, I will." (BNC)

Convention 2: *The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting in order to indicate that the speaker's authority is not operative and that, therefore, the degree of optionality typical of suggestions is still at work.*

(b) *The speaker has reasons to believe that the addressee's will is going to be low.* The speaker, through the mitigation of his act, tries to prevent a possible retaliation or face-threatening refusal from the addressee. See example (16) above.

Convention 3: *The lower the degree of addressee's will, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting in order to avoid possible face-threatening refusals.*

(c) *The addressee is superior to the speaker* (i.e. institutional power, ad hoc power, etc.):

(27) Andrew to his teacher: Well, I think the cafeteria would be a more suitable place for us to eat lunch in, sir!

-Teacher: Well, I don't care what you think Andrew. (TBC)

Convention 4: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting in order to avoid possible retaliations from the addressee in the case that he does not like the speaker's intrusion in the form of a suggestion.*

(d) *The context of the utterance is formal and/or there exists a large social distance between the speakers.* In situations of this kind higher levels of

politeness and, therefore, of mitigation are required. The conversation between two generals who meet for the first time in a dinner setting illustrates this:

(28) He found it helpful to address his remarks to Binetti's thick purplish lips, avoiding both his eyes and the regimental tie. "Perhaps you would choose the wine for us," he suggested. "If I'm not mistaken I seem to have heard it said that you're something of a connoisseur." (BNC)

Convention 5: The more formal the context and/or the larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting.

The interplay between the parameters of mitigation, on the one hand, and those of power, addressee's will, social distance, and formality, on the other, have been summarized in the above conventions. The variable of power, however, requires further attention:

Power. Suggestions can take place in any kind of power scenario, whether symmetrical or asymmetrical, whether it is the speaker who is more powerful than the addressee or vice versa, whatever the kind of power involved. In the previous discussion of the variables included in the ICM of suggesting we have seen examples of most of these power scenarios. The analysis of the data in the corpus reveals that there seem to be two power-related principles in the performance of suggestions. The first of them affects those situations in which the addressee is more powerful than the speaker. As stated in convention 4, the existence of a powerful addressee correlates with higher degrees of mitigation in the production of an act of suggesting. The second, which affects those scenarios in which it is the speaker who is more powerful than the addressee and which has been captured in convention 2, requires further attention. As stated in convention 2, the existence of a powerful speaker demands higher degrees of mitigation in order to communicate the fact that the speaker's power is not operative in the utterance of the suggestion. Accordingly, the corpus contains no occurrences in which the speaker makes overt use of his superiority in the performance of a piece of suggestion. This is yet another feature, together with those of speaker's will and optionality, which sets suggestions apart from other directive types like ordering (i.e. physical, institutional authority), and advising (i.e. knowledge authority). In addition, it is yet another argument, which favours the view of suggestions as a proper illocutionary category as opposed to a sheer mode of illocutionary performance.

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF SUGGESTING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the addressee, or the speaker and the addressee
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically the speaker assumes the addressee to be able to carry out the specified action
<u>Addressee's Will</u>	Either high or low depending on the ratings of the cost-benefit variable
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Suggestions may seek the benefit of the speaker, the addressee, of both of them, of the speaker and a third party, or just of a third party.
<u>Optionality</u>	Prototypically suggestions display high degrees of optionality See convention 1
<u>Mitigation</u>	Prototypically low See conventions 2,3,4, and 5
<u>Speaker's Will</u>	Prototypically very low
<u>Power</u>	The speaker's power, if existent, is not operative in the performance of suggestions See also conventions 2, 4
<u>Social Distance</u>	Suggestions can be performed whatever the social distance that holds between the speakers See convention 5
<u>Formality</u>	Suggestions can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context See convention 5

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF SUGGESTING

Convention 1: *The degree of optionality of suggestions may decrease slightly as a result of the activation of the convention of politeness, or the existence of a small social distance between the speakers. Nevertheless, unlike in the case of requests or beggings, the activation of the aforementioned conventions of interaction is not consciously and overtly aided by the speaker.*

Convention 2: *The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting in order to indicate that the speaker's authority is not operative and that, therefore, the degree of optionality typical of suggestions is still at work.*

Convention 3: *The lower the degree of addressee's will, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting in order to avoid possible face-threatening refusals.*

Convention 4: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting in order to avoid possible retaliations from the addressee in the case that he does not like the speaker's intrusion in the form of a suggestion.*

Convention 5: *The more formal the context and/or the larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of suggesting.*

9.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Suggesting

The number of suggestions corresponding to each sentence type in the present corpus is the following:

Interrogative-based suggestions	42 occurrences
Imperative-based suggestions	35 occurrences
Declarative-based suggestions	33 occurrences
Total	110 occurrences

As shown in section 9.1, suggestions differ from other directives mainly in their combining three meaning conditions: a low degree of speaker's will, a high level of optionality, and a speaker who is not powerful or who does not make use of his power. Such a combination results in a largely tentative and unassuming type of directive act. These meaning conditions which make up the ICM of suggesting allow us to hypothesize about the type of realization

procedures which can be expected in the expression of this illocutionary type. It can thus be predicted that there will be no realization procedures which indicate that the speaker has a special power status, as is the case in the expression of orders or threats (i.e. use of harsh falling intonation, use of time satellites of immediateness, etc.). Notice the oddity of the following instances of suggestion:

- (1) ? Let's go to the cinema. At once! (Harsh falling intonation)
 (2) ? Why not go to the cinema? Now! (Harsh falling intonation)

Likewise, it can be predicted that those realization procedures involved in the activation of the parameter of speaker's will, which are one of the distinguishing features in the performance of beggings, will be absent in the expression of suggestions. Consider the following utterances:

- (3) ?Let's go to the cinema! (With a persuasive fall-rise intonation)
 (4) ?Oh! Jesus! Why not go to the cinema?

The utterance in (3), if produced with the specified intonation, would be closer to the categories of requesting or begging than to that of suggesting, despite the use of the plural imperative (i.e. *let's*) which is prototypically associated with speech acts which generally involve a double agent (i.e. speaker and addressee), like proposals or suggestions. Example (4) sounds a bit strange. There is a clash between the unassuming interrogative form prototypically used in the production of suggestions, and the use of exclamations (i.e. *Oh, Jesus*) which express a high degree of speaker's will. If the speaker really wants the state of affairs to be brought about, as those exclamations seem to suggest, then it makes little sense to use such a tentative device as a *why not + inf* interrogative in order to achieve his goal.

9.2.1. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Suggesting

The inherent optionality of interrogative sentences makes of them excellent foundations for those realization procedures involved in the performance of suggestions. Let us remember that, according to Risselada (1993: 70), interrogative sentences simply present a proposition as (partially) open. They are, therefore, non-impositive by nature and this feature explains their low frequency of appearance in the production of coercive and/or authority-based illocutions like orders (section 4.2.3), and threats (section 10.2.4). Likewise, the openness and high levels of optionality conveyed by interrogative sentences makes them a little effective means of performing those

speech act types which involve a high degree of speaker's will (see the discussion on beggings in section 8.2.3). On the contrary, those illocutionary types which are characterized by offering a high degree of optionality to the addressee (e.g. requests, suggestions) will find in the interrogative sentence a suitable means for their expression. However, in spite of their shared preference for interrogative-based realization procedures, the meaning differences between requests and suggestions, pointed out in section 9.1, motivate some distinct traits of the interrogative sentences used in each case. More specifically, the lower degrees of speaker's will, the higher degrees of optionality, and the general tentativeness of suggestions are reflected in the nature of the realization procedures used in the production of the illocutionary type under consideration.

Use of *Why Not + Infinitive without to* Interrogative Sentences

In the corpus, the most recurring interrogative-based realization procedure for suggestions is illustrated in examples (5) to (7) below:

(5) -Reader: I am engaged to be married in the fall, and I refuse to pay thousands of dollars for a wedding gown. There aren't any discounts bridal stores in my area. Do I have any other options?

-Advisor: *Why not look in the dress department?* With the right accessories, a basic matte jersey column dress is an affordable, elegant bridal gown. Or check out the bridesmaid dresses -you'd be surprised how similar they can be to wedding gowns, and at about a quarter of the price. (*Company*, June 1998: 67)

(6) -Reader: (...) A close friend warns me that Joe could be a con man - or even a 17-year-old girl! She says the relationship with Joe is not real. I say, it sure is! What do you think?

-Advisor: Ask yourself whether you want this electronic relationship to be six months or two years down the road. If you want to move beyond a small-screen romance, *why not take the plunge now?* Talk to Joe and figure out a comfortable and public meeting place. Spending time together in different situations and contexts is the best way to discover what is true and lasting between you. (*Company*, 1998: 56)

(7) Listen to me. If you have a choice between killing yourself and doing something you're scared of doing, *why not take the leap and do the thing you're scared of doing?* (JVV)

Interrogative sentences of the type *why not + infinitive without to* manage to activate the most distinctive parameters which make up the ICM of suggesting, namely, tentativeness and unconstrained optionality. This type of

realization procedure simply presents a certain action for its realization in the future. The realization of the action is presented as an open one, rather than as an issue already set up, via the use of the interrogative sentence. Hence the tentativeness of the utterance. Moreover, no reference is made to the identity of the agent of such action. Together with the use of an interrogative sentence, the lack of reference to the intended agent increases the level of optionality of the act to a maximum, as the addressee need not infer that he is the intended agent if he does not want to do so. As a matter of fact, realization procedures of this kind seem to be incompatible with those devices which may constrain the addressee's optionality. Consider the following sentence:

(8) ??Why not do the washing-up, please?

As shown in section 5.2.1, the adverb *please* mitigates the force of the speech act. The mitigation of the strength of the act results in a minimization of cost and, therefore, it functions as a mechanism of persuasion in order to talk the addressee into bringing about a costly state of affairs. A reduction in the cost of the action makes it more difficult for the addressee to overlook the convention of politeness according to which he is expected to change the state of affairs which is negative to the speaker. In this way, the freedom of the addressee is constrained. This is a common practice in the performance of requests, which are attempts to restrain the addressee's optionality motivated by the speaker's desire to achieve his goal. However, suggestions typically display low degrees of speaker's will and offer the addressee unconstrained freedom of action, which motivate the incompatibility of the adverb *please* with the conventional realization procedure for suggestions in example (8). Now look at the similar utterance in (9) below:

(9) ?Sarah, why not do the washing-up, please?

While (8) was completely unspecified as to the agent of the action expressed in the predication, the use of the vocative (i.e. *Sarah*) in (9) points to the addressee as the agent. In this way, part of the tentativeness and optionality which characterizes prototypical suggestions like (8) are lost. As a result, (9) is open to an interpretation as a peripheral highly tentative instance of request, which explains the use of the adverb *please*.

Let us go back to the discussion of examples (5) to (7) after this brief digression. There is nothing in the suggestions in italics which signals a specially high degree of speaker's will. In this indirect way, the low degree of speaker's will, typical of suggestions, is pointed to. Furthermore, conventional suggestions of this kind are incompatible with realization devices which instantiate the parameter under consideration. Examples (10) and (11) below illustrate this:

(10) Please! Oh please! Let's go to the cinema! (With a persuasive fall-rise intonation)

(11) ?Oh! Jesus! Please! Why not go to the cinema?

The repetitions, exclamations, and persuasive intonation of these utterances point to a high degree of speaker's will which is a characteristic of the act of begging, but not of the act of suggesting. Because of this, the interpretation of these sentences as suggestions is unlikely. Furthermore, in the case of (11) there is a clash between those devices which activate parameters of the ICM of begging (i.e. repetitions, exclamations, etc.) and the use of a conventional realization procedure for suggestions (i.e. *why not + infinitive without to*). Hence the oddity of the utterance.

In short, the use of *why not + infinitive without to* interrogative sentences is a highly explicit means of performing a suggestion because it succeeds in activating the three most relevant meaning conditions of the ICM of suggesting: its tentativeness, the low degree of will of the speaker, and their high degree of optionality.

It should be pointed out that in examples (5) and (6), the *why not + infinitive without to* interrogative is either preceded or followed by imperative sentences which do not share the capacity of the previous interrogative realization procedure to activate the aforesaid variables of the ICM of suggesting. In other words, imperative sentences are less tentative, since they specify the identity of the intended agent of the future action expressed in the predication. Moreover, as shown in section 4.2, they always make a certain degree of speaker's will explicit and they do not have the property of conveying optionality to such an extent as interrogative sentences do. There is, however, a particular feature of those suggestions in (5) and (6) which justifies the use of imperatives together with *why not + infinitive without to* interrogatives: the fact that they have been solicited by the addressee. Since the addressee himself has asked for the speaker's opinion, the latter need not be so tentative, and need not make the optionality of the suggestion so explicit, because the addressee is not likely to find imposition in something he himself has required. Hence the unproblematic use of imperative sentences in the performance of the suggestions under scrutiny.

Use of *Why + Don't + You/We + Infinitive without to* Interrogative Sentences

Although similar in form to the previous type of realization procedure, interrogative sentences of the *why + don't + you/we + infinitive without to* kind qualify as less explicit ways of performing suggestions. Let us see some examples:

(12) -Alvy: Tsch, why don't we get... why don't we get Rob, and the three of us'll drive into Brooklyn, you know, and we show you the old neighbourhood? (AH)

(13) Arakny said nothing about it as she turned and looked over the horse and the wagon, the wood basket and grill on its side. "Why don't you build a fire and we'll have tea?" she suggested. "Do you have chairs?" Olly remarked as she went obediently to the wood basket. (BNC)

(14) Thought we might have to put Appleby off. The next morning I borrowed some jeans and sandals from Elinor and wore one of Otley's tropical shirts with bananas and palm trees all over it. He bought it in the Swinging Sixties and had never worn it. "Why don't you stay at home and help Aunt Bedelia with the dandelions?" he suggested. (BNC)

The realization procedure under consideration still activates the optionality variable typical of suggestions to a certain extent due to its interrogative nature. However, they make the intended agent of the specified action (*you, we*) explicit and, because of this, they are less tentative and offer a smaller amount of optionality to the addressee. Hence their lower degree of specialization as realization procedures for suggestions. It is interesting to note that this lower degree of specialization makes *why + don't + you/we...* procedures compatible with mitigating devices like the adverb *please*. Compare example (15) below with example (8) which is reproduced as (16) for convenience:

(15) Why don't you do the washing-up, please?

(16) ??Why not do the washing-up, please?

As stated in the discussion of (8), the use of a conventional device for the expression of suggestions like the *why not + infinitive without to* interrogative is largely incompatible with the use of the adverb *please*. However, the use of this mitigating adverb together with *why + don't + you/we...* interrogatives is perfectly possible. It should be taken into account, however, that the use of *why + don't + you/we...* interrogatives with mitigating devices like *please*, favours a request, rather than a suggestion interpretation. Let us compare the following three utterances in this connection:

(17) Why not do the washing-up?

(18) Why don't you do the washing-up?

(19) Why don't you do the washing-up, please?

Example (17) is a prototypical instance of suggestion. The variables of tentativeness, high unconstrained optionality, and low degree of speaker's will are activated by the *why not + infinitive without to* interrogative sentence. Example (18) still activates the optionality variable to a great extent and the interrogative does not make a special degree of speaker's will explicit. The suggestion reading, therefore, is still possible. However, the specification of the intended agent (i.e. *you*) turns this interrogative sentence into a somewhat less tentative act and enables an alternative interpretation of the utterance as a request. Likewise, in (19) the intended agent has been specified and, therefore, the act is less tentative and more constraining than (17). Moreover, the use of the mitigating adverb *please* further restrains the optionality for the addressee. I have already argued in the discussion of example (8) that the minimization of the force of the act by means of mitigators like *please* is a persuasive device used in order to talk the addressee into performing the specified action. The fact that the speaker bothers to use persuasive devices of this kind is a sign that his degree of will is higher than the one which characterizes acts of suggesting. This favours the interpretation of (19) above as a request.

Use of *How about + Gerund Interrogative Sentences*

How about + gerund... interrogatives activate the same number of parameters of the ICM of suggesting as *why not + infinitive without to* sentences.⁶³ Like the latter, they are highly specialized and conventional means of expressing suggestions. The examples below illustrate this:

(20) "We've been in Rio for three days and in that time we haven't been near a beach. *How about spending the rest of the afternoon in Ipanema? Or Copacabana?*" she suggested. "Or Copacabana," he agreed. (BNC)

(21) "Brilliant! A toast I think." She raised her coffee cup. "To new beginnings," she said. "To new beginnings," I echoed, and as our cups touched, we both smiled. "*How about [having] one for the happy couple?*" she suggested. "To absent friends," I said. "To absent friends." She took a sip of her coffee... (BNC)

As can be seen in these examples, the realization procedures in italics do not specify the intended agent of the action expressed in the predication. This fact, together with the openness of the interrogative sentences and the lack of

63. A variant of the realization procedure under consideration displays the interrogative pronoun *what* (i.e. *what about + gerund...?*).

devices pointing to the speaker's will, result in an unassuming and tentative device perfectly adapted for the expression of suggestions.

Use of *How about + You/We + Infinitive without to* or *How about + Object Pronoun + Gerund Interrogative Sentences*⁶⁴

Unlike *how about + gerund...* interrogatives, the realization procedures under scrutiny make the intended agent of the specified action explicit. As a consequence, they lose part of the tentativeness and optionality of their *how about + gerund...* counterparts:

(22) "It seems like your fun is suspect, or that your fun is really no fun, you know? Because I'd rather this wasn't a date," continued Shawnee Ray. "How about we go to Canada?" Lipsa suggested. "Ho Wun's. Why not?" Lipsa could almost feel Shawnee's smile open in the dark. The nearest Chinese restaurant was located in a tiny town across the border and it was a romantic place. (BNC)

(23) How about me not blaming you for everything?

(24) How about you doing your homework instead of watching so much TV?

As was the case with *why don't + you/we...?* interrogatives, the fact that the intended agent is specified results in a reduction of the tentativeness and optionality of the speech act performed by means of these realization procedures and, as a result, they appear as less specialized means of expressing suggestions. In this way, the interrogative sentences of the type under consideration may also be used for the expression of neighbouring speech acts like requesting and advising. Notice also their compatibility with devices whose function is that of constraining the optionality for the addressee. The use of these devices, however, is not as appropriate with *how about + gerund...?* realization procedures. Compare the following examples:

(25) How about you buying some milk, please?

(26) ?How about buying some milk, please?

(27) How about buying some milk?

64. A variant of these realization procedures displays the interrogative pronoun *what* (i.e. *what about + you/we + infinitive without to...?* or *what about + object pronoun + gerund...?*).

While (27) is just a clear case of suggestion, (25) would be very close to becoming an instance of request. In spite of the tentativeness associated with the *how about...* phrase, the explicitation of the intended agent (i.e. *you*) and the use of the adverb *please* favour the request interpretation. Finally, (26) sounds odd: a conventional realization procedure for the expression of suggestions (i.e. *how about + gerund...?*), which is characterized by its absolute optionality and tentativeness, is followed by a persuasive device whose function is to constrain the addressee's optionality (i.e. adverb *please*). The use of two devices with opposite functions (i.e. constraining of optionality vs. allowance of absolute optionality) is contradictory and explains the oddity of example (26).

Use of *What If + You/We + Infinitive without to* Interrogative Sentences

The corpus includes only one instance of suggestion displaying this form:

(28) -Annie: Alvy, what about... what if we go away this weekend, and...
(AH)

This type of realization procedure is just a variant of those *how about + you/we...* and *why + don't + you/we...* interrogative sentence types presented above. It activates the same number of variables of the ICM of suggesting. Nevertheless, unlike the other two procedures, *what if...* sentences do not have a counterpart which does not make the agent of the action explicit (i.e. * *what if going away this weekend?*).

More Formal Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Suggesting

As stated in convention 5 of the ICM of suggesting, formal contexts require the performance of this speech act type to be even more tentative and mitigated than is already the case with average suggestions. The corpus includes one possible type of realization procedure which complies with these requirements of formal contexts:

(29) Mr. Cocks criticized video interviewing techniques of police and social workers. "Might there not be a case for putting the initial interview in the hands of an educational psychologist skilled in eliciting a history without being committed to what the social workers revealingly call disclosure?" he suggested. (BNC)

Once more (29) presents an interrogative sentence which does not make the intended agent explicit, thus activating the features of tentativeness and optionality typical of suggestions. Furthermore, in the case under scrutiny, the use of the past modal (i.e. *might*) and the long-winded expression *Might there not be a case for...* contribute to making example (29) an even more tentative and polite instance of suggestion, which is highly appropriate for a formal context like the one under consideration (i.e. interview with an specialist).

9.2.2. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Suggesting

Imperative-based suggestions are almost restricted to those cases in which the beneficiary of the specified action is either the addressee or both the speaker and the addressee. In this aspect, they differ from those imperatives used in the performance of orders, which prototypically have the speaker as the beneficiary of the action. Furthermore, the vast majority of the imperative sentences used in the expression of suggestions are not accompanied by any kind of persuasive devices such as those described in relation to the acts of requesting, begging, advising, or warning (e.g. hedges, adverb *please*, reason, purpose, or condition satellites, etc.). Let us look at two examples:

(30) “You’re just guessing. You must be. You couldn’t possibly know things like that.” He sounded as if he was trying to convince himself as much as Sharon. “Check it,” Sharon suggested. “You must know someone at the police department. You’re a lawyer. Ask them.” “It’s crazy.” But her father’s voice showed that he was considering it. (BNC)

The benefit of the action suggested by Sharon is to the addressee, who needs the information that he will get by following Sharon’s suggestion. Therefore, the use of an imperative is appropriate. Since the benefit is to the addressee, he has no reason to find the unmitigated imperative as offensive or impositive. Furthermore, as shown above, there are no mitigating or persuasive devices in the expression of Sharon’s suggestion. The lack of this type of realization procedures points to the fact that she is not specially interested in the addressee’s compliance. Such a low degree of speaker’s will is another clue pointing to the interpretation of her utterance as a suggestion. Compare it with the following utterances:

(31) Check it, *because otherwise you won’t solve the mystery.*

(32) Check it, please, *I need you to believe me.*

(33) Check it, I am talking from experience. *If you check it, you’ll find out what you are looking for.*

The reason satellites in italics in sentences (31) and (33) point respectively towards a warning and an advice interpretation by activating the cost-benefit variable of the ICMs of each of these speech act types. Moreover, the fact that the speaker bothers to try to persuade the addressee of the convenience of carrying out the action through the use of rational arguments (i.e. reason satellites) points to the existence of a certain degree of speaker's will, which is also a characteristic of warning and advising as opposed to suggesting. In (32), the use of the mitigator *please* and the discourse reason satellite pointing to the speaker as the beneficiary of the addressee's action (in italics) activate two relevant features of the ICM of requesting, thus favouring the interpretation of the utterance as an instance of this illocutionary category. The imperative sentence in (30), however, does not include any of the realization procedures described in relation to sentences (31)-(33). It is precisely the lack of those devices which points to the existence of a low degree of speaker's will and favours its interpretation as a suggestion. Let us remember that the imperative sentence *per se* does not necessarily involve the expression of imposition. On the contrary, it merely presents an action to be brought about by the addressee in the future, and this lax meaning is perfectly compatible with the variables included in the ICM of suggesting. Finally, because suggestions very often involve a double agent (i.e. speaker and addressee), the use of the plural imperative is also fairly frequent:

(34) "Let's go for a run," the owner suggested, and Roy eagerly agreed.
(BNC)

As is the case with singular imperatives, the lack of mitigating or persuasive devices is a characteristic feature of plural imperatives used in the expression of suggestions. Consider the following example:

(35) "*What brings you back to Miami?*" "*You,*" I said. At that, the lights went blinking on in the quick-moving mind of Felipe Nadal. Work? We go back to work? "Come on, Felipe," I suggested, "*let's go get a cup of coffee.*" (BNC)

In (35) the use of the expression *come on* as well as of the addressee's first name (i.e. *Felipe*), preceding the plural imperative (i.e. *let's go for a cup of coffee*), indicate a higher degree of speaker's involvement (i.e. higher degree of speaker's will), which is confirmed by the previous sentences in italics in the text. Suggestions, however, are characterized by displaying minimal degrees of speaker's will. As a result, the sentence in italics in (35) is not a clear instance of the category of suggestions in spite of the categorization offered by the narrator (i.e. *he suggested*). It could perfectly well be interpreted as a piece of tentative request.

9.2.3. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Suggesting

In this section I shall present the most common declarative-based realization procedures for the expression of the tentativeness and unassumption typical of suggestions. As will be shown, the realization procedures involved in the expression of declarative-based suggestions are also found in the performance of other directives (e.g. requesting, advising). Their degree of specialization for the production of suggestions is fairly low. They can be divided in three large groups: the use of level two epistemic objective mood operators, the use of level two deontic objective mood operators, and the use of expressions of tentativeness. Let us see each of them in turn:

Use of Level Two Epistemic Objective Mood Operators

The use of adverbs like *possibly*, *perhaps*, and *maybe*, which express uncertainty, was found to be involved in the performance of requests as a means of increasing the optionality of the speech act. The following is a prototypical instance of request which makes use of this realization procedure:

(36) Erm, so could you *possibly* speak to MX? (BNC)

Likewise, the optionality of suggestions is partially activated by this type of realization procedure. Look at the following sentences:

(37) "I think she needs a vacation. We all do. Mom hasn't taken any time off from the store in almost a year." "Well, *maybe* you can work on them," suggested Debi. "Play on their sympathies and beg to get away from it all." (BNC)

(38) "If you are free next week, we could *perhaps* see the new Cher film," he suggested. (BNC)

In spite of the fact that the mood operators in italics in sentences (37) and (38) activate the variable of optionality to a certain extent, the actual degree of optionality of these instances of suggestions does not match the unconstrained optionality conveyed by some of the interrogative-based realization procedures for suggestions described in section 9.2.1. Unlike *why* + (*not*)+ *infinitive without to* and *how about* + *gerund* interrogatives, the declarative sentences in (37) and (38) specify the intended agent of the specified action and, hence, their degree of optionality is lower. Because of this, despite the use of mood operators, declarative sentences like those reproduced above are not very explicit instances of suggestions and can easily be interpreted as tentative highly polite pieces of requests instead.

Use of Level Two Deontic Objective Mood Operators

Several suggestions in the corpus consist of declarative sentences containing level two objective mood operators:

(39) -Brian: (nervous) Uh, excuse me, fellas? I think we *should* just write our papers... (TBC)

(40) “Perhaps you *would* choose the wine for us,” he suggested. “If I’m not mistaken I seem to have heard that you’re something of a connoisseur.” (BNC)

(41) “Maybe they’ve already been thrown away? We *could* check with Ms. Tepper,” suggested Robyn. “She might have them for some reason.” (BNC)

Level two objective mood operators, like those in italics in sentences (39)-(41), activate the variable of optionality typical of suggestions to some extent, especially when their past forms are used. Nevertheless, as was the case in examples (37)-(38) and for the same reasons, they still do not fully instantiate the unconstrained optionality which characterizes prototypical suggestions. Hence, they are little specialized means of performing suggestions, which could be easily opened to different interpretations as peripheral extremely polite instances of requests.

Use of Expressions of Tentativeness

Consider the following instances of suggestion:

(42) -Andrew: Well, *I think* the cafeteria would be a more suitable place for us to eat lunch in, sir! (TBC)

(43) The maid said Maria wasn’t expected home until late that night, so I left a message for her to call me -whenever she got in. “We can *try going* directly to Stevens,” I suggested. (BNC)

Expressions of tentativeness like *I think* and *try + gerund* in the preceding examples manage to instantiate the high degree of optionality characteristic of suggestions. Still, the explicitation of the intended agents in (42), and the explicitation of the beneficiary of the specified action (i.e. *for us*) in sentence (43) somehow constrain the optionality of the act and turn examples (42) and (43) into somewhat unspecialized instances of the speech act under scrutiny, if compared with more conventional forms of suggestions:

(44) Why not eating lunch in the cafeteria?

(45) Why not try going directly to Stevens?

SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF SUGGESTING

Agent Type	Pronoun (<i>you, we</i>), <i>let's</i> , imperative sentence type
Time of the Action	Non-past verb tense, imperative sentence-type
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>can</i>)
Addressee's Will	
Cost-Benefit	
Optionality	Interrogative sentence type (<i>why don't you/we?</i> , <i>how about you/we?</i> , <i>what if you/we?</i>), interrogative sentences which do not make the agent type explicit (<i>why not + infinitive without to</i> , <i>how about + gerund...</i>), level two epistemic objective mood operators (<i>maybe</i>), level two deontic objective mood operators (<i>should</i>), expressions of tentativeness (<i>I think...</i>)
Mitigation	Interrogative sentence type (<i>why don't you/we?</i> , <i>how about you/we?</i> , <i>what if you/we?</i>), interrogative sentences which do not make the agent type explicit (<i>why not + infinitive without to</i> , <i>how about + gerund...</i>), level two epistemic objective mood operators (<i>maybe</i>), level two deontic objective mood operators (<i>should</i>), expressions of tentativeness (<i>I think...</i>)
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence types
Power	
Social Distance	Vocatives
Formality	Use of mitigating strategies (past modals)

10. THE ACT OF THREATENING

10.1. The ICM of Threatening

Authors differ as to what the correct categorization of the act of threatening should be. Searle (1979) includes threats within the group of directive illocutionary acts due to the fact that they are attempts to get the hearer to do something. In contrast, Leech (1983: 217) classifies threats as commissives, because they are *speaker-oriented* (i.e. they make reference to a future event X for which the speaker is assumed to be responsible). I claim that neither of these proposals is completely satisfactory. As a matter of fact, both of them present just a partial picture of the act of threatening. Searle's account ignores the fact that threats are attempts to get the hearer to do something through coercion (i.e. through the speaker's undertaking to bring about a negative state of affairs for the addressee in the case of the latter's non-compliance). Therefore, it is not fully appropriate to consider a threat as a purely directive illocution. Leech, on the other hand, focuses on a different aspect of threats, namely, the fact that they involve a commitment by the speaker to carry out a future action (e.g. *I'll kill you*). But again, he overlooks the fact that the speaker's undertaking is motivated by his intention to get the addressee to do something. In other words, threats are not purely commissive acts either. Leech's classification of the speech act type under consideration may be explained by his concern with unconditional threats exclusively (i.e. those which do not specify a certain action for the addressee to carry out). Although he does not overtly say so, this would explain his decision to include threats in the commissive category. Nevertheless, even under this assumption, Leech's proposal is not without problems. Wierzbicka (1987: 179) suggests that the distinction between conditional and unconditional threats may be misleading and that unconditional threats always require some *dos* or *don'ts* to be reconstructed in their interpretation by the addressees. She considers the extreme cases of *threatening phone calls*:

Having considered many such cases, however, I have come to the conclusion that if they are interpreted as *threats*, then some *ifs* and some *dos* or *don'ts*

are always reconstrued (by the addressee, or by the reporter). Even if the addressee cannot identify the exact purpose of the threatening phone call, he assumes that some sort of implicit condition is attached to the overt utterance. (Wierzbicka, 1987: 179)

The present corpus clearly confirms Wierzbicka's insights. The vast majority of the threat instances in it overtly specify a condition, and in those few cases in which this is not the case, the condition is implicit and easily derived from contextual information. On the basis of this evidence, it can be concluded that the distinction between conditional and unconditional threats is not operative since all threats seem to include a condition to a lesser or greater extent. Once unconditional threats are done away with, Leech's classification of the act of threatening as purely commissive is even more difficult to accept. Threats not only involve a promise on the part of the speaker, but also his intention to use that promise as a form of coercion to get someone to do something.

The hybrid nature of threats has already been pointed out by Bach and Harnish (1979), who felt the need to put forward the existence of another superordinate illocutionary category (i.e. directive-commissive). Such a category would include acts like threatening, inviting, offering, and the like, which display features of both commissive and directive acts. However, I agree with more recent proposals (e.g. Verschueren, 1985; Risselada, 1993) to the effect that it is not necessary to posit further *ad hoc* superordinate illocutionary categories in order to account for hybrid acts like the one under scrutiny. Within a cognitive account of illocutions, hybrid acts can be accommodated as just borderline cases between already existing neighbouring categories. Furthermore, I would like to suggest that a mixed act constitutes a borderline occurrence between basic-level, rather than superordinate, illocutionary categories. Threats, for instance, seem to be a mixture of warnings and promises, rather than of directives and commissives. One of the semantic conditions of warnings (i.e. avoidance of cost), which is not shared by other directives, is essential in the understanding of threats. Likewise, other commissives, different from promises, include some semantic conditions which hinder their use as meaning constituents of the act of threatening. The commissive act of guaranteeing, to give just one example, implies the idea that the object of the guarantee (i.e. an object, or a future action) is something desirable for the addressee (see Wierzbicka, 1987: 212). On the contrary, in the case of threats, the action which the speaker undertakes to perform, is prototypically negative for the addressee. Finally, it is interesting to note that threats are a mixture of more than two illocutionary categories. They share with beggings a high degree of speaker's will. As shown below, such a high degree of speaker's will explains the pressure and coercion which forms part of the nature of threats. Moreover, threats are also somewhat like orders in that the speaker prototypically has some power over the addressee. Such a borderline nature will have a reflection on the working of the variables of the

ICM of threatening, which will resemble other illocutionary ICMs (i.e. orders, beggings, warnings, promises). Before I turn to the description of the ICM of threatening, I shall consider one more traditional belief about threats which is also debatable: their impolite nature.

Leech (1983: 104) observes that threats belong together with accusing, cursing, and others, to a group of *conflictive* speech acts, which are characterized by their intrinsic lack of politeness. Unlike *competitive* illocutions like requests and orders, conflictive acts cannot be mitigated in order to make them more polite. According to Leech, this aspect of threats originates in the fact that their illocutionary goal conflicts with the social goal of establishing and maintaining comity. Hence, as far as threats are concerned, politeness seems to be completely out of the question because, by their very nature, they are bound to cause offence. However, this idea is not entirely correct as will become apparent in this analysis. On some occasions, peripheral members of the threat category can have a higher degree of politeness as they gradually fade into a more polite speech act like warning. Let us start with the description of the ICM of threatening:

Agent Type and Time of the Action. Prototypical threats present two predications each of which has a different agent type, but both of which refer to non-past actions. The following are some examples of central instances of the category of threatening:

(1) Yesterday, 53-year-old Susan Carpenter told how he threatened to murder her moments before blowing his own brains out in her garden. She said he shouted: “Let me in or I will blow your head off.” (BNC)

(2) Kid: A banana (laughs, makes noise).

Mother: I sh I shall put you to bed.

Kid: Oh no.

Mother: I will if you don't calm down. (BNC)

Regardless of their diverse realizations -alternative coordination in sentence (1) versus conditional subordination in (2)-, in both cases we find two different future states of affairs. Each of them has a different agent:

Example (1)

State of affairs 1: to let the speaker in

Agent of state of affairs 1: the addressee

Time of the action: non-past

State of affairs 2: to blow the addressee's head off

Agent of state of affairs 2: the speaker

Time of the action: non-past

Example (2)

State of affairs 1: to put the addressee to bed

Agent of state of affairs 1: the speaker

Time of the action: non-past

State of affairs 2: to calm down

Agent of state of affairs 2: the addressee

Time of the action: non-past

Moreover, it should be noticed that the two states of affairs that make up threats are presented as alternative (i.e. either one or the other will take place). The fact that the addressee is offered a choice between two possible states of affairs does not, however, increase the optionality of the speech act. As will be shown in detail in relation to the cost-benefit variable, the second choice is even more costly than the first and, as a consequence, the addressee is forced to carry out the suggested action. The choice between two costly state of affairs leads to the coercive reading that is one of the most outstanding features of threats.

Agent's Capability. Since threats involve two different agents, let us consider each of them in turn.

Addressee as the agent. As can be observed in examples (1) and (2), and as is the case in all the instances of threats that make up the present corpus, the capability of the addressee to carry out the action suggested by the speaker is high. It is necessary that this is so if the speaker wants to have a fair chance to achieve his goal. In other words, it would make no sense to threaten someone to do something he is incapable of doing. However coercive the threat were, it would be no use.

Speaker as agent. It is observed that, prototypically, the speaker is capable of performing the action which he undertakes to perform when uttering a threat. In examples (1) and (2), for instance, both speakers are able to carry out their threats: the speaker in (1) is in possession of a gun which will allow him to kill Susan, and the speaker in (2) has the necessary authority to make the child go to bed (i.e. she is his mother). The smaller the speaker's power, the weaker the force of the threat will be, and a complete absence of power would preclude the performance of threats. Consider the following example:

(3) Pumpkin lets go off his gun and places both hands on the table. Yolanda can't stand it anymore.

-Yolanda: Okay, now let him go!

-Jules: Yolanda, I thought you were gonna be cool. When you yell at me, it makes me nervous. When I get nervous, I get scared, that's when motherfuckers get accidentally shot.

-Yolanda: (more conversational) Just know: you hurt him, you die. (PF)

Pumpkin and Yolanda are under the control of two hitmen, Jules and Vincent, who have the guns and, therefore, the power. Yolanda's final utterance, though it takes the form of a conventional threat, is merely a bluff or an attempt to make her interlocutor nervous. She does not have a gun and, consequently, she is incapable of carrying out her threat. This explains Jules's next turn in the conversation in which he completely ignores Yolanda's utterance and continues to intimidate her and Pumpkin:

-Jules: That seems to be the situation. Now I don't want that and you don't want that and Ringo here don't want that. So let's see what we can do. Now this is the situation. Normally both of your asses would be dead as fuckin' fried chicken. But you happened to pull this shit while I'm in a transitional period. I don't wanna kill ya, I want to help ya... (BNC)

Let us capture those facts in convention 1 below:

Convention 1: *The smaller the speaker's capability to carry out the threatening action, the weaker the force of the act of threatening, and vice versa.*

Addressee's Will. Since in the production of a threat the speaker works under the assumption that he is presenting the addressee with two costly choices, he expects the degree of addressee's will to be low. In general this is the case. Consider, for instance, example (2) above in which the mother's threat to put the child to bed is met with the kid's expressive rejection (i.e. *Oh, no*). However, it is not always possible to be totally sure whether the addressee will consider a certain action to be costly or not. Sometimes what we regard as negative or costly is seen as positive or not so negative by others. Consider the following example:

(4) "We moved from Norwalk," she says, "because I had to have a bigger garden. I said to Paul: 'Either we move or I will plow up your driveway and turn it into a rock garden.' " *Unsbaken by this threat, Paul, a calm man, expressed his willingness to cooperate*, on one condition: the new house must have a ... (BNC)

In this situation, the addressee did not see moving to a bigger house as such a negative choice and his willingness to do so was, therefore, high. Taking this into account, it should be concluded that what is important is that the speaker works under the assumption that the degree of addressee's will is going to be low. Whether the addressee actually wishes to carry out the action or not is, nevertheless, dependent on each particular interaction and on the nature of the action that he is being asked to carry out.

Cost-Benefit. The vast majority of the instances of threats in the corpus are intended to benefit the speaker. Only on three occasions do we find a beneficiary different from the speaker (i.e. a third party). And in one case, the benefit is not only to the speaker, but also to a third party. Let us see some examples:

(5) FO3: So, they can say that girl can sort of like scared them...?

FOX: Yeah. Mm, mm, so she'll say like she'll say to them: 'Well, if you don't leave these them alone or something, I'll get like people from year eleven like erm...' (BNC)

(6) -Yolanda: Just know: you hurt him (i.e. Pumpkin), you die. (PF)

In example (5) the benefit of the action is to a third party (i.e. the guys that are being bothered by the addressee). In example (3), which has been reproduced above as (6) for convenience, the benefit is both to a third party (i.e. Pumpkin, who will avoid being hurt) and to the speaker herself (i.e. Yolanda, who will be happy if she prevents her boyfriend from being hurt).

What appears as an invariable trait of threats is the fact that they always involve a cost to the addressee. The nature of such cost is different from that of the type of cost involved in other directives acts (requests, beggings) and deserves further explanation. In uttering a threat, the speaker seeks to influence the addressee's behaviour to his own benefit and/or to the benefit of a third party. Moreover, as stated above, the speaker works under the assumption that the proposed action involves a cost to the addressee. Because of this, the speaker anticipates a potential resistance by the addressee in granting his request and he attempts to overcome it by telling the addressee that his refusal to do as told will result in a greater cost to him. Hence the *alternative unavoidable cost* which has been found to characterize threats and which differentiates them from other illocutionary types like requests or beggings. In the case of orders, there is also a second alternative cost implicit: the speaker is more powerful than the addressee and the latter is aware that his non-compliance may lead the speaker to use his power against him. However, such a second cost is never overtly communicated as is the case with threats. The reasons for this can be twofold:

(1) The speaker believes that his superiority over the addressee is enough to secure the latter's compliance.

(2) The speaker's will is not strong enough to perform a coercive and, therefore, socially conflictive speech act like a threat.

The following conversation from the corpus exemplifies this:

(7) Allison squeaks and slams her face onto the table, hiding in her jacket hood.

-Bender (a student; Allison's classmate): She doesn't talk, sir...

-Vernon (the teacher, to Bender): *Give me that screw...*

-Bender: I don't have it...

-Vernon: You want me to yank you outta that seat and shake it out of you?
(TBC)

Vernon's first utterance (in italics) counts as an order. Vernon believes that his authority -as the teacher- will be enough to obtain Bender's compliance. However, he meets with Bender's refusal to give him the requested object. As a consequence, Vernon replies with a threat which involves a double cost: either Bender gives him the screw, or he will get it through the use of physical violence. By means of the coercion involved in the offering of two costly choices, the speaker attempts to achieve his goal of getting Bender to give him his screw. In sum, since his superiority is not enough to secure compliance from the addressee, the speaker turns to the performance of a stronger more coercive act like a threat as a means to achieve his goal. This decision is motivated by the fact that the degree of speaker's will is high enough to push him into the performance of a socially conflictive act. In short, threats prototypically involve a benefit to the speaker and/or a third party and an alternative unavoidable cost to the addressee.

Speaker's Will. Because threats prototypically result in a benefit to the speaker, it is not surprising that they display a high degree of speaker's will. The speaker's wish that the addressee carries out the proposed action is similar to that of beggings and lower than that of other directives like ordering, requesting, suggesting, warning, or advising. Such a high degree of speaker's will explains the lack of mitigation which, as will become apparent below, characterizes threats, as well as the use of coercive and highly impositive devices whose function is to secure compliance on the part of the addressee so that the speaker can achieve his goal.

Optionality. The speaker who utters a threat is prototypically endowed with the power to carry it out. The only choice the addressee has is that between two costly state of affairs. In other words, the degree of optionality of the act of threatening is prototypically low. Nevertheless, since the low degree of optionality of this speech act type hinges on the speaker's power to actually carry out the threat, and since the latter is a scalar parameter, the degree of optionality of threats will be expected to vary depending on the values taken up by the power variable. The data in the corpus confirm this hypothesis:

(8) "I was walking home with Fx and his brother and he smokes a lot and he was smoking and he like goes he goes 'Go on have a drag' and I said 'No I don't want one' and he goes 'I'll beat you up if you don't' and like he's erm a year older than me. And like I got really scared and I did..." (BNC)

(9) "Gets me totally stressed. You know I mean I'm sitting there minding me own business watching TV and he comes in and jumps on me or turns the TV over and I get mad and say 'if you turn it back over I'll kill you.' And he goes 'no.' He's, you know, he's by now he's got hold of the remote control and I've got up like and say 'Turn it back over, will you, I'm watching this.' " (BNC)

Example (8) depicts a situation in which the speaker is more powerful than the addressee. He threatens to hurt the addressee and, because of his greater physical strength, is capable of doing so. In such a situation the addressee has no choice but to agree to what the speaker wishes (i.e. the degree of optionality is at a minimum). In example (9), on the contrary, the speaker, a female, is physically less powerful than the addressee, a male. The speaker's utterance, which takes the form of a threat and is intended to intimidate the addressee, is nevertheless completely ignored by the latter who even takes the remote control from the speaker. Because the addressee knows that the speaker does not have the power to carry out the threat, the degree of optionality is largely increased and the utterance becomes a very weak and peripheral instance of the threat category.

Convention 2: The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee and the greater the speaker's capability to carry out the threatening action, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.

Mitigation. The fact that the speaker prototypically has the capacity and power to carry out his threat, together with the fact that the degree of speaker's will is significantly high in the case of central instances of threats, leads us to expect low levels of mitigation in the performance of this speech act type. This hypothesis is confirmed by the data in the collection of threats. With a very

small number of exceptions to be considered below in relation to the variables of power, social distance, and formality, the majority of threat instances in this corpus displays no overt mitigation devices. Prototypical threats, like examples (10)-(13) below, illustrate this characteristic lack of mitigation:

(10) “And you work no magic, or I’ll fray and tear every weaving of this lad’s body, and his spirit will spill and die.” (BNC)

(11) “Hold your tongue, evil bitch, or I’ll cut it out.” (BNC)

(12) “Tell me or I’ll hurl you back into the chaos you were born from.” (BNC)

(13) “Go away, or I’ll call the police.” (BNC)

It has also been observed that the interplay between the variables of power and mitigation is more complex than it may appear at first sight. I have already pointed to one possible correlation between them: the greater the speaker’s power, the smaller the need to mitigate the threat. A great power, however, allows the speaker not only to be able to overlook politeness-related notions (i.e. mitigation), but it also enables him to play around with such devices and to change their default values. Let us explain this in more detail. If the person who is to utter a threat is more powerful than the addressee and this is mutually manifest to both of them, then the speaker can choose not to mitigate his threat without any negative consequences. But, what is of most interest is that he can choose to mitigate it, and in so doing he will be able to produce certain communicative effects which are not those generally communicated through the use of mitigation (i.e. politeness), but rather the opposite ones (i.e. imposition). Let us illustrate this with one example. One of many mitigation devices is the use of implicitness. By being implicit, one grants the addressee the choice to reach the intended meaning or a different, less demanding one. But sometimes the use of implicitness may not mitigate the force of the speech act, but rather strengthen it, as was evidenced by example (3), which is repeated here as (14) for convenience:

(14) -Jules: Yolanda, I thought you were gonna be cool. When you yell at me, it makes me nervous. When I get nervous, I get scared, that’s when motherfuckers get accidentally shot. (PF)

Here, Jules leaves to Yolanda the task of inferring the meaning of the underlying threat, something like *If you don’t stay quiet, I will kill you*. The use of implicitness has been shown to increase the addressee’s optionality and, therefore, the degree of mitigation and politeness in the case of other directives (i.e. requests). However, regarding threats, like (14) above, it can be

observed that the addressee's optionality does not increase in any way. The use of implicitness, on the contrary, seems to add a further imposition or cost to the addressee (i.e. that of inferring the intended speech act). In this way the speaker underlines his superiority and adds a further communicative effect (i.e. intimidation) to his speech act. As was noted above, the default value of a mitigating device like implicitness has been reversed and its use serves to strengthen, rather than to soften, the force of the illocution.⁶⁵

Interestingly enough, this reversal of the default function of mitigating devices is only possible in relation to those directive speech acts which involve a powerful speaker and whose mitigation parameter prototypically rates low (e.g. ordering, threatening). Requesting, warning, advising, or begging, where the speaker is not typically powerful, and/or are generally mitigated, do not permit this playing around with the function of mitigation. Moreover, there are two situations in which such reversal of the default function of mitigation is not possible. These situations are those in which the social distance is small or the speakers find themselves in a formal context. Let us see two examples:

(15) Conversation between two friends: "Man, you best back off, I'm getting pissed." (PF)

(16) "Well, look, I'm sorry, but if you don't do this, it is within my right to remove you from the premises." (BNC)

In (15) there is an implicit formula (i.e. *I'm getting pissed*) instead of the explicit expression of the speaker's goal (i.e. *I'll hurt you*). In a metonymic operation, the speaker is referring to the cause and letting the addressee infer the effect: if someone 'gets pissed' with someone, he will end up attacking that person. The use of mitigation is motivated by the high degree of intimacy that exists between the speakers (i.e. they are two good friends). Because of this, the speaker wishes to soften the force of his threat.⁶⁶ (16) depicts a formal context, a school meeting. As has already been pointed out in relation to other directives like orders and requests, formal contexts require higher levels of politeness. The mitigation devices (i.e. *Well, look, I'm sorry*) found in (16) have the function of softening the force of the act and, therefore, of making of it a more polite instance of threat.

65. The same phenomenon is observed in relation with orders. The use of mitigating devices, like the adverb *please*, in a context in which the order reading is unequivocal, leads the mitigating device to take on a different value from its default one and to strengthen the force of the order. E.g. *Will you close the damned door, please!!!!*

66. A high degree of mitigation of a threat when the social distance is small may lead to a warning reading. By mitigating his act the speaker conveys the idea that he does not intend to coerce the addressee, but rather to help him avoid a cost, which he himself (i.e. the speaker) would otherwise inflict on him. (See also example (22) in section 7.1).

In situations of this kind, the variable of mitigation functions in a regular way and in a similar manner as it does in the case of other directives: it reduces the force of the threat and enhances its degree of politeness. It can be concluded, therefore, that the reversal of the function of some mitigating devices seems to be possible only in those situations in which mitigation is not used by default. Such is the case of certain speech act types like orders and threats which are prototypically not mitigated. However, when these prototypically unmitigated illocutions need to be mitigated, in accordance with certain principles of social interaction -as when it is necessary to increase politeness due to formality or intimacy requirements-, then the reversal of mitigation becomes impossible.

Social Distance. It has already been argued that the existence of a small social distance between the speakers makes it necessary to increase the degree of mitigation of the act as in example (15) above. However, the corpus contains several examples which are exceptions to this tendency. Let us consider them:

(17) (...) joy to finally speak my mind, unfretted by the insecurity of youth. “No, you can’t cancel,” I will shriek down the phone at thoughtless dinner guests calling at the 11th hour. *“Certainly not or I will never invite you again.”* (BNC)

Although the participants in (17) are friends and the social distance between them is small, the speaker produces an unmitigated, harsh threat (in italics). Having considered those cases of unmitigated threats between intimates in the corpus, I have reached the conclusion that they all seem to involve a trivial cost that justifies the lack of mitigation. In (17), the speaker’s request to the addressee (i.e. not to cancel one’s attendance at a dinner at the last moment) is not too much to ask. Moreover, his threat (i.e. not to invite him again) does not involve a substantial cost either. At least if it is compared to the prototypical cost involved in threats, which generally has to do with physical harm (see examples 1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 15 above). Let us summarize all this in convention 3:

Convention 3: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of threatening, except when trivialities are involved, that is to say, when either the requested action and/or the promised retaliation in case of non-compliance involve small costs to the addressee.*

Formality. Most of the examples of threats in the corpus take place in informal contexts (one hundred and thirty seven out of one hundred and forty). This is only natural if we consider the fact that threats are prototypically coercive, and formal contexts tend to require polite behaviour. Nevertheless, as was shown above in connection with example (16), it is possible to perform threats in formal contexts, and these will tend to be somehow mitigated in an attempt to soften their characteristic forcefulness.

Convention 4: *The more formal the context, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of threatening, and vice versa.*

Power. I have already considered the parameter of power in relation to other variables of the ICM of threatening (e.g. mitigation, agent's capacity). Let us now summarize those findings and consider in greater detail the importance of this variable for the performance of this illocutionary act.

Threats prototypically require a speaker who has some kind of power over the addressee. This power guarantees that he will be capable of carrying out the threat. Hence its relevance. Lack of power, as has been illustrated above, turns threats into mere bluffs, especially when such lack of power is manifest to both participants. Consider the following example:

(18) MO2: Yeah, well it deserves it. Bastard.

MO1: So you can make useful input.

MO2: So I say: "Look, you complete turd, give us a job now or I'll nut you."

MO1: *Mm. You must be joking. There's no way we can do that.*

MO2: Shit. What do you mean?

MO1: He'll never give us a job. (BNC)

MO2's suggestion of threatening someone into giving them a job is considered inappropriate by MO1 (see his reply in italics). He realizes that one cannot threaten someone who is in a superior position (i.e. someone who has the power to give them a job or to decide against it).

In section 4.1 I discussed the existence of several kinds and degrees of power. Institutional or physical power were among the most prototypical members of the category while knowledge or moral power would constitute more peripheral cases. The vast majority of the threats in this corpus display central types of power (i.e. physical or institutional). Only three cases present knowledge authority and those instances which display moral power correspond to acts in which the benefit is not only to the speaker but also to

a third party (see above). Threats are meant to pressurize the addressee into compliance and the existence of central types of power, when possible, is one of the most effective ways to secure that the addressee will carry out the specified action. Hence the connection between central types of power and the performance of threats.

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF THREATENING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the speaker OR the addressee
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically it is presumed that the addressee is capable of performing the requested action Prototypically the speaker should be able to carry out the threat See convention 1
Addressee's Will	Varies with the circumstances of the context of utterance. But the speaker works under the assumption that the degree of addressee's will is low
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Benefit to the speaker (prototypically) or to the speaker and a third party Alternative unavoidable cost to the addressee
<u>Optionality</u>	Prototypically low See convention 2
Mitigation	Prototypically unmitigated. But mitigation may be used in certain circumstances connected with social distance, and formality See conventions 4 and 5
Speaker's Will	Prototypically very high
<u>Power</u>	Threats are prototypically uttered by speakers with power over the addressee. As his power decreases, so does the strength of the act
Social Distance	Irrelevant. Threats can be uttered whatever the social distance between the participants. See convention 3
Formality	Threats are more frequent in informal contexts, though they can also take place in formal ones. See convention 4

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF THREATENING

Convention 1: *The smaller the speaker's capability to carry out the threatening action, the weaker the force of the act of threatening, and vice versa.*

Convention 2: *The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee and the greater the speaker's capability to carry out the threatening action, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of threatening, except when trivialities are involved, that is to say, when either the requested action and/or the promised retaliation in case of non-compliance involve small costs to the addressee.*

Convention 4: *The more formal the context, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of threatening, and vice versa.*

10.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Threatening

Those realization procedures for threats found in the corpus show once more how the different basic linguistic resources (e.g. sentence types, intonation, address terms, satellites, etc.) which may be found in the expression of other illocutionary types are rearranged into particular configurations which, by pointing or activating a certain number of variables of the ICM of threatening, facilitate the interpretation of a given utterance as an instance of this speech act type. The actual distribution of realization procedures for the act of threatening by sentence type is the following:

Declarative-based threats	46 occurrences
Imperative-based threats	1 occurrence
Interrogative-based threats	1 occurrence
Declarative/imperative-based threats	92 occurrences
Total	140 occurrences

In section 10.2.1, it is argued that declarative-based threats predominantly involve the use of two declarative sentences (either independent, juxtaposed, or joined through subordination, or coordination). This peculiarity of declarative-based threats and the fact that the highest number of threats in the

corpus are realized by means of the simultaneous use of declarative and imperative sentence types are predictable phenomena within a cognitive study of illocutions like the one pursued here. I have pointed to the presentation of two alternative states of affairs with two different agents (i.e. either the speaker or the addressee) as one of the special traits of the ICM of threatening.⁶⁷ The use of two declarative sentences or the use of an imperative plus a declarative sentence, where the speaker and the addressee are presented respectively as the agents of each of the states of affairs depicted by each pair of sentences, activates this meaning condition. As a result, this eases the interpretation of the utterance as an instance of threat. Let us see these and other realization procedures for this illocutionary category in detail:

10.2.1. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Threatening

Use of Level Two Condition Satellites Plus Main Declarative Sentence

One fairly explicit type of declarative-based realization procedure for threats consists in the use of a declarative sentence preceded by a level two satellite of condition. The next example qualifies as a prototypical instance of this type of realization procedure:

(1) ZGY: They are living creatures.

MOX: I'll make some good money out of them.

ZGY: If you hurt them, I'll sue you ... (BNC)

Example (1) manages to activate most of the variables of the ICM of threatening. It presents two states of affairs. The first one has the addressee as the agent (*you hurt...*), while the second has the speaker as the agent (*I'll sue...*). Both states of affairs refer to a non-past time (i.e. present and future tenses respectively). The speaker has the capacity and the moral and legal power to carry out his threat. The addressee's will to comply with the

67. Warning and advising also present two future states of affairs. One of them has the addressee as the agent, but the speaker is not prototypically the agent of the other as is the case with threats. Warnings could be paraphrased as *If you do/don't do X, Y will happen to you*, or *If you do/don't do X, Z will cause Y to happen to you*, where Y is a negative or costly state of affairs and Z is different from the speaker. Threats, on the contrary, could be paraphrased as *If you do/don't do X, Y will happen to you* or *If you do/don't do X, Z will cause Y to happen to you*, where Y is again a negative state of affairs, but where Z is prototypically the speaker. Advising differs from warning and threatening in the fact that Y is positive or beneficial.

speaker's wish is weak (i.e. he wants to kill the animals to make some money). The speaker undertakes to bring about a state of affairs which is negative to the addressee (*I'll sue you*). The activation of all these variables makes the interpretation of the utterance as a threat fairly straightforward. Nevertheless, there is one variable of the ICM of threatening which is not overtly activated by this type of realization procedure and which is left to be inferred by the addressee, namely, the exact state of affairs that the speaker wants the addressee to bring about. In example (1), the speaker tells the addressee that if he carries out a certain action (i.e. *to hurt the animals*), then he (i.e. the speaker) will cause something negative to happen to the addressee. Given that the addressee's action is presented as the cause of the speaker's negative action against the addressee, the latter can easily infer that the speaker wants him to carry out just the opposite action. In example (1), for instance, the addressee needs to infer that the speaker wants him *not to hurt the animals*. As will be shown in section 10.2.3, this variable (i.e. the speaker wanting the addressee to carry out a certain action) can be made explicit by means of using an imperative sentence instead of a level two satellite of condition (e.g. *Don't hurt the animals or I'll sue you*). In connection to this, it is also interesting to compare example (1) to sentence (2) below:

(2) If you don't hurt the animals, *I won't hurt you*.

In contrast to example (1), the main declarative sentence in italics in (2) presents the speaker undertaking a commitment not to bring about a negative state of affairs for the addressee. This subtle difference between sentences (1) and (2) motivates the interpretation of the utterance as a piece of negotiation rather than as a threat. In order to be interpreted as a threat, the speaker should appear as the agent of a future state of affairs which is negative to the addressee. Other instances of the realization procedure under consideration (i.e. level two satellite of condition plus main declarative sentence) may display lower degrees of achievement as they activate a smaller number of variables of the ICM of threatening. Let us consider some less prototypical instances:

(3) "I'm rather offended about the fact that you are you you seem to be rather making an issue of the fact that you're able to swing the lead and get away with various bits and pieces and if you don't tidy up your act I'm going to have a word with the boss..." (BNC)

If (3) and (1) are compared, the first thing that can be observed is that, whereas in (1) the speaker's undertaking to carry out a negative state of affairs was overtly expressed, in (3) it needs to be inferred by the addressee on the basis of contextual information. The action of *swing* someone is intrinsically

negative. On the contrary, the fact that someone has a word with his boss does not necessarily imply that such a conversation will result in a negative state of affairs for the addressee, for example, the speaker's intention could be to persuade the boss to promote the addressee. Now, consider examples (4) and (5) below:

(4) "I didn't really want erm didn't really feel like coming but he would keep writing and he write and he write and gave me a final threat: 'If you don't come now you don't come at all.'" (BNC)

(5) FOX: Who reckons Bill Clinton's dead?

-MOX: You'll be dead in a minute if you don't shut up. Shut up.

-MOX: Are you ready? Wake him up...(BNC)

In these two instances of threat, the two main clauses present the addressee as the patient of a future negative state of affairs, but they do not present the speaker as the agent who will bring about such a negative state of affairs for the addressee. The task of deciding who will be the agent of such actions is left for the addressee to infer. Depending on whether the contextual and background information available to the addressee leads him to believe that the speaker or a different person will be the agent of the future negative actions, he will tend to interpret the sentences above as members of either the threatening or the warning illocutionary categories.

Use of Two Declarative Sentences Joined through Combinatory Coordination

A different type of realization procedure which nevertheless activates the same number of variables as the one just described is the use of two declarative sentences joined through combinatory coordination (i.e. by means of the conjunction *and*):

(6) -Pumpkin: (yelling to all) Everybody be cool this is a robbery!

- Bunny: Any of you fuckin' pricks move and I'll execute every one of you... (PF)

The addressee is left the task of inferring what the speaker wants him to do (i.e. *not to move*). But otherwise the variables of agent type, time of the action, agent's capability, and cost-benefit of the ICM of threatening get activated just as was the case with the use of level two condition satellites plus declarative sentences.

Use of Juxtaposed Declarative Sentences

The juxtaposition of two declarative sentences could also activate those variables of the ICM of threatening which, as shown above, are instantiated through the use of coordination or condition satellites. The only difference is that in the case of juxtaposition, the idea that the realization of one of the states of affairs is dependent on the materialization of the other needs to be inferred by the addressee. The following sentence illustrate this:

(7) In the swimming-pool, there's a locker key down by the drain in the deep end. There'll be somebody watching you. You won't see them. I want you to get that key. I want you fully clothed when you do. You so much as remove your wristwatch, your son dies. (R)

Use of Alternative Coordination of Declarative Sentences (and Level Two Deontic Objective Mood Operators)

A more explicit type of declarative-based realization procedure for threats consists in the alternative coordination, by means of the conjunction *or*, of two declarative sentences. The first of which presents a predication whose agent is the addressee, while the second has the speaker as the agent. The use of alternative coordination allows the speaker to overtly express the precise state of affairs which he wants the addressee to bring about. Such a state of affairs need not be inferred as was the case with the three previous types of realization procedures (see examples (1), (6), and (7) above). Let us see some examples:

(8) When someone moves away from him, which is normal, and talks to somebody else and spends time with other friends, he panics and puts the clackers on and he says: "You'd better be there or I'll throw you out." (BNC)

(9) "You don't forget to pay me," West said. "I said to her I don't carry money." She threatened me: "You'll pay me or I'll report you." I said: "Report me for what?" and she answered: "You raped me." (BNC)

(10) "Get dressed. Get Lois to go down and get the key and let us out of here." "Not till I've had my fun," said Angel. "I deserve some too. It's my lunch hour." "You'll have to do as I say, or I'll tell Oriole about you and me." (BNC)

Sentences (8) to (10) depict two alternative states of affairs: either one or the other is to take place in the future. At first sight the addressee is being offered a choice, but it is a choice between two negative states of affairs, one of which is to be brought about by the speaker. The variables of agent type, time of the action, and cost-benefit of the ICM of threatening are thus activated. Moreover, sentences (8) and (10) make use of level two deontic

objective mood operators (i.e. *had better*, *will have to*) which minimize the level of optionality, and therefore, activate one more meaning condition of threats. It should be noticed that operators of this type were also found among the realization procedures characteristic of the act of ordering. The fact that both orders and threats make use of this kind of impositive device is not arbitrary, because in both cases the speech act is uttered by speakers who are more powerful than their addressees. Nevertheless, the point of orders is not to coerce the addressee with a choice between two negative states of affairs, hence, their realization procedures do not generally involve the use of alternative coordination or level two condition satellites like those found in the expression of threats.

More Implicit Declarative-Based Realization Procedures

It was pointed out in the description of the ICM of threatening that on some occasions (i.e. small social distance, formal contexts, etc.) the performance of threats needs to be more implicit. This maximization of implicitness increases the optionality of the act and, as a consequence, softens its force. Here is one such example:

(11) He starts walking down the hall. Vincent, smiling, walks a little bit behind.

-Vincent: How many?

-Jules: Fuck you.

-Vincent: Would you give me a foot massage—I'm kinda tired.

-Jules: Man, you best back off, I'm getting pissed — this is the door. (PF)

The degree of intimacy between the two speakers is high as they are good friends. Jules wants Vincent to stop pulling his leg and, given Vincent's low willingness to cooperate, Jules chooses to perform a threat in order to persuade him. Threats are highly coercive and offensive speech acts and Jules knows that it is not appropriate to threaten a friend. For this reason, he makes an attempt to mitigate its force by means of implicitness. Instead of overtly communicating the negative state of affairs that he intends to bring about if Vincent sticks to his attitude, he refers to the effect of Vincent's behaviour (i.e. *I'm getting pissed*). Moreover, our life experience (i.e. long term background knowledge) tells us that when someone gets pissed with something or someone, he is likely to perform some nasty action against the source of his problem. In other words, the speaker in (11) is metonymically activating a common everyday life scenario. In this way, by just hinting at the possible source of violence (i.e. someone getting pissed with someone else), he is

communicating to the addressee that he may attack him if he keeps on with his irritating behaviour. The utterance in example (11) manages to activate several variables of the ICM of threatening: the fact that the addressee is expected to perform a certain action (i.e. to back off) and the fact that this action should take place in the future. However, the fact that the speaker will bring about a negative state of affairs for the addressee if he does not comply is only pointed at through the metonymic process discussed above. The significant level of implicitness of the threat softens its force and makes it more appropriate in the context under scrutiny which is characterized by the small social distance between the participants.

10.2.2. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Threatening

In the corpus only one instance of threat is expressed by means of a single imperative:

(12) -Dr. Ellison: No, you don't have anything. You're just a hypochondriac, sorry. Or, looking on the bright side, congratulations!

Joe takes a step for Kenneth.

Kenneth takes out a gun and points it shakily at Joe.

-Joe: You know, I'm gonna get you up!

-Dr. Ellison: Hold it! Don't make me kill you when there's nothing wrong with you! (JVJ)

The first imperative (i.e. *Hold it!*) communicates the action which the speaker wants the addressee to carry out. The second imperative points to the state of affairs which the speaker will bring about if the addressee does not comply with his wishes. Moreover, the speaker presents the addressee as responsible for the speaker's future actions (i.e. *Don't make me...*). In this sarcastic way, the speaker manages to convey the idea that the addressee can avoid the potential cost. One further inferential step will make the addressee realize that the way to avoid such a cost is by following the speaker's instructions (i.e. *Hold it!*). There are more explicit ways of performing a threat than the use of two imperatives as in (12). These other means involve the use of both imperative and declarative sentences and are dealt with in the next section.

10.2.3. Imperative/Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Threatening

Most of the threat instances in the corpus (ninety two out of one hundred and forty) are expressed by means of a combination of imperative and

declarative sentences. Within the group of realization procedures which share this characteristic, the vast majority of the occurrences (eighty six) are cases of alternative coordination. The fact that this is the most common type of realization procedure is not an arbitrary phenomenon. The alternative coordination of an imperative and a declarative sentence activates most of the variables of the ICM of threatening. In other words, this is a highly explicit means of performing threats. Let us illustrate this in detail.

Use of Alternative Coordination of Imperative and Declarative Sentences

(13) Wilkinson then told the pupils: “*Get to the back of the class or I will kill you.*” (BNC)

The variables of the ICM of threatening that are activated by means of sentences like the one in italics in example (13) are the following:

(1) Agent type: there are two predications each of which expresses a different state of affairs. By means of the imperative sentence the addressee is presented as the agent of one of those states of affairs and by means of the declarative sentence the speaker presents himself as the agent of the other.

(2) Time of the action: both states of affairs display a non-past tense.

(3) Cost-benefit: the action to whose realization the speaker commits himself involves a cost to the addressee (i.e. to kill him).

(4) Speaker’s will: the use of an imperative sentence activates the variable of speaker’s will (see section 4.2).

(5) Mitigation: there is no overt mitigation.

(6) Optionality: the degree of optionality is minimal (i.e. choice between two options).

Some other variables, like agent’s capability or power, need not be communicated because they are already obvious in the context of the utterance. It is mutually manifest to both participants in (13) that the speaker is capable of carrying out his threat because they can see that he has got a gun. For the same reason, his power is also manifest without the need to overtly communicate it. In sum, most of the variables of the ICM of threatening are instantiated by the utterance in (13). The degree of codification of this instance of threat is fairly high and it would require a significantly marked context to understand this utterance as a different type of speech act. Interestingly enough, sometimes even the power variable (the speaker’s superiority over the addressee) which is typical of the act of threatening is

overtly signalled. This is done by means of realization procedures which have been seen at work in the expression of orders. Let us remind the reader that both orders and threats are performed by powerful speakers. Here are some examples:

Use of Harsh Falling Intonation

Only speakers in a powerful position can make use of a falling, harsh, impositive intonation without fearing some negative reaction from the addressee. Of course, they do so at the cost of doing away with politeness requirements. Several instances of threats in our corpus display this type of intonation:

(14) “Get out, or I’ll kill you both!” Herndon growled. (BNC)

Level Two Time Satellites of Immediateness

For reasons already discussed in section 4.2, the use of time satellites which ask for immediate action are also associated with powerful speakers and serve to add strength to impositive acts like orders, and, as can be seen in example (15) below, also to threats:

(15) (...), punching each other. “Stop it!” Jill yelled, darting forward. “Stop it *right now*, or I’ll turn you all into frogs!” The threat brought instant peace. (BNC)

The coercive character of threats is enhanced in the previous example by means of the time satellite and the falling, harsh intonation.

Use of Insults, Swearings, and Rude Vocatives

Insults, swearings, and rude vocatives are also found in the expression of threats like the following:⁶⁸

(16) “Look, *you complete turd*, give us a job now or I’ll nut you.” (BNC)

68. The degree of speaker’s power is a factor that needs to be taken into account in the use of expressions of this kind. Nevertheless, the existence of a powerful speaker only enables their use without fear of retaliation, but it does not motivate it. Insults and rude vocatives are generally associated with the existence of an angry mood on the part of the speaker.

(17) “Don’t move, *nigger*, or I’ll blow you away.” (BNC)

(18) “*God damn you*, go on, or I will kill you.” (BNC)

As was the case with the use of intonation or time satellites of immediateness, the force and impoliteness of threats is enhanced with the addition of linguistic elements like those under consideration.

Use of Juxtaposed Imperative and Declarative Sentences

As observed at the beginning of this section, a small number of imperative/declarative realization procedures for threats do not display alternative coordination. Some of them are cases of juxtaposition of an imperative and a declarative sentence. (19) below illustrates this:

(19) “Say that again! I’ll kill you!” (BNC)

The use of juxtaposition does not specify what the relationship is between the two sentences. Because of this the threat reading is not so straightforward. Compare the two possible paraphrases of (19) below:

(20) “Say that again or I’ll kill you!”

(21) “Say that again and I’ll kill you!”

Utterance (20) is clearly an attempt to get the addressee to repeat something. In contrast, (21) could be a threat if it is understood that the speaker does not want the addressee to repeat something. This would be an implicit kind of threat as the addressee needs to infer that the speaker wants him to do just the opposite to what he is saying. But (21) could also have a reading as a mixed threat-challenge like, for instance, *you do not dare to say that again because if you do I’ll kill you*. Probably because juxtaposition may give way to ambiguities of this kind, it is not used as often as alternative coordination in the expression of threats.

10.2.4. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Threatening

The corpus only contains one instance of interrogative-based threat:

(22)-Vernon : Give me that screw...

-Bender: I don’t have it...

-Vernon: You want me to yank you outta that seat and shake it out of you?
(TBC)

When it is clear from the context of the utterance that the speaker wants the addressee to perform a certain action -as is the case in (22)-, a simple question about the addressee's wish that the speaker brings about a negative state of affairs for him (i.e. for the addressee) is enough to activate the cost-benefit variable of ICM of threatening and, consequently, to enable the interpretation of the utterance as an instance of threatening.

**SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES
FOR THE ACT OF THREATENING**

Agent Type	Imperative sentences, conditional satellites plus declarative sentences, coordinated imperative and declarative sentences
Time of the Action	Non-past verb tense
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>will, can</i>)
Addressee's Will	
Cost-Benefit	Level two time satellites of immediateness (<i>right now...</i>)
Optionality	Level two deontic mood operators (<i>have to...</i>), level two time satellites of immediateness (<i>right now...</i>), use of harsh falling intonation, use of insults, swearing, and rude vocatives
Mitigation	Level two deontic mood operators (<i>have to...</i>), level two time satellites of immediateness (<i>right now...</i>), use of harsh falling intonation, use of insults, swearing, and rude vocatives
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence type
Power	Use of harsh falling intonation, level two deontic mood operators (<i>have to...</i>), level two time satellites of immediateness (<i>right now...</i>)
Social Distance	Use of mitigating strategies (<i>vocatives, implicitness</i>)
Formality	Use of mitigating strategies

11. THE ACT OF INVITING

11.1. The ICM of Inviting

The small number of studies devoted to the analysis of the act of inviting can be divided into two main groups: on the one hand, there are those which regard invitations as clear cases of directive illocutions (e.g. Searle, 1979: 17; Leech, 1983: 217; Wierzbicka, 1987: 82); on the other hand, there are those which suggest that invitations have a hybrid *commissive-directive* nature (e.g. Bach and Harnish, 1979; Hancher, 1979: 6-7). In the ensuing discussion of this illocutionary category, I have attempted to put forward arguments in support of this second group of theories. Nevertheless, there is one important point of divergence between these accounts and the one I shall be defending in this chapter. This has to do with the relative weight of the directive and commissive elements which integrate the act of inviting. Hancher holds a radical stance on this issue:

Offering, tendering, bidding, inviting, volunteering, and formal challenging are all hybrid speech acts that combine directive with commissive illocutionary force. As such they need to be specially provided for in Searle's taxonomy. Let us call them commissive-directives. [...] *commissive-directives are equally commissive and directive; neither force dominates.* (Hancher, 1979: 6. Emphasis mine)

I shall attempt to demonstrate that Hancher makes a similar mistake to the one made by Searle and which had motivated the need for a new, *ad hoc* illocutionary category like that of commissive-directives in the first place. Both authors fall into the trap of the classical theory of categorization. Searle (1979: 17) establishes such rigid types of illocutionary categories that they are unable to accommodate hybrid illocutions like invitations without problems. Hancher (1979: 6) realizes this drawback of Searle's illocutionary taxonomy. He observes that certain speech act types, like invitations or offers, have been forced into the mold of certain illocutionary categories to which they do not fully belong. In order to overcome this weakness of Searle's classification, Hancher posits the existence of a new *sui generis* hybrid category of

commissive-directives. I cannot object to Hancher's observation that the act of inviting includes features of both directive and commissive illocutions. However, I would like to argue that Hancher's new independent *ad hoc* illocutionary category is once more the output of a very probably unconscious influence of the classical theory of categorization. As a consequence, Hancher's new all-or-nothing category does not solve the problems that were already haunting Searle's taxonomy of speech acts. I hypothesize that Hancher's category of commissive-directives, if it exists as such, is not a homogenous group of illocutions which occupies an exactly intermediate position between the two extremes of prototypically directive (e.g. orders, requests) and prototypically commissive (e.g. promises, guarantees) illocutions. Between these two extremes it should be possible to find several illocutionary categories which may be closer to one or the other. As a matter of fact, I would like to suggest that invitations are closer to the directive end, while other hybrids (e.g. offers) are nearer the commissive end. The following description of the ICM of inviting will provide arguments supporting this hypothesis. Moreover, the present corpus-based study reveals some relevant misconceptions of previous accounts of the act of inviting in relation to some of its meaning conditions (e.g. the identity of the person who receives the benefit of the performance of the act, the actual degree of optionality of the person who faces an invitation, the degree of the speaker's will and its relevance for the definition of the act under consideration, etc.). The data in the corpus point to slightly different views on these matters from those held in previous analyses which were not founded on the observation of real language instances of invitations.

Acts of inviting are generally defined as requests for the addressee's presence at or participation in a given event. Nevertheless, as pointed out by Verschueren (1985: 172), invitations can also count as simple requests for someone to do something in a polite way. Wierzbicka (1987: 81) makes a similar observation. Around two thirds of the invitations in the corpus fall within the first subgroup distinguished by Verschueren (i.e. requests for the addressee to come to a place and join an activity). The rest are just instances of polite requests for other types of action. However, in spite of the fact that invitations to an event are a significant portion of the total number of acts of inviting that take place in everyday interaction, they are just a specific subtype of the other more general type of inviting act (i.e. polite requests for some action). Both kinds of invitation share the same meaning conditions and are, therefore, members of the same category, whose ICM is described below.

Agent Type and Time of the Action. All instances of inviting in the corpus present the addressee as the agent of the action expressed in the predication. Likewise, the specified action is to take place in a non-past time (i.e. present or future):

(1) “Why do you say so?” he asked. “Because you’ve made no arrest. That simple. Without your knowledge I can only guess.” “Guess away,” he invited. “Then I’d say perhaps Harry’s sunglasses and pen and belt were with Angela Brickell because she took them there herself.” “Go on,” he said neutrally. (BNC)

(2) It was the ad-lib Macmillan press conference that was of the most interest to Ned. “Ask me about any subject,” I invited the audience. “What about the Queen?” someone shouted. (BNC)

(3) But Jonas Hamilton saw it immediately as he opened the door to her. His strong face, lined by age and illness, framed a pair of kindly eyes that softened at the sight of her. “Paige, my dear child, come in, come in,” he invited warmly, sounding almost as if he was expecting her. (BNC)

In presenting the addressee as the agent of a future action, invitations fulfil one of the more central features of directive speech acts (see orders, requests, warnings, and beggings). This observation probably led Searle (1979: 17) to classify invitations as directives. In contrast, Hancher describes the category as a mixed group:

Consider inviting, which is similar to offering. Searle (1976: 11) classes inviting as a directive; and ‘when I invite you to do’ something, I am indeed trying to direct your behavior. But more than that is involved. If I invite you to my party and then refuse to let you in, you will normally have grounds to object. The reason for this is that *an invitation is not only a directive but also a commissive*: it commits the speaker to a certain course of behavior himself. (Hancher, 1979: 6)

As illustrated by (1) to (3), the specific course of behaviour that the speaker commits himself to in the performance of an invitation is not generally made explicit. This may justify the position held by Searle, Leech, or Wierzbicka, who focus only on the directive side of invitations and overlook the commissive component. Nevertheless, a closer analysis of examples like (1) to (3) seems to support Hancher’s reflection on the existence of a commissive ingredient in connection to the act of inviting. Thus, in (1) the speaker is committed to allow the addressee to guess (i.e. it would be inappropriate for him to provide the right answer before the addressee has had a chance to guess); in (2) the speaker commits himself to paying attention to the questions made by the audience; and finally, in (3), the speaker undertakes to permit the addressee’s entering his house. In the following I endeavour to offer a possible explanation for the existence of this alleged commissive side of invitations.

To begin with, invitations involve a benefit to the addressee. In other words, the agent of the action (i.e. the addressee) is the beneficiary of his own action. But, most importantly, the bringing about of the state of affairs expressed in the predication always involves the speaker’s cooperation to a

greater or lesser extent. If examples (1) to (3) above are considered, it is observed that the materialization of the three future states of affairs expressed in their predications involve respectively: (1) that the speaker does not tell the addressee the answer before the latter attempts to guess it, (2) that the speaker pays attention to the addressee, and (3) that the speaker is willing to let the addressee enter his house. The exact involvement of the speaker in the realization of the future state of affairs is not instantiated in any of the three examples above, but in (2) and (3) it is subtly pointed to by means of the highlighted elements: *Ask me about any subject, Paige, my dear child, come in, come in*. Both the use of the first person object pronoun (i.e. *me*) and the deictic verb *come* -which implies movement towards the speaker- point to the involvement of the speaker in the bringing about of the future states of affairs.

Now, invitations count as attempts to get the addressee to carry out an action which is assumed to be beneficial to him (see discussion of the cost-benefit variable below). This means that, in uttering an invitation, the speaker is creating some expectations on the part of the addressee to obtain a benefit upon completion of the specified action. If the speaker fails to carry out his share of the specified action, he will be shattering those expectations and, as a result, bringing about a negative state of affairs for the addressee. Now, according to Ruiz de Mendoza's (1999) convention of politeness, people living in our society are expected to alter those states of affairs which are negative for others. In this connection, I would like to add that people living in society are not only expected to alter negative states of affairs, but also logically not to cause negative state of affairs for others in the first place. The convention of politeness would thus need to be extended to include this idea:

CONVENTION OF POLITENESS IV

(a) If it is manifest to the addressee that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to the speaker, and if the addressee has the capacity to change that state of affairs, then the addressee should do so.

(b) If it is manifest that a potential state of affairs is not beneficial to the speaker, then the addressee is expected not to bring it about.

[Correlation with social distance] *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the more the addressee is expected (1) to change the specified state of affairs affecting the speaker and (2) not to bring about negative states of affairs for the speaker.*

[Correlation with the degree of speaker's will] *The higher the desire of the speaker to have a negative state of affairs altered, the higher the addressee's commitment should be to bring about such a change.*

According to point (b) of the convention of politeness we are expected not to bring about negative states of affairs for others. As far as the act of

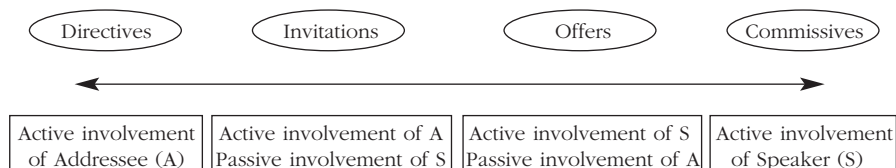
inviting is concerned, this implies that if the speaker creates some expectations in the addressee by means of an invitation and then fails to fulfil his share of whatever is necessary to bring about the future state of affairs, he will be shattering the addressee's expectations, creating a negative state of affairs for the addressee, and therefore, breaking the convention. Hence the commitment which conforms the commissive side of invitations to which Hancher and others have referred. In short, the fact that the act of inviting (1) presents the addressee as the agent of a future action, (2) involves a future benefit for the addressee, and (3) involves the speaker's cooperation in carrying out the future action, explains its mixed commissive-directive nature.

The actual involvement of the speaker in the bringing about of the future state of affairs is of a fairly passive nature. It usually boils down to permitting the addressee's actions (i.e. not impeding them). In this connection, it is interesting to compare invitations to other cases of hybrid commissive-directives, like offers (see chapter 12). Compare the following utterances:

(4) Come and stay for the weekend. (Invitation)

(5) Shall I close the window for you? (Offer)

Both acts of inviting and offering require the involvement of both the speaker and the addressee in the bringing about of a future state of affairs. The invitation under (4) requires an active involvement on the part of the addressee (i.e. to carry out the specified action, namely, to physically move to the speaker's home) and a passive involvement on the part of the speaker (i.e. allow the addressee to stay in his house during the weekend). On the contrary, the offer under (5) asks for an active involvement of the speaker (i.e. to carry out the specified action: to close the window), and just a passive involvement on the part of the addressee (i.e. to accept the speaker's offer). This brings acts of inviting closer to the category of directive speech acts (which involve actions by the addressee) and acts of offering closer to extreme of commissive illocutions (which involve actions by the speaker), in spite of their mixed nature. Let us schematize this observations:



From this discussion it can be concluded that those illocutionary categories which occupy intermediate positions between the two extremes of

directives and commissives do not participate equally in the nature of the two illocutionary categories from which they draw part of their meaning conditions. Contrary to Hancher's (1979: 6) prediction, some commissive-directives are more commissive or more directive than others. Thus, invitations are closer to the directive end of the continuum, while offerings, for instance, are nearer the commissive end.

Agent's Capability. In all instances of inviting in the corpus the speaker assumes that the addressee is capable of carrying out the specified action. This is only natural, since it would be a waste of time to tell someone to do something we know he is unable to do. Moreover, on those occasions in which it is mutually manifest to both participants that the addressee lacks the capacity to perform the specified action, inviting someone to do something could even be considered socially impolite (e.g. inviting someone to a party when it is mutually manifest to both participants that the addressee is not capable of attending the party). The following example illustrates the absurdity of uttering an invitation in a situation in which the addressee's capacity to perform the action is known to be small or non-existent:

(6) "Guess where I'm going this weekend," he invited her. Sensibly he didn't wait for a reply, since the possibilities were clearly endless. "London," he told her, staring triumphantly. She was puzzled by the doctor's manner. (BNC)

As mentioned above, the speaker is also an agent, though a fairly passive one, whose action consists in permitting and cooperating in the bringing about of the future state of affairs. Although this corpus contains no examples, it should be expected that, as was the case with promises, if the speaker is uncertain about his capability to carry out his role as agent, he will tend to mitigate his invitation in some way or another. For instance, if the speaker is not sure whether he will be able to organize a party, he may utter a tentative invitation like *Come to my party next Friday, that is, if I manage to get everything organized in time*. This observation makes up our first convention of the ICM of inviting:

Convention 1: *The higher the degree of speaker's uncertainty about his capability to carry out his share of the action, the greater the need for mitigation and tentativeness in the performance of the act of inviting.*

Addressee's Will. According to the data in the corpus, the performance of acts of inviting require the speaker's assumption that the degree of addressee's will is high:

(7) “Go on,” he invited softly, “touch me. *You know you want to.*” Luce jumped and glanced up, but his lids were still closed. (BNC)

Sometimes, however, the speaker’s assumption may fail and in these cases, the performance of an invitation gives way to a socially conflictive situation like the one captured in the following example:

(8) “Come in,” he invited Lisa. “Come in and meet Nina.” *The only thing Lisa wanted to do was flee*, but she summoned the strength from somewhere to step back into the office, pinning a brave smile to her face. (BNC)

The speaker asks Lisa to meet Nina on the assumption that she would like to meet her. But Nina is the speaker’s girlfriend and Lisa is in love with the speaker. Lisa does not want to meet Nina, but she feels forced to do so in order not to reject the speaker’s invitation. As will be made clear in the discussion of the cost-benefit variable below, invitations usually involve a benefit for the speaker as well as for the addressee. In example (8) the speaker is willing to introduce his friend Lisa to his girlfriend. Because the speaker also benefits from the action, a rejection on the part of the addressee would be considered a *faux pas*. The speaker’s wrong assumption on the addressee’s will in the situation depicted in (8) has given rise to an uncomfortable and conflictive scenario. In order to avoid undesirable situations like the one under consideration, the speaker who is to utter an invitation is expected to increase the mitigation of his act whenever he is uncertain about the addressee’s will and, especially, whenever he has reasons to expect a low degree of addressee’s will:

(9) There was no fun in the house, and Walker felt like a traitor. Then on Saturday evening, Snoot broke the impasse with an invitation. “Tonight’s Ruby Redd’s last tango up to Daintytown. You going?” At least Snoot was talking. (BNC)

As can be inferred from the context, the relationship between the speakers is not good at the moment. Snoot has reasons to expect a rejection from Walker if he invites him to go with him to a tango event. Making use of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) terminology, it can be stated that in order to prevent a face-threatening rejection from Walker, Snoot performs a highly implicit invitation which sounds more like a question for information (cf. *Come with me to the tango event tonight, Walker*). In this way, he offers the addressee a possibility not to accept his invitation without performing a blatantly face-threatening rejection.

Convention 2: *The lower the degree of addressee's will, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of inviting, and vice versa.*

Cost-Benefit. Both Leech (1983: 217) and Wierzbicka (1987:82) characterize the act of inviting as involving a benefit to the addressee and at the same time a cost to the speaker. The data in the present corpus, however, suggest a different picture: invitations do result in a benefit to the addressee, but they do not involve a cost to the speaker. In most cases, the bringing about of the specified action also involves some kind of benefit to the speaker and, on those occasions when this is not the case, the carrying out of this action cannot be properly said to be costly to the speaker. Consider the following examples:

(10) Everyone keeps saying so. It's all I hear. "Stupid, stupid, stupid." Connie scrambled up, meeting some resistance from her long skirt. "What's wrong with you?" she asked. "Oh, nothing," said Scarlet. "I'm just sick of everything." "Join the club," said Connie, but she was glad to see her weak and neurotic neighbour. Never, she swore, never would she let life mess her around the way it had messed Scarlet. "Tell Connie all about it," *she invited, relieved to have, for a time, someone other than Memet upon whom to focus her attention, someone more miserable than herself.* (BNC)

(11) *"It is really no problem at all. Honest. Come any time you want. If you want to talk come round,"* invited Darmat. (BNC)

The speaker in example (10) also benefits from the bringing about of the specified state of affairs as she herself acknowledges in the highlighted sentence (i.e. it is good for her to talk to someone who is even more miserable than she is). In (11) the benefit is clearly to the addressee, but the speaker makes it clear that it does not involve an additional cost to him (see sentence in italics).

Optionality. Wierzbicka (1987: 82), who has considered the parameter of optionality in relation to the act of inviting, claims that the addressee's freedom to decide upon the performance of the specified action is unlimited (i.e. invitations involve a high degree of optionality). The analysis of the examples in the corpus, however, suggests that the optionality of the addressee is always somehow restricted and that, in some situations, this optionality may be even further reduced. This somehow constrained optionality is due to the fact that invitations involve a benefit not only for the addressee but also for the speaker. If I invite someone to a party, for example, I do so because I want him to come. Therefore, if he decides to accept my invitation, I also benefit in some

way (i.e. from the presence of someone I like in my party). A rejection of an invitation, therefore, may bring about a negative state of affairs for the speaker (i.e. it goes against his desires). In this way, the addressee's freedom to decide upon the acceptance or rejection of an invitation is found to be constrained by the workings of the convention of politeness. Moreover, the stronger the speaker's will, the more the addressee's freedom is reduced, unless we want to overlook the principles of the convention of politeness and behave in an impolite manner. Example (8) above illustrates this correlation between speaker's will and optionality.

Convention 3: *The higher the degree of speaker's will, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Mitigation. Because invitations generally involve a benefit to both the speaker and the addressee, the required levels of mitigation are low. However, I have already pointed out in my discussion of the variable of addressee's will that the weaker the addressee's will is expected to be, the greater the need of increasing the mitigation of the act of inviting is too (see convention 2).

Speaker's Will. In contrast to Wierzbicka's (1987: 82) observations, the instances of invitations in this corpus suggest that there exists a certain degree of speaker's will in the performance of invitations. The degree of speaker's will varies greatly, but it is always present. On some occasions it rates remarkably high:

(12) "*Come in, please, come in* and share our meal," they invited. *After so much genuine persuasion*, Shelley thanked them and sat down at the table. (BNC)

In other cases, it is so low that it comes close to turning into indifference:

(13) "Come in and sit down," invited the doctor. (BNC)

The values taken on by the speaker's will parameter are usually determined by the degree to which the specified action is desirable for the speaker. As shown in the discussion of the cost-benefit variable, this usually rates from *beneficial* to *non-costly*. In (13) the doctor does not have any special interest in the addressee's performing the specified action. It is just his duty to invite him to take a seat. The performance of the action is not perceived as beneficial to the speaker, but neither is it perceived as costly, which explains the speaker's indifference. In (12), on the other hand, the speaker wants the addressee to stay and eat with him, therefore, the carrying

out of the specified action is beneficial to the speaker as well as to the addressee, which accounts for the former's stronger will.

In general, the stronger the speaker's will, the lower the addressee's optionality tends to be (see convention 3) and the more marked the tendency to strengthen the force of the act. Consider example (12) above. The high degree of speaker's will motivates the use of strengthening devices (e.g. repetitions) like those we have already seen in the expression of other illocutionary types (e.g. begging), which are similarly characterized by a high degree of speaker's will. The speaker needs to bear in mind, however, that if the degree of addressee's will is low, he will have to mitigate his act of inviting in order to overcome the addressee's expected lack of cooperation.

Convention 4: *The higher the degree of speaker's will, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of inviting, except on those occasion when the degree of addressee's will is low.*

Power. The analysis of the corpus suggests that no special power relationship between the speakers is needed in order to perform an invitation. We can invite people to do something whether they are above or below us in a hierarchy of power. As is the case with all those illocutionary types which involve some benefit to the speaker (e.g. orders, requests...), the stronger the speaker, the more obliged the addressee will feel to carry out the specified action. Refusing to do something which benefits someone who is more powerful may result in some retaliation which is best to be avoided.

Convention 5: *The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Also, as is the case with all those acts which require the performance of an action -whether beneficial or costly- on the part of the addressee (orders, request, type 1-offers...), the more powerful the addressee, the greater the need for mitigation in order to prevent the speech act from being understood as an imposition (cf. *Come for tea tomorrow and You may want to meet me for tea tomorrow*).

Convention 6: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of inviting, and vice versa.*

Social Distance. The effects of social distance on the performance of invitations are, according to the data, non-existent. Invitations can be performed whatever the social distance between the speakers. Furthermore, I have not observed any interrelation between the degree of social distance and other parameters of the ICM of inviting (e.g. mitigation, optionality, etc.). The beneficial nature of invitations, both for the speaker and the addressee, is very

probably the reason why different ratings in the social proximity of the speakers do not result in the need of higher degrees of mitigation or optionality.

Formality. For the reasons stated in relation to the social distance parameter, invitations can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context, without requiring extra mitigation as the formality of the situation increases.

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF INVITING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the addressee (active) and the speaker (passive)
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically assumed to be high See convention 1
<u>Addressee's Will</u>	Prototypically assumed to be high See convention 2
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Benefit to the addressee and benefit or non-cost to the speaker
<u>Optionality</u>	Constrained by the convention of politeness See conventions 3, 5
<u>Mitigation</u>	Prototypically low See conventions 2, 4, 6
<u>Speaker's Will</u>	Prototypically high See conventions 3, 4
<u>Power</u>	Invitations can be performed whatever the power relationship that holds between the speakers See convention 5, 6
<u>Social Distance</u>	Invitations can be performed whatever the social distance that holds between the speakers
<u>Formality</u>	Invitations can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF INVITING

Convention 1: *The higher the degree of speaker's uncertainty about his capability to carry out his share of the action, the greater the need for mitigation and tentativeness in the performance of the act of inviting.*

Convention 2: *The lower the degree of addressee's will, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of inviting, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The higher the degree of speaker's will, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 4: *The higher the degree of speaker's will, the lesser the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of inviting, except on those occasion when the degree of addressee's will is low.*

Convention 5: *The higher the degree of power of the speaker over the addressee, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 6: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of inviting, and vice versa.*

11.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Inviting

The distribution of the invitations in the corpus by sentence types is the following:

Imperative-based invitations	78 occurrences
Declarative-based invitations	16 occurrences
Interrogative-based invitations	11 occurrences
Total	105 occurrences

11.2.1. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Inviting

Invitations display a marked preference for imperative-based realization procedures. In this they resemble several other directive types (e.g. ordering, advising, warning, begging, etc.). However, once more it has been observed that those imperative sentences used in the expression of invitations exhibit certain formal peculiarities which are clearly motivated by the special features of the ICM of inviting, and which function as hints for the addressee in his interpretation of a certain imperative as an instance of invitation.

Use of Imperative Sentence Plus Level One Satellites of Company

Invitations very often request the presence and participation of the addressee in an event in which the speaker is also involved (e.g. a party, a trip, etc.). Company satellites, which specify an entity together with whom the state of affairs is effected (see Dik, 1989: 195), activate this condition:

(1) "We'll have to be up early." "What a coincidence, I'm going up there too," Tumbleweed told us. "Might bump into you eh?" "Come *with us*," I invited. (BNC)

(2) "... to say. Hey, I've got a wonderful idea. Let's become lovers. Come away *with me* for a dirty weekend." (BNC)

Examples like (2) illustrate the difference between suggestions -which put forward a joint activity of the speaker and the addressee-, and invitations - which refer to a future activity of the speaker to which the addressee can join himself.

Use of Formal Elements Signalling Speaker's Involvement

The bringing about of the state of affairs suggested by an act of inviting very often requires the speaker's cooperation, even if it is a passive one, as was argued in section 11.1. The speaker's involvement in the future action is pointed to in a very subtle manner in most instances of invitations of the corpus. Sometimes this is achieved by means of presenting the speaker as the patient of the addressee's action:

(3) It was the ad-lib Macmillan press conference that was of the most interest to Ned. "Ask *me* about any subject," I invited the audience. (BNC)

(4) "Go on, try *me*, you'll see you can trust me," Shelley invited. (BNC)

Nevertheless, the most frequently used means of pointing to the involvement of the speaker in the bringing about of the state of affairs expressed in the predication is the use of the deictic verb *come*, which implies movement towards the speaker. Since, moreover, a vast portion of the invitations uttered in everyday life interaction constitute attempts to get the addressee to attend an event generally organized by the speaker (e.g. a party, a dinner, etc.), the use of the deictic *come* is all the more appropriate in the expression of this speech act type:

(5) "*Come* for supper. Is that right?" (BNC)

(6) "*Come* Wednesday, we never we hardly spoke. I did find out that he'd been to see a solicitor erm as to furniture because some of the furniture that we had in this room and in the house..." (BNC)

The ability of the deictic *come* to signal the speaker's involvement in the future state of affairs may explain its use in the performance of the act of inviting even when the participants already share the same physical

environment. In these cases the elements *come* or *come and* seem to function simply as pointers of the speaker's role or inclusion in the future state of affairs:

(7) There was this lady who lived in the village and once frightened a kiddie to death because she said to her 'Come and look, see what I've got in the oven' And she'd done this hare but she'd cooked it with its head on. (BNC)

(8) In the photo shop. The addressee has just entered the shop. The speaker invites him: "Oh, there you are. Come and have your photo taken." (BNC)

Use of Soft Non-Impositive Intonation

Another realization procedure associated with the performance of invitations is the use of a soft, warm, non-impositive intonation. This distinguishes imperative-based invitations from other speech act types which are also performed by means of imperative sentences, but which prototypically display stronger and more impositive intonation patterns (e.g. orders, threats, etc.):

(9) "Paige, my dear child, come in, come in," he invited *warmly*, sounding almost as if he was expecting her. (BNC)

(10) "Come upstairs with me, if you want to," he invited *softly*. (BNC)

Notice that example (10) also includes a condition satellite which activates the variable of addressee's will.

Use of Repetitions and Mitigators

Invitations also involve a benefit to the speaker (see section 11.1) and, depending on the relative weight of the benefit involved, the degree of speaker's will may also vary. Where the speaker's wanting the specified state of affairs is high, we find the use of realization procedures which can make this explicit and which are typical of illocutionary act types like begging which display high degrees of speaker's will (e.g. repetitions, mitigators). The example below illustrates this:

(11) "*Come in, please, come in* and share our meal," they invited. (BNC)

11.2.2. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Inviting

Invitations require the speaker's assumption that the degree of addressee's will is high. It has been shown in section 11.1 that invitations addressed to people who do not have a desire to carry out the action specified in the predication may give way to uncomfortable situations from the point of view of social interaction: the addressee finds himself in the need of either refusing the invitation (i.e. performing a potential face-threatening act) or accepting the invitation against his will. Lack of certainty about the degree of addressee's will, therefore, requires the performance of more tentative and implicit invitations, which thus increase the addressee's optionality. Declarative-based invitations are handy in this kind of situation:

(12) "I'm throwing a party to welcome Ross. It'll be at mine, Wednesday afternoon," invited Amelie. (BNC)

In contrast to imperative-based invitations, the use of declarative sentences enables the speaker to avoid presenting the addressee as the agent of a future action (cf. *Come to my party on Wednesday*). The resulting invitation is thus more implicit and the freedom of the addressee is considerably increased.

11.2.3. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Inviting

As was the case with declarative-based invitations, those based on the use of interrogative sentences are motivated by the need of increasing the addressee's optionality (e.g. when the degree of addressee's will is unknown or expected to be low):

(13) When he finally came into the bedroom and flopped down at the edge of the bed, she was aware that he was worried and preoccupied. "Would it help to tell me about it?" she invited him. Ken poured out his problem. (BNC)

SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF INVITING

Agent Type	Imperative sentence type, level one satellites of company, use of formal elements signalling speaker's involvement (pronouns like <i>me</i> , deictic verbs like <i>come</i>)
Time of the Action	Imperative sentence type
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>can</i>)
Addressee's Will	Condition satellite (<i>if you want...</i>)
Cost-Benefit	
Optionality	Use of soft non-impositive intonation, use of <i>please</i> , interrogative sentences, condition satellites (<i>if you want...</i>)
Mitigation	Use of soft non-impositive intonation, use of <i>please</i> , interrogative sentences, condition satellites (<i>if you want...</i>)
Speaker's Will	Imperative sentence type, repetitions
Power	Use of soft non-impositive intonation, use of mitigating strategies when the addressee is more powerful than the speaker
Social Distance	
Formality	

12. THE ACT OF OFFERING

12.1. The ICM of Offering

As mentioned before, in contrast to the purely commissive view of offers found in authors like Leech (1983: 217) and Wierzbicka (1987: 191), Hancher (1979: 7) argues for the status of offers as members of a hybrid commissive-directive category:

I have already discussed the appropriateness of Hancher's category of commissive-directive illocutionary acts in section 11.1, so I shall not go over this issue again. Let it suffice to say that although Hancher's insights into the hybrid nature of acts like inviting or offering was a step forward in relation to other contemporary taxonomies (e.g. Searle, 1979), his positing of a new *ad hoc* illocutionary category of commissive-directives is debatable. As was shown in section 11.1 and in contrast to Hancher's views, the alleged members of the category of commissive-directives are not equally commissive and directive. In some cases (e.g. invitations) the directive component predominates. In other cases (e.g. offers) it is the commissive component which carries more weight in the definition of the speech act type. In short, rather than an intermediate category (i.e. commissive-directive) what seems to exist is an illocutionary continuum between the extremes of directive and commissive speech acts. As put forward in section 11.1, the act of offering is closer to the commissive end of the cline in presenting the speaker as the active agent of the action specified in the predication and the addressee as a mere passive agent whose involvement consists simply in accepting the speaker's offer. The remainder of this section is devoted to the description of the ICM of offering.

Agent type. Over three quarters of the offers included in the corpus present the speaker as the agent of the action expressed in the predication. The following examples illustrate this:

(1) “So long,” Grady said. “My hotel’s down here.” He gestured along a dimly lit alleyway running away from the river-front at tight angles. “I’ll walk you back to your hotel,” I offered. “I wouldn’t if I were you,” Grady said. (BNC)

(2) Broker to secretary: Tess McGille to see Jack Trainer.

Secretary: May I take your coat?

Broker: Yes, please. (WG)

There is, however, a group of offers which present the addressee rather than the speaker as the agent:

(3) Speaker offering a strawberry to the addressee:

- Edward: Do try one!

- Vivian: Why?

- Edward: It brings out the flavour from the champagne.

- Oh! Ok. (PW)

(4) “I’m afraid he will have left before I reach the station.” “Take my car,” Damon offered unhesitantly. (BNC)

Those instances of offers which present the addressee as the agent invariably involve the transfer of objects (i.e. *strawberry*, *car*) from the speaker to the addressee. Transferring necessarily involves both the speaker’s giving and the addressee’s taking. Because of this, those instances of offers which have to do with the transfer of objects can present either the speaker or the addressee as the agent. Compare the following examples:

(5) a. Have another biscuit

b. May I offer/give you another biscuit?

(6) a. *Have the window closed

b. May I close the window for you?

Example (5) involves the transfer of an object (i.e. biscuit) and, therefore, it is possible to present either the speaker or the addressee as the agent. The use of one or the other will activate the transferring schema through metonymy. In order for the addressee *to have another biscuit* or *to take the*

speaker's car, it is necessary that the speaker is willing to *give him another biscuit* or to *lend him his car*. Example (6), on the contrary, involves an offer which does not have to do with the transfer of an object, but simply with the performance of an action. There is no transfer involved and hence the realization procedure with the addressee as the agent (i.e. 6a) is not possible.

Nevertheless, even in those cases in which the addressee is presented as the agent (e.g. 3, 4, 5), it is implied that the speaker is also committed to the performance of an action. Thus in (3), Edward is committed to giving Vivian the strawberry, in (4) the speaker is committed to lending the addressee his car, and finally in (5) he is committed to giving him the biscuit. It can be concluded that offers always involve an action by the speaker and that in those instances of offering in which the transfer of an object is involved, both the speaker and the addressee are to perform certain actions (i.e. giving and taking). Nevertheless, the picture is even more complicated than this. In a broader sense, all instances of offering -not just those involving a transfer of objects- require the addressee to perform a certain action, namely, accepting or rejecting the speaker's offer. This is a more passive kind of action, since it merely involves a linguistic reply, but it is an action nonetheless and, because it needs to be carried out by the addressee, it gives the act of offering its directive flavour. Let us summarize the above discussion. There seem to be at least two types of offering: (1) those which involve the transfer of an object from the speaker to the addressee, and (2) those which simply involve the performance by the speaker of an action which is beneficial to the addressee. On the one hand, type (1) offers involve an action by the speaker (i.e. the action of giving), and two actions by the addressee (i.e. the action of accepting the offer and the physical action of accepting or taking the object that is being offered). On the other hand, type (2) offers involve an action by the speaker (i.e. the bringing about of a beneficial state of affairs for the addressee) and an action by the addressee (i.e. acceptance of the offer). As shown above, these meaning differences between type (1) and type (2) offers motivate also some formal differences (i.e. type (1), but not type (2), offers permit the use of imperative sentences which present the addressee as the agent).

Time of the Action. All instances of offers in the corpus refer to non-past -either present or future- actions. Examples (1) to (6) above illustrate this. The analysis of the data largely confirms Wierzbicka's observation to the effect that the act of offering seems to refer to a more immediate future than other neighbouring illocutionary categories like that of promising:

But promises refer to actions situated in distant or indefinite future and consequently they are more hypothetical than offers, which refer to the present or to the immediate future. It is much more likely that something will prevent a promise from being fulfilled than an offer from being acted out. (Wierzbicka, 1987: 191)

Agent's Capability. In general, offers require the agent to be capable of carrying out the specified action. In the case of type (2) offers only the speaker's capability needs to be considered. The person who utters an offer like (6) above (i.e. *May I close the window for you?*) is certain of his own capacity to perform the action expressed in the predication. People do not usually offer themselves to do things they are unable to do, because this would result in a violation of point (b) of the convention of politeness (see section 11.1).

In the case of type (1) offers, together with the capability of the speaker, it is also necessary to take into account that of the addressee (i.e. if the latter will be physically able to accept the object we are offering to him). It would not be very appropriate, for instance, to offer a piece of cake to a person suffering from diabetes, or a car to someone who does not have a driving licence. In those cases in which it is mutually manifest to both participants that the addressee lacks capacity to accept the offer, the performance of the act will be regarded as little considerate or altogether impolite.

In sum, it is necessary that both the speaker and the addressee are capable of performing the actions which they are expected to carry out in relation to the act of offering. Moreover, as is the case with promises and invitations, lack of certainty about the speaker's capability to perform the offered action may require a higher degree of mitigation and tentativeness in the performance of the offer. There are no examples in the corpus which would help us to confirm this hypothesis. However, it is easy to come up with some examples. An offer like *I'll close the window for you* suggests an optimal degree of certainty on the part of the speaker about his ability to perform the future action. However, an offer like *I might have a chance to have a look at your car before I go* (as an offer to fix the addressee's car) reveals the speaker's lack of certainty about his own ability to perform the action expressed in the predication. Let us include these facts in the first convention of the ICM of offering:

Convention 1: *The higher the degree of speaker's uncertainty about his capability to perform the offered action, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of offering.*

Addressee's Will. The speaker who utters an offer does not know whether the addressee wants him to carry out the action expressed in the predication. In general, he has reasons to believe that the degree of addressee's will is going to be high, since he is working under the assumption that what he is offering to give or do is beneficial to the addressee (see discussion of the cost-benefit parameter below). However, the speaker does not always entertain the same degree of certainty about the degree of addressee's will which, on many occasions, is completely unknown to the speaker:

(7) “I think Mary Ann and Brian would like that. Where is Brian, anyway? Has Jon talked to him?” “He’s working,” said Michael. “I *could* put Jon in Burke’s old room,” offered Mrs. Madrigal. “*If you don’t mind, that is?*” “What makes you think he’d want to stay in a house with a kidnapped anchorwoman in the basement?” “We could ask and find out.” (BNC)

The speaker’s lack of certainty about the addressee’s will motivates, as in example (7) above, highly tentative and mitigated instances of offer. Notice the elements in italics in (7). On other occasions, the speaker is completely sure that the addressee’s will is high:

(8) Felipe was reading a book in Spanish in one corner of the room. “Say, where can a man find a cold beer hereabouts?” Albright asked him. “Come on,” Felipe offered, “I’ll take you into Muelle.” (BNC)

Felipe’s offer has been prompted by his interlocutor’s previous question, which instantiates his willingness to be shown a nice place to have a beer. Those offers which follow previous requests or wishings from the addressee tend to be little mitigated, resembling the category of promises, as expressed in the following convention of the ICM of offering:

Convention 2: *The lower the degree of speaker’s certainty regarding the degree of addressee’s will, the greater the need for mitigation and tentativeness in the performance of the act of offering, and vice versa.*

Cost-Benefit. The person who makes an offer either knows for certain that what he intends to do is beneficial to the addressee -this usually happens if the latter has overtly informed him in this connection-, or works under the assumption that the action he intends to carry out is beneficial to the addressee. Offering to do something which is clearly negative for the addressee would rather be a peripheral ironic instance of the threatening category:

(9) Would you like me to crush your head against the wall??

Because the concept of *benefit* is subjective in nature (i.e. what is believed to be beneficial by some people may appear as costly to others), the performance of offers is usually tied to the use of interrogative sentences which allow the speaker to enquire into the addressee’s opinion before overtly committing himself to the performance of a certain action (see section 12.2).

Only on those occasions when the speaker is certain that the addressee will agree on the beneficial nature of a given action is he entitled to perform less tentative offers (see example (8) above).

Optionality. Because both the speaker and the addressee are expected to carry out some action in relation to the act of offering, I shall consider the optionality associated with either of them.

As far as the speaker is concerned, his degree of freedom not to carry out the action which he himself has put forward is constrained, as is the case with promises, by point (b) of the convention of politeness (see section 11.1). By presenting a state of affairs which is beneficial to the addressee, the speaker creates some expectations, for which he becomes responsible. Not meeting those expectations would give rise to a negative state of affairs for the addressee (i.e. disappointment) and, according to the convention of politeness, we should not bring about negative states of affairs if we want to behave politely. The addressee's freedom to accept or reject the offer is not so constrained. Since the benefit is to himself, he is free to decide whether he wants the speaker to carry out the specified action or not. Nevertheless, he is invariably expected to provide the speaker with either a rejection or an acceptance in the form of a reply. Ignoring the speaker's offer by not responding to it would also count as a violation of the convention of politeness. The speaker who makes an offer is showing concern for the addressee. When we are concerned for someone, we expect this concern to be reciprocal. An offer which meets no response may be interpreted as lack of concern for the speaker on the part of the addressee, which would create a negative state of affairs for the speaker, and count as impolite behaviour.

Mitigation. Because offers prototypically seek the addressee's benefit, they do not need to be highly mitigated. Nevertheless, there exist some situations in which the degree of mitigation of the act of offering needs to be increased. I have already discussed one of them above in relation to the speaker's lack of certainty regarding the addressee's degree of will (see convention 2). Likewise, the degree of mitigation of the act of offering tends to increase in those situations in which the addressee is more powerful than the speaker, or the social distance between the speakers is large. Let us see some examples:

(10) In the flight to L.A., the stewardess notices Joe and approaches.

-Stewardess: Can I get you anything, sir?

-Joe: No, thank you. No, I changed my mind. Some club soda, please.

-Stewardess: Alright. (JVV)

(11) Secretary to her boss: How about some coffee? (WG)

(12) Young Chief stroked the few scanty hairs on his upper lip, hiding his mouth. "I can arrange a rescue," Abasio offered, somewhat disconcerted by the Young Chief's manner. (BNC)

Examples (10) to (12) depict situations in which the social distance between the speakers is considerable and, moreover, the addressee's social power is greater than the speaker's. Notice the corresponding use of mitigating devices such as interrogative sentences, tentativeness (*How about...?*), implicitness (*I can do X*), etc. The use of less mitigated expressions in those contexts (e.g. *I'll bring you a coffee, I'll arrange a meeting*) would have constrained the addressee's optionality by not giving him a chance to reject the offer without openly confronting the principles of the convention of politeness. But it has already been repeatedly pointed out that it is necessary to increase the optionality of the addressee in situations in which the social distance is large or the addressee's power is greater than the speaker's. This explains the greater appropriateness of more highly mitigated instances of offer in these situations. Let us capture these insights in the following conventions:

Convention 3: *The larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need of mitigation in the performance of the act of offering.*

Convention 4: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need of mitigation in the performance of the act of offering.*

Speaker's Will. There are offers which stem from the speaker's own volition. These usually correspond to scenarios in which the social distance between the participants is small. In this case the degree of speaker's will is also high. Nothing forces the speaker to perform the offer except his own desire to be useful to others. On the contrary, there are offers which the speaker is forced to perform, even against his will, because they are part of his social role. Consider, for instance, examples (10) and (11) above. In both cases it is part of the stewardess' and the secretary's jobs to perform offers. Logically, their degree of will is lower.

Power, Social Distance, and Formality. The production of offers is not restricted to any special configuration regarding the power, social distance, or formality parameters. Whatever is the value taken on by any of these variables, it is possible to perform an act of offering. Conventions 3 and 4, however,

summarize some of the correlations that take place between the variables of social distance and power, on the one hand, and the parameter of mitigation, on the other, with respect to the act of offering.

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF OFFERING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the speaker (active) and the addressee (passive)
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically high See convention 1
<u>Addressee's Will</u>	Prototypically assumed to be high See convention 2
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Prototypically offers involve a benefit to the addressee and a cost to the speaker
<u>Optionality</u>	Constrained by the convention of politeness
<u>Mitigation</u>	Prototypically low See conventions 3, 4
<u>Speaker's Will</u>	Prototypically high
<u>Power</u>	Invitations can be performed whatever the power relationship that holds between the speakers See convention 4
<u>Social Distance</u>	Offers can be performed whatever the social distance that holds between the speakers See convention 3
<u>Formality</u>	Offers can be performed whatever the degree of formality of the context

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF OFFERING

Convention 1: *The higher the degree of speaker's uncertainty about his capability to perform the offered action, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of offering.*

Convention 2: *The lower the degree of speaker's certainty regarding the degree of addressee's will, the greater the need for mitigation and tentativeness in the performance of the act of offering, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The larger the social distance between the speakers, the greater the need of mitigation in the performance of the act of offering.*

Convention 4: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need of mitigation in the performance of the act of offering.*

12.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Offering

Interrogative-based offers	61 occurrences
Declarative-based offers	27 occurrences
Imperative-based offers	17 occurrences
Total	105 occurrences

12.2.1. Interrogative-Based Realization Procedures for Offering

Taking into account the meaning conditions which make up the ICM of offering (see section 12.1), it is not surprising that this illocutionary type should show some preference for the use of interrogative-based realization procedures. Offers are conditional. In other words, the bringing about of the states of affairs specified in the predication will only take place if the addressee accepts the offers. This conditional nature is best expressed by means of interrogative sentences which present a (partially) open proposition which will be left like that unless the addressee accepts. Moreover, the addressee's acceptance is usually motivated by basic factors like his liking, wanting, or finding the proposed action necessary. Several of the offer instances in our corpus question these factors:

(1) Person (1) cannot start her car. Person (2) knocks on the side window. Person (1) rolls down the window.

-Person (2): Do you need some help?

-Person (1): No, I... Well, yeah, thanks. (SI)

(2) Conversation between two friends.

- Ely: Do you want some tea or something?

- Max: Sure, that'll be great. (GF)

(3) A couple at home.

- Annie: Would you like a glass of chocolate milk?

- Alvy: Hey, what am I -your son? Whatta you mean? I-I came over TV.
(AH)

These questions about the addressee's desire or necessity can be further specified in order to instantiate one of the most characteristic meaning conditions of the ICM of offering, namely, that it is the speaker who will bring about the state of affairs which is the object of the addressee's wishes or necessity. Consider the following examples:

(4) Butch, still trying to chase the cobwebs away, sees on TV Hell's Angels tear-assin' through a Vietnamese prison camp.

-Butch: What are you watching?

-Fabian: A motorcycle movie, I'm not sure the name.

-Butch: Are you watchin' it?

-Fabian: In a way. Why? Would you like *me* to switch it off?

-Butch: Would you please?

She reaches over and turns off the TV (PF).

(5) She goes to the entranceway and fingers a switch on the wall.

-Patricia: This is the light switch. Did Mike show you how to work the bathroom?

-Joe: Yeah.

-Patricia: Good. Do you want *me* to turn off the light while I'm going?

-Joe: Okay. (JVV)

The pronouns in italics in (4) and (5) present the speaker as the agent of the specified action, while the questions themselves (i.e. *would you...?*, *do you...?*) point to the addressee as the potential beneficiary of that action. Moreover, the use of interrogative sentences, which put forward a proposition as open, constitutes a hint towards the existence of a high degree of optionality on the part of the addressee. In sum, these types of realization procedure activate most of the meaning conditions of the ICM of offering and, therefore, they are fairly codified means of performing offers.

Other interrogative-based realization procedures for the act of offering focus on the variable of the agent's capability, and in so doing they present the speaker as the potential agent of a future action. The use of interrogative sentences of this type in conjunction with beneficiary satellites referring to the addressee is yet another highly codified means of making offers:

(6) Can I get *you* something to drink? (BNC)

(7) Interior of the Iguana Motel. Sailor and Lula's room -night.

-Sailor: Man, that barf smell don't fade fast.

Lula goes right to the bed and flops down on it.

-Sailor: Anything I can do *for you*?

-Lula: No, I don't think so, Sail. I just need to lie down. (WAT)

Finally, interrogative-based realization procedures allow the speaker to express a degree of mitigation and tentativeness which is particularly useful in those cases in which he is uncertain about the degree of the addressee's will. Consider the following example:

(8) "*How about* I take you to dinner -unless you've made other arrangements, of course?" he offered. (BNC)

The tentativeness and optionality typical of the realization procedure *how about*, often used in the performance of the act of suggesting, is used in (8) together with a first person subject -presenting the speaker as the agent of a future action- and a second person object -presenting the addressee as the beneficiary of the action, and thus, activating the ICM of offering. When used in the expression of suggestions, the *how about* realization procedure is usually followed by a verb phrase and no subject is specified (e.g. *How about going to the theater tonight?*).

12.2.2. Declarative-Based Realization Procedures for Offering

Declarative sentences do not convey the same degree of optionality as interrogative sentences and, therefore, they are not so well adapted as the latter for the production of a speech act type (i.e. offers) which is characterized by its lack of imposition on the addressee (i.e. the addressee is free to accept or reject the speaker's offer). In general, those instances of offers which are expressed by means of a declarative sentence correspond to situations in

which the speaker is certain that the addressee's desire to be addressed such an offer is strong. The expression of offers in situations of this type is identical to that of some kinds of promise. This is only natural since prototypical promises take the addressee's will for granted. In the aforementioned contexts, therefore, the differences between the ICMs of offering and promising are neutralized. Consider the following example:

(9) "I've only brought enough clothes with me to last until after the marathon tomorrow. I can hardly travel to Amsterdam in a vest and running shorts." "I'll lend you some clothes," Whitlock offered. (BNC)

On the basis of the addressee's previous statement, the speaker has reasons to believe that the addressee's will to be offered some clothes will be strong. This explains some of the peculiarities of his offer. If compared to any of the interrogative-based instances of offering in section 12.2.1, the offer in (9) is less mitigated in the sense that it gives the speaker a much smaller chance to fail to carry out the offer. Due to this lack of optionality, the interpretation of (9) seems to shade into a promise.

The use of declarative sentences with a first person subject followed by the modal *can* returns instances of offers with a higher degree of optionality, as they can be interpreted as mere assertions of speaker's capability:

(10) Young Chief stroked the few scanty hairs on his upper lip, hiding his mouth. "I can arrange a rescue," Abasio offered, somewhat disconcerted by the Young Chief's manner. (BNC)

(11) "I could put Jon in Burke's room," offered Mrs. Madrigal. "*If you don't mind*, that is?" (BNC)

Notice also the use of the condition satellite in (11) which contributes to increase the degree of freedom of the addressee.

12.2.3. Imperative-Based Realization Procedures for Offering

The most widely used imperative-based realization procedure for the performance of acts of offering consists in the use of the *let* particle followed by a first person object pronoun (i.e. *me*, *us*) which presents the speaker as the potential agent of the future action if the addressee gives his consent:

(12) Secretary: Miss McGille. Good afternoon. Let me take your coat.

-Miss McGill: Thank you. (WG)

Note also that in (12) the use of the second person possessive adjective (i.e. *your*) points to the addressee as the beneficiary of the action. In order to make this meaning condition of the ICM of offering more explicit, it is also possible to use beneficiary satellites with the imperative-based realization procedure under scrutiny:

(13) Let me open the window *for you*

Finally, those offers which have to do with the transfer of an object from the speaker to the addressee can be expressed by means of average imperatives (without the particle *let*):

(14) "Take my bike, and keep it for as long as you may need it," Samantha offered eagerly. (BNC)

SUMMARY OF REALIZATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF OFFERING

Agent Type	Pronouns (can <i>I</i> do X for you?, would you like <i>me</i> to do X?), use of <i>let me/let us</i>
Time of the Action	Non-past verb tense
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>can</i>)
Addressee's Will	Use of interrogative sentences (<i>would you like me to do X?, do you want me to do X?</i>)
Cost-Benefit	Beneficiary satellites signalling the addressee as the beneficiary of the action (can I get <i>you</i> X?, anything I can do <i>for you</i> ...)
Optionality	Interrogative sentences (<i>would you like me to do X?, do you want me to do X, can I get you X?</i>), condition satellites (<i>if you don't mind</i> ...)
Mitigation	Interrogative sentences (<i>would you like me to do X?, do you want me to do X, can I get you X?</i>), condition satellites (<i>if you don't mind</i> ...)
Speaker's Will	Use of <i>let me/let us</i>
Power	Use of mitigating strategies (past modals, condition satellites) when the addressee is more powerful than the speaker
Social Distance	Use of mitigating strategies (past modals, condition satellites) when there exists a large social distance between the speakers
Formality	

13. THE ACT OF PROMISING

13.1. The ICM of Promising

The number of specific studies on the description of the meaning conditions of directive speech acts -other than requests- is scarce. In the case of commissive illocutions, like promises, this trend is even more marked. The factors that may explain this bias towards the study of certain types of illocutions in favour of others are varied. To begin with, promises have been found to be, in general, less frequent than requests both in children's and adults' interactions (see Dore, 1974; D'Andrade and Wish, 1985; Bernicot et al., 1993). It may be speculated that, since requests involve a benefit to the speaker, they have very probably been more directly connected with the survival of the species from the most remote times of human history than commissive acts, -which are beneficial to others. This would explain the higher frequency of occurrence of the former. Furthermore, due to their costly nature, requests are intrinsically linked to the implementation of mitigation and politeness strategies, which makes them a more attractive object of study for linguists. Whether for these or other reasons, the fact is that speech act theorists have shown a marked preference for the study of directives and, more specifically of requests. Commissives, in general, and promises, in particular, have received much less attention in the literature. As pointed out by Bernicot and Laval (1996), the few studies on promises that there are have been conducted in research on the philosophy of language in the early times of speech act theory (see Searle, 1969, 1979). As a matter of fact, Searle's (1969) satisfaction conditions for the act of promising have been largely unquestioned -with the exception of the controversy aroused around the sincerity condition- and scarcely elaborated.⁶⁹ In this connection, two slightly

69. Gibbs and Delaney (1987) and Laval (1992) claim to have demonstrated the importance of the preparatory condition (regarding the listener's wishes) and the sincerity condition in the comprehension of promises by adults. Other authors (e.g. Van der Auwera, 1978; Ruiz de Mendoza, 1994b) argue against the relevance of the sincerity condition for the concept of promising on the basis of the common occurrences of insincere and broken promises.

different proposals (cf. Leech, 1983, and Wierzbicka, 1987) will be considered. Nevertheless, on the whole, most subsequent studies on the act of promising, which have been carried out mainly within the field of language acquisition and development, largely accept Searle's description of this speech act category without further discussion (see Astington, 1988a, 1988b, 1990; Laval, 1992).

For Searle (1969: 57) a promise represents a commitment on the part of the speaker to carry out a future action (propositional content condition). Moreover, the addressee should want the speaker to do so (preparatory condition), and the speaker should have the intention of performing the action (sincerity condition). Finally, the utterance of a promise puts the speaker under the obligation of bringing about the state of affairs expressed in the predication (essential condition).

Leech (1983) accepts the relevance of both the propositional content condition and the sincerity condition for the performance of promises, as defined by Searle. Nevertheless, Leech's (1983) description of this illocutionary category differs from Searle's in two main respects: he does not include in his definition of promises the essential condition, and he offers a slightly different formulation of the preparatory condition. Unfortunately, Leech does not offer an explanation of the exclusion of the essential condition. Whether this is due to the sketchy and mainly programmatic nature of his description of illocutionary categories, or to the firm belief that the performance of a promise does not necessarily place the speaker under an obligation to carry out the specified action is beyond us. However, I agree with Leech that it is possible to define the act of promising, and to distinguish it from other commissive and directive speech acts, without making reference to the concept of obligation. Moreover, I shall argue that the obligation which is usually associated with promises arises from the interplay between the expectations aroused in the addressee by a promise and the working of a general principle of social interaction. In the same way, it is possible to define the act of ordering without making reference to the concept of imposition, which nevertheless will be present in the addressee's understanding of this speech act type arising from the superiority or greater power which characterizes the speaker who utters an order.

With respect to the preparatory condition for promises (i.e. the addressee would prefer the speaker to carry out the specified action to his not doing so), Leech offers a less psychological and more factual version in terms of cost and benefit: the performance of a promise presupposes that the action involved will be beneficial to the addressee. From this it can be inferred that the addressee will want the speaker to perform the action, and on most occasions this turns out to be the case. But this is not a necessary precondition for the performance of this illocutionary act. One can promise to do something as

long as it is beneficial to the addressee even if one does not know whether the addressee wants him to do so, or even if one knows that the addressee does not want him to do so -in spite of the potential benefit. Consider the following utterance:

(1) Husband: Do you like that fur coat?

Wife: Listen to me, I don't want you to buy me a fur coat, you have other things to worry about. I am not even into fur.

Husband: Darling, I promise I'll buy you a fur coat.

In a situation in which the couple is going through economic difficulties, the wife does not want her husband to spend money on a fur coat because there are other priorities on the household list (i.e. the addressee would rather the speaker did not carry out the action specified in the predication). In spite of knowing that the addressee does not want him to carry out the action, the speaker feels himself entitled to utter a promise under the assumption that his action is beneficial to the addressee, even if she does not recognize it as such.

In sum, as can be observed from the promise instances that make up the corpus, on most occasions the speaker cannot be completely sure that the addressee wants him to carry out a certain action; all he can do is to presume that this will be the case on the basis of his assumption that the future action is beneficial to the addressee. Therefore, the corpus largely confirms Leech's view of the preparatory condition for promises in terms of cost-benefit against Searle's, which involves the speaker's knowing in advance the addressee's preferences -something which is not always possible.

Another account of promises which differs slightly from Searle's is the one put forward by Wierzbicka (1987). As this author points out, one of the most intriguing aspects of promises is related to the *obligation* which this act imposes on the speaker. For Searle (1969: 60), this obligation was part of the illocutionary purpose of the act of promising (i.e. "the point or purpose of a promise is that it is an undertaking of an obligation by the speaker to do something"). As opposed to this, Wierzbicka (1987: 207) does not see the obligation undertaken in uttering a promise as an aim in itself, but rather as a way of achieving the real point of an act of promising (i.e. to cause the addressee to believe that he, the speaker, will perform the act). She believes that in uttering a promise, the speaker is "appealing to a particular social *game*, a game which allows people to use their personal credibility in general to strengthen the credibility of one particular undertaking (Wierzbicka, 1987: 207)." In other words, with a promise, the speaker does not undertake an

obligation, but rather causes the addressee to believe that the speaker will do something, which is guaranteed by his personal credibility. Hence it is the risk of losing his personal credibility which binds the speaker, not the act of promising itself.

The data in the corpus supports Wierzbicka's suggestions to a large extent. As can be seen in section 13.2, none of the realization procedures for the act of promising instantiates the idea of obligation. Therefore, it can be concluded that this concept is certainly not a component of the semantics of the act of promising, but rather a by-product of its performance. Wierzbicka's explanation of the origin of the obligation arising from the production of a promise seems to be very much influenced by Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. The loss of credibility to which Wierzbicka refers is just a particular case of loss of positive face. I agree with her that the obligation inherent in promises emerges from a certain social *game*, but in my opinion the loss of the speaker's credibility is only one part of such game, and on its own cannot explain the binding imposed on the speaker in all cases. An extremely individualistic person, who does not care about what others think about him, would not be highly concerned about losing his credibility. Nevertheless, if he utters a promise, he will be equally bound by it. In order to explain the reasons why this is so, it is necessary to turn once more to the convention of politeness. The essence of the act of promising boils down to the speaker manifesting his intention to do something which is beneficial to the addressee. Therefore, the utterance of a promise raises some expectations in the addressee. Shattering the addressee's expectations -which have been created by the speaker himself through the utterance of a promise- would count as a case of non-observance of point (b) of the convention (see section 11.1) and would, as a consequence, be considered impolite. Hence the binding or obligation that the person who utters a promise feels upon himself to perform the action expressed in the predication, if he wants to comply with the convention of politeness.

On the basis of this discussion, I may conclude that the dimension of obligation traditionally associated with promises is not a meaning condition of the act itself, but rather the result of the interplay between the utterance of a promise (i.e. the expression of the speaker's intention to carry out an action which is beneficial to the addressee) and principle (b) of social interaction included in the convention of politeness. Non-observance of this principle would result in an absence of obligation, but at the same time it would give rise to impolite unreliable promises. This view of promises and the related concept of obligation allows us to include within this illocutionary category those instances in which the speaker utters a promise without intending to carry out the specified action. The speaker's goal in uttering a promise may be to talk the addressee into doing something in his benefit (i.e. the speaker's benefit). For instance, the speaker may produce a conditional promise, like *If*

you get me those files, I'll think about your promotion, in order to achieve his goal of getting hold of certain files, but with no intention of carrying out the promised action. That is to say, he is using the act of promising as a persuasive strategy in the following way:

“I tell you that if you do X for me, I will do Y for you. Y is beneficial to you. You think that I will be observing the principles of politeness that exist in our society and that, therefore, I would not say that I am going to do Y for you if I don't intend to do so. Nevertheless, as a matter of fact I am taking advantage of your belief in my observance of those principles just to get you to do X, but I do not feel under the obligation to observe those principles. In fact I am using them to achieve my goal: to get you to do X. Therefore, mine is an insincere promise which puts me under no obligation. In turn, I know that the price I pay for this is that of not being polite (i.e. I am not conforming to the principles of social interaction of our community).”

It is interesting to include this discussion on some of the meaning conditions of promises (i.e. preparatory, essential), as defined by Searle (1969), and revised by Leech (1983) and Wierzbicka (1987), prior to the description of the ICM of promising for the following two reasons. In the first place, it facilitates further reference and comparison of the present description of this illocutionary act with those previous accounts. And, in the second place, because it is necessary to clarify the reasons why the concept of obligation, closely linked to the act of promising since Searle (1969), is not included in this description. The remainder of this section is devoted to the description of the ICM of promising based on the analysis of the corpus data.

Agent Type. The great majority of the instances of promising in the corpus (ninety one out of one hundred and two entries) present the speaker as the agent of the action stated in the predication:

(2) They held each other a last time in the darkness. “*I'll* come back. *I'll* come back for you one day soon,” he promised. (BNC)

In some cases, the agent of the action includes both the speaker and the addressee. The following example illustrates this:

(3) [...] had wanted to ask whether this was where he had thought he saw movement higher up the hill, but Chet held a finger to his lips and shook his head. “Later, *we will* talk,” he promised, but he had not returned and now, surprisingly, although invited, he was not here to watch the hunt. (BNC)

These are cases in which the action which benefits the addressee involves his own participation. In (3) above, the addressee wants to hold a conversation with the speaker. But this action involves his cooperation too.

Moreover, as pointed out by Boguslawski (1983), it is also possible to find promises in which the agent is neither the speaker, nor the addressee, but someone else different from the former two. He offers the following example:

(4) I promise you that Jane will do it.

Nevertheless, I agree with Wierzbicka's remark that in promises like those illustrated by (3) and (4), there is always the implicit idea that the speaker will do something to ensure that the predicated action takes place. In (3), the speaker will do something so that the conversation with the addressee can be held, and in (4), he will do something to ensure that Jane carries out the action. Therefore, even in these cases, it is legitimate, as Wierzbicka (1987: 205) remarks, to include a component referring to the speaker as the agent of a future act in the description of the category of promising.

Finally, there are instances of promising in which no agent is specified (i.e. passive constructions are used):

(5) "But it illustrated the need for tighter security," he said. "There will be more checkpoints along the roads and more security with this groups," he promised travellers. (BNC)

(6) The man repeated Drummond's conversation with Chet in English as though he had learned it by rote. "You will be rewarded," Davichand promised him. (BNC)

The non-explicitation of the agent who is to bring about the state of affairs specified in the predication may be the consequence of one of several factors. It may be the case that the identity of the agent is already obvious from the context of the utterance, and that, therefore, the speaker does not feel the need to invest time and effort in making it explicit once more. However, it can also be the case that for some reasons (e.g. low degree of speaker's will, high cost of the action, etc.) the speaker wishes to increase his own optionality. In other words, he wants to leave himself a way out, a possibility to refuse to carry out the specified action. One way of doing this is through the non-explicitation of the agent's identity. I shall come back to this aspect of the ICM of promising in the discussion of the optionality variable below. However, as was the case with examples (3) and (4), those promises expressed by means of impersonal constructions also imply the idea that the speaker will do

something to ensure that the predicated action takes place. Consequently, it can be concluded that the act of promising prototypically has the speaker as the agent of the predicated action.

Time of the Action. All instances of promising in the corpus involve a non-past action. Prototypically the non-past action tends to refer to the future (see examples 2-6 above). However, some of the entries in the corpus refer to the present. For example:

(7) “(...) with this sort of thing, as you know, and I’d be glad to come over and talk to you about it, if you...” “Would you?” he sounded pathetically grateful. “I’m leaving right now,” I promised him. Faye offered to make the necessary calls to postpone my meetings, and I left the office... (BNC)

In order to account for promises like (7), I shall describe prototypical acts of promising as involving a non-past action.

Agent’s Capability. According to the data in the corpus, the person who utters a promise either knows that he has the capacity to carry out the promised action or works under the assumption that he will be able to do so. Sometimes the speaker has good reasons to believe in his capacity:

(8) -M21: Why do they agree with me? Why do seventy-year-old people?

-M25: *I can answer you and I will answer you.*

-M21: Well why why are th Why do they like it? Why do they agree with me?

-M25: You’ve slandered a whole class of people by the behaviour of a few. (BNC)

In (8) the speaker’s capacity to carry out the promised action (i.e. to answer the addressee’s question) depends upon his knowledge. He is certain that he has the necessary knowledge to answer the question and, therefore, that he is capable of performing the specified action. In this case, the speaker does not work under the assumption that he has the capacity to perform the action, but rather he is certain that he has such capacity. On other occasions, the speaker just hopes that he will be able to bring about the promised state of affairs even though he is not a hundred per cent sure about the outcome:

(9) And the Soviets are right behind them. They want to spread their goddamn revolution all through Central America. “Well, I’ve got news. They’re not going to get away with it,” Casey promised. “And the Cubans right along with them. The President wants this done. And if Ronald Reagan wants it done, then, by God, this agency will be fulfilled.” (BNC)

The speaker in (9) is promising to stop the communist revolution in Central America. Her promise is based on the assumption that she will be capable of stopping them, and such an assumption is in turn based on the knowledge that she can count on the backing of the world’s leading country (i.e. USA) to achieve this goal.

Finally, there are several examples of promises in which the speaker’s capacity to bring about the promised state of affairs is unknown to himself, because it is dependent on the help or actions of a third party and/or on external factors beyond his control. Even on these occasions, the speaker works under the assumption that all difficulties will be overcome and that he will eventually be able to carry out the action:

(10) There was something in the attitude that bothered him. “Thank you,” he told her. “I’m here and we’re planning.” “And you’ll get action,” Eva promised him self-consciously. “If Gil planned it, it’s really planned. She bent and kissed Gil lightly on the forehead. (BNC)

(11) They held each other a last time. “I’ll come back. I’ll come back for you one day soon. God keep you. I love you.” Then, as they had agreed, Anthony walked not towards Kranenberg but southward. He had his ‘tally’, his prisoner of war identification tag. (BNC)

The materialization of the state of affairs promised in (10) is dependent on the correct functioning of Gil’s plans (i.e. it is dependent on factors which are external to the speaker’s capacity and beyond his control). In (11), the speaker makes a promise, the fulfilment of which, given the war context in which it has been uttered, is also very much dependent on external factors. In both cases, however, the speaker works under the assumption that all problems and difficulties will be overcome and that he will be capable of performing the action.

High degrees of uncertainty about his capacity to fulfil his promise or more pessimistic outlooks on such ability may motivate conditional promises like the following:

(12) If I find the shop, I will bring you a nice chocolate box. I don't know if you've heard of boiled cream and melted chocolate mixed together. (BNC)

Addressee's Will. As was argued in the introduction to this section it is not always possible for the speaker to determine whether the addressee wants him to bring about a certain state of affairs or not. If the action which is to be the object of his promise is beneficial to the addressee, the speaker will be justified in assuming that the degree of addressee's will is going to be high. Still there is a margin for error: what some people deem beneficial others believe to be costly. In conclusion, the speaker cannot be completely certain that the addressee wants him to perform a certain action unless the latter has explicitly told him so (i.e. promises which follow requests by the addressee). The sentences in italics in the following example make it explicit that the degree of addressee's will is high:

(13) "*You didn't promise.*" "Okay. I won't do anything to hurt your boy. And business is business. We'll work together as we always have." "*Promise?*" "I promise." (BNC)

Nevertheless, this is not always the case. Sometimes the speaker ventures to utter promises without having this certainty and simply assumes that a certain state of affairs is beneficial to the addressee and that everyone likes to be the beneficiary of a positive action. This may lead to the addressee's rejection of promises when the specified state of affairs is not desirable to him:

(14) I buy you a flat in town
- I don't want that....

Under the light of example (14), Searle's preparatory condition (i.e. the addressee would prefer the speaker's doing X to his not doing X) seems too strong and I would rather formulate a weaker version in which the speaker *simply works under the assumption* that the addressee's will is high. Whether it is high in actual fact or not cannot always be anticipated by the speaker, and he does not necessarily have to wait to be sure about the addressee's will to perform a promise. It is enough if the speaker has some grounds to assume that it will please the addressee, as in example (14) above.

Cost-Benefit. Over half the instances of promises in the corpus involve a benefit to the addressee and a cost to the speaker (examples (2)-(13) illustrate

this attribute of the ICM of promising). The frequent occurrence of promises of this type is responsible for their status as stereotypical cases of the category. Searle (1969), Leech (1983), and Wierzbicka (1987) focus their analyses of promises on those occurrences which display these features without considering other possibilities. The present corpus reveals that prototypical promises may also be beneficial to a third party, to the addressee and a third party, or even to both speaker and addressee. Consider the following examples:

(15) I should not have left it so late before telling him I was struggling. "I'll repay him by downing Norwich," promised the striker. (BNC)

(16) Father is going to the war against the Russians.

-Father: I'm worried about T (a dog)

-Son: Why?

-Father: She doesn't know what's going on. I think she thinks I'm going away forever.

-Son: I'll take care of her.

-Father: You will?

-Son: Yeah!

-Father: You promise?

-Son: Yeah! I promise. (CT)

(17) Rush's testimonial is scheduled for December, but he promised: "I will be concentrating everything on my football. *I am even more determined to get it right on the pitch this season, because I don't want anyone saying that Ian Rush is more interested in ...*" (BNC)

Example (15) displays a third party different from both the speaker and the addressee (i.e. *him*) as the beneficiary of the action expressed in the predication. In (16), the beneficiaries of the action are both the addressee (i.e. the father, who sees his wishes fulfilled), and a third party (i.e. the dog which will receive the child's cares). Finally, in (17) both the speaker and the addressee will benefit from the bringing about of the specified state of affairs: if Rush concentrates on his playing and does better, he (i.e. the speaker) will gain prestige and the addressee (i.e. football supporters) will be able to see better football.

Furthermore, those instances of promising in which the benefit is to both the speaker and the addressee give rise to higher degrees of speaker's will - because the speaker also benefits-, and consequently, lower degrees of

optionality and mitigation. Notice how the speaker's stronger will is explicitly expressed in the sentences in italics in (17) and how his promise is not mitigated in any sort of way (cf. *I will...*, *I will probably...*, *I'll try to...*, *If I can, I will...*, etc.). There is, however, at least one exception to this generalization: those situations in which the speaker is not sure about his capacity to carry out the action. In these cases, even though his degree of will remains high, we are bound to see some mitigation in the performance of the promise. Look at example (18) below:

(18) "Those horrible murders, and now your father feeling bad. But he'll be all right. Believe me." "I'll try," Robyn promised. Still, the haunting thoughts refused to go away. (BNC)

Robyn's bringing about of the state of affairs expressed in her promise may result in a benefit to herself -she will feel better-, and also the addressee (i.e. her mother), who is trying to cheer her up and would badly like her to feel better. Since the speaker also benefits from the performance of the action, we would expect high degrees of speaker's will -as is the case-, and low levels of mitigation in the expression of the promise, as in (17) above. However, the fact that the speaker is not certain about her capacity to carry out the specified action leads her to the performance of a highly tentative and mitigated promise (i.e. *I'll try*). The first convention of the ICM of promising summarizes all the logical consequences of having the speaker as one of the beneficiaries - together with the addressee- of the action expressed in the predication:

Convention 1: *The degree of speaker's will increases and the degree of mitigation decreases on those occasions when not only the addressee, but also the speaker is the beneficiary of the act of promising. Nevertheless, the degree of mitigation will increase on those occasions when the speaker is not certain about his capacity to perform the specified action, and vice versa, regardless of the nature of the beneficiary.*

Optionality. As opposed to directives, the optionality of promises and commissives in general is related to the speaker rather than the addressee, since it is the former who is usually the agent of the action. Moreover, since promises always involve a benefit to the addressee, the freedom of the speaker to perform the predicated action will be constrained by the convention of politeness in the way explained in the introduction to this section. Furthermore, if the addressee has overtly communicated his desire that a certain state of affairs is brought about, then the degree of speaker's optionality will be further constrained. Consider the following instance of promising:

(19) But the duchess phoned vice-chancellor Tom Husband and asked: “Do you want me to come?” When he replied: “We would love you to be here,” the duchess promised: “Then I will be.” (BNC)

If the speaker fails to fulfil her promise in (19), she will be giving rise to a considerably socially conflictive *faux pas*, given that the addressee’s will is mutually manifest to both participants. This consideration leads us to elaborate a bit further the convention of politeness:

CONVENTION OF POLITENESS V

(a) *If it is manifest to the addressee that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to the speaker, and if the addressee has the capacity to change that state of affairs, then the addressee should do so.*

(b) *If it is manifest that a potential state of affairs is not beneficial to the speaker, then the addressee is expected not to bring it about.*

(c) *If it is manifest that a potential state of affairs is beneficial to the speaker, then the addressee is expected to bring it about.*

[Correlation with social distance] *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the more the addressee is expected (1) to change the specified state of affairs affecting the speaker, (2) not to bring about negative states of affairs for the speaker, and (3) to bring about beneficial states of affairs for the speaker.*

[Correlation with degree of speaker’s will] *The higher the desire of the speaker to have a negative state of affairs altered, the higher the addressee’s commitment should be to bring about such a change.*

The degree of optionality of example (19) above is constrained by points (c) and (b) of the convention of politeness. First one is expected to bring about those states of affairs which are desired by others. In (19) it has been explicitly communicated that the addressee wants the duchess to come to the event. Second, one is expected not to bring about negative states of affairs for others. The duchess has expressed her intention to attend the event, thus creating some positive expectations in the addressee. If afterwards she decides not to attend the event, she will be creating a negative state of affairs for the addressee (disappointment).

Convention 2: *The higher the degree of addressee’s will, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

It will be shown below, in relation to the variables of power, social distance, and mitigation, that the characteristically low degree of optionality of promises can somehow vary depending on the values taken on by these three parameters.

Mitigation. The concept of mitigation has been traditionally associated with directive speech acts, which involve an action by the addressee. More specifically, mitigation is associated with costly directives (orders, threats, requests, and beggings). In these cases, mitigation devices are used to reduce the force of the act, minimize its cost, and persuade the addressee into compliance. Regarding commissive acts, mitigation may be seen as an irrelevant issue: there seems to be no need to mitigate an act which results in a benefit to others. The corpus, however, proves this intuition wrong. The force of the instances of promising contained in it can be mitigated depending on the ratings of several other variables of the corresponding ICM. The mitigation of promises may be motivated by a variety of factors:

(1) An attempt to minimize the cost that the performance of a promise brings about for the speaker by means of increasing his optionality. Compare example (20) with its mitigated counterparts in (21) and (22):

(20) I'll buy you a TV

(21) I'll probably buy you a TV

(22) I think I'll buy you a TV

(2) Mitigation is also found in the performance of promises as a means of preventing the addressee from entertaining high expectations when the speaker is not too certain of his capacity to perform the promised action:

(23) "*We're trying to improve* facilities for all recreational users and *will work hard to ensure* the impact of one sport will not be to the detriment of any other activity of the environment," she promised. (BNC)

Example (23) is mitigated by means of the use of tentative expressions. Compare the expressions in italics to their unmitigated counterparts: *We will improve...* and *we will ensure...*

(3) If the addressee's power is greater than the speaker's and the latter is not certain about his capacity to fulfil his promise, he will tend to mitigate it as a means of preventing possible retaliations from the powerful addressee. Notice the condition satellite and the use of a passive construction in the expression of (24) below uttered by a secretary to his boss:

(24) *If I succeed in getting those files, you'll be* the first one to see them.

Convention 3: *The greater the cost of the promised action, the greater the uncertainty of the speaker about his capability to perform the promised action, and/or the higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of promising.*

Speaker's Will. According to the data in the corpus, one is not generally compelled to perform promises. Sometimes they are requested from us, as was the case with examples (13) and (16) above. On these occasions, one may feel under an obligation to carry out the corresponding promise, in spite of one's degree of will, in order to comply with the point (c) of the convention of politeness. In other words, when the promise has been requested by the addressee, the degree of speaker's will may take on any value due to the fact that the performance of the promise does not emerge from his own volition, but from the addressee's wishes. Nevertheless, on most occasions, promises are not asked for. The speaker spontaneously decides to inform the addressee that he is going to do something beneficial to the latter. In these cases, the degree of speaker's will is logically high: he wants to carry out a certain action in the benefit of others. Moreover, there is another factor, the social distance between the speakers, which may increase even further the degree of speaker's will:

Convention 4: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will.*

Power. It has already been pointed out that the existence of a powerful addressee demands higher levels of mitigation (see convention 3) in order to prevent possible retaliations. For the same reason, powerful addressees also bring about a reduction of the already prototypically low freedom of the speaker.

Convention 5: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the lower the degree of optionality.*

If on the other hand, the speaker is more powerful than the addressee, his optionality will still be constrained by the workings of the convention of politeness (see discussion on the optionality variable above) and will still be low.

Social Distance. The act of promising can be performed whatever is the social distance which holds between the speakers. However, the relative rating of this parameter in a given context will motivate some particular behaviour of several other of the variables included in the ICM of promising. As pointed out above in the discussion of the speaker's will parameter, small social distances are typically associated with higher degrees of speaker's will:

(25) MO1:Thanks Amy.

FO1: And er I think you're great I really do.

MO1: Oh you're very kind.

FO1: Well thank you very much anyway for that and I *definitely* will write to the water people and and I will let you know how I got on. (BNC)⁷⁰

On the contrary, large social distances are connected with lower degrees of speaker's will. Nevertheless, the degree of freedom of the speaker in these contexts remains low due to the constraints imposed by the convention of politeness, which is operative whatever the social distance between the speakers.

Convention 6: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will and the lower the degree of optionality. The larger the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, while the degree of optionality of the speaker remains low due to the constraints imposed by the convention of politeness.*

Formality. The corpus contains a small number of promises performed in formal contexts (five instances), none of which, however, correlates with special values of the mitigation variable, as is usually the case with directive speech acts.

70. Let us remind the reader that the variable of social distance is understood in a very lax sense in this dissertation (see the description of these variables in section 3.2): it may include the closeness which arises from the belonging to a certain common social group, or just the closeness which arises from the liking or admiration of someone.

SUMMARY OF THE ICM OF PROMISING

<u>Agent Type</u>	Prototypically the speaker
<u>Time of the Action</u>	Prototypically non-past
<u>Agent's Capability</u>	Prototypically assumed to be high See conventions 1, 3
<u>Addressee's Will</u>	Prototypically assumed to be high See convention 2
<u>Cost-Benefit</u>	Prototypically promises result in a benefit to the addressee and a cost to the speaker See convention 1
<u>Optionality</u>	Prototypically low See conventions 2, 5, 6
<u>Mitigation</u>	See conventions 1, 3, 6
<u>Speaker's Will</u>	Prototypically high, especially in the case of unrequested promises See conventions 1, 4, 6
<u>Power</u>	Promises can be uttered whatever the power relationship that holds between the participants See conventions 3, 5
<u>Social Distance</u>	Promises can be uttered whatever the social distance that holds between the participants See convention 6
<u>Formality</u>	Promises can be uttered whatever the formality that holds between the participants

CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ICM OF PROMISING

Convention 1: *The degree of speaker's will increases and the degree of mitigation decreases on those occasions when not only the addressee, but also the speaker is the beneficiary of the act of promising. Nevertheless, the degree of mitigation will increase on those occasions when the speaker is not certain about his capability to perform the specified action, and vice versa, regardless of the nature of the beneficiary.*

Convention 2: *The higher the degree of addressee's will, the lower the degree of optionality, and vice versa.*

Convention 3: *The greater the cost of the promised action, the greater the uncertainty of the speaker about his capability to perform the promised action, and/or the higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the greater the need for mitigation in the performance of the act of promising.*

Convention 4: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, and vice versa.*

Convention 5: *The higher the degree of power of the addressee over the speaker, the lower the degree of optionality.*

Convention 6: *The smaller the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will and the lower the degree of optionality. The larger the social distance between the speakers, the higher the degree of speaker's will, while the degree of optionality of the speaker remains low due to the constraints imposed by the convention of politeness.*

13.2. Realization Procedures for the Act of Promising

13.2.1. Declarative-based Realization Procedures for Promising

The most outstanding feature of the realization procedures displayed by the promise instances contained in this corpus is their absolute preference for the use of declarative sentences. None of them is based on either interrogative or imperative sentence forms. In this respect promises differ from directive speech acts, which we have already seen that can be expressed through the use of any of the three sentence types, to a greater or lesser extent. Some directives may have a preference for the use of interrogative sentences (e.g. requesting), others for the use of imperatives (e.g. ordering), and yet others for the use of declaratives (e.g. advising). But on the whole their realization procedures can be based on any of the three sentence types. Promises, on the contrary, are exclusively linked to the use of declarative sentences. The reasons for this has to do with the nature of the three universal sentence types. Though according to Risselada's (1993: 71) weak version of the Literal Force Hypothesis, all three are largely unspecified as to their meaning conditions, one of them (i.e. the declarative sentence) is even less so than the other two (i.e. imperative and interrogative sentences). Consequently, declarative sentences are compatible with a higher number of illocutionary values than the other two.

Imperative sentences seem to be linked to the speaker's wishes and the addressee's actions, while promises revolve around the addressee's wishes and

the speaker's actions. Hence their incompatibility.⁷¹ Interrogative sentences present propositions as (partially) open. This feature has been shown to be useful in the expression of some directives (e.g. requests), in order to enhance the addressee's optionality to perform the specified action and hence, to make the act less conflictive from the point of view of social interaction. As regards the category of promises, the optionality of the addressee need not be increased, since he is not prototypically the agent of the future action and, in any case, because the specified action is to his benefit. In sum, it is taken for granted that everyone likes others to bring about states of affairs which are beneficial to them. Therefore, there is no point in questioning the addressee about his desire that a beneficial action is carried out for him. An interrogative sentence like *Do you want a bicycle?*, for instance, does not instantiate some of the central parameters of the ICM of promising, such as the fact that it is the speaker who is to carry out a future action. Moreover, as was shown in section 13.1, in connection to the addressee's will variable, the speaker who is to utter a promise needs not know for certain whether the addressee wants him to carry out the specified action or not. It is enough if he works under the assumption that the addressee does want him to bring about the state of affairs. Finally, questioning speaker-related parameters of the ICM of promising would be of no use either, since that kind of information is directly accessible to the speaker himself (e.g. *Do I want to buy you a bicycle?*, *Can I buy you a bicycle?*, *Is it beneficial to you that I buy you a bicycle?*, etc.).

We are therefore left with declarative sentences, which are so little specified as to their meaning conditions that they are compatible with those of the ICM of promising -as well as with those of most, if not all, illocutionary ICMs. A number of realization procedures allow the speaker to further specify the default underspecified illocutionary value of the declarative sentence so that it can instantiate the variables of the ICM of promising. As a matter of fact, the combination of several of those realization procedures can give rise to remarkably explicit instances of promises. Below there is a description of those which can be found in the corpus data:

71. In the previous two chapters (11 and 12), we have had the chance to see that this incompatibility does not hold for those hybrid illocutionary categories which lie half way between the directive and commissive categories (e.g. invitations and offers). Illocutionary categories of this kind include within their ICMs meaning conditions which have to do with actions of both the speaker and the addressee, and also desires and wishes of both the speaker and the addressee. The existence of satisfaction conditions which have to do with the speaker's wishes explains the fact that both invitations and offers permit the use of imperative constructions in their expression.

First Person Singular or Plural Subjects Plus Present Continuous or Future Simple Tenses

The use of a first person subject plus a present continuous or future simple tense activate the first two variables of the ICM of promising: agent type and time of the action. Those instances of promises performed through the activation of these two parameters are frequent in the corpus. Examples (1) and (2) below illustrate them:

(1) “*I’ll* be back by noon,” he promised. (BNC)

(2) “We will repay you as soon as the money is here,” she promised. (BNC)

(3) “*I’m leaving* right now,” I promised him. (BNC)

(4) And through frustrated tears he promised: “*I’m going to start* slowly and build up.” (BNC)

These two parameters (i.e. speaker as agent and non-past as time of the action) are shared with other illocutionary categories, such as those of predicting and asserting. In the four examples reproduced above, the interpretation of those utterances as promises is aided by the available contextual information which points to the addressee as the beneficiary of the action described in the predications. The latter is a relevant variable of the ICM of promising and, therefore, enables a promise reading of those utterances. Nevertheless, on occasions on which this variable is not contextually manifest to both participants, it is possible to overtly express it and in turn to make the speaker’s intention of performing a promise more explicit. This is achieved through the use of the next type of realization procedure:

Use of Level One Beneficiary Satellites

The use of first person subjects and non-past tenses together with satellites which point to the existence of beneficiaries different from the speaker gives way to fairly explicit instances of promises:

(5) “Right, I will organize that *for you*,” he promised. (BNC)

(6) (...) several years ago he promised: “I’ll do *for Queensland* what Mr. Cain did for Victoria.” (BNC)

(7) Desdemona promised: “I will devote all my *abilities on thy behalf*.” (BNC)

In a less explicit way, the speaker can point to the identity of the addressee as the beneficiary of the action through the use of vocatives signalling closeness and/or level two company satellites. Consider the following example:

(8) “Oh *darling*, I love you so much, I will live *with you* in a tent in the middle of a cold muddy field if ever those days were there in your life.” (BNC)

Use of Expressions Pointing to the Addressee’s Will

Another type of realization procedure which can contribute to enhancing the level of codification of an instance of promising consists in the use of expressions which point to the speaker’s acknowledgement that the addressee wants him to carry out a certain action. Consider the following example:

(9) “*Don’t worry*, pal, we’ll be there,” Ray promised as the stretcher-bearers moved off towards their ambulance. (BNC)

The expression *Don’t worry* in (9) points to the speaker’s acknowledgement that the addressee wants him to do something; the action which he undertakes to carry out in the predication. Reason satellites may also fulfil this function:

(10) I’ll buy a new TV. *I know you want one.*

(11) I’ll buy a new TV. *I’ve been told you want one.*

(12) *You want that TV very badly, don’t you?* I’ll buy it then.

It has been suggested in the description of the ICM of promising (section 13.1) that the force of promises may vary depending on a number of factors. When the cost of the action is significant for the speaker, for instance, he may try to increase his freedom to eventually carry out the action or not. In order to do this, he will opt for the performance of less explicit and/or more tentative promises. Likewise, if the speaker is not too sure about his capacity to bring about a certain state of affairs, he will tend to increase the implicitness and tentativeness of his promise. This reduction in the force of promising is usually carried out by means of level two epistemic mood operators, expressions of tentativeness, or the use of impersonal passive constructions. Below are some examples which illustrate the use of these three realization procedures respectively:

(13) Darling, *I've been thinking I may* buy you a night gown. (BNC)

(14) "I'll *try* to adjust to your schedule," she promised. (BNC)

(15) "*There will be* no more time-wasting," he promised. (BNC)

Examples (13) to (15), even if they do not fully match our stereotypical idea of a promise, are still good examples of the category of promising in the contexts in which they are uttered, because they instantiate some of the conventions included in the ICM under consideration. By way of illustration it should be noticed that example (14) conforms to the knowledge on the workings of promises captured in convention 3, according to which the force of promises needs to be mitigated if the speaker is uncertain about his capacity to bring about the specified state of affairs. In the example under consideration the force of the act has been mitigated via the use of tentativeness.

On the contrary, the existence of little costly states of affairs, high degrees of speaker's will, and/or high degrees of speaker's certainty about his capacity to carry out the promised action will result in more explicit and/or forceful instances of promising:

(16) "I will keep it a secret!" she promised. (BNC)

(17) I *will*. *I will* give you a call tomorrow just to ... if anything else has to be handled. (BNC)

(18) "Listen, thanks for talking. Good luck. Will you keep us in touch?" "I *certainly* will." (BNC)

(19) I *will definitely* take care of him for you, darling.

As can be seen in examples (16)-(19), more forceful promises may be expressed through the use of a varied array of realization procedures including the use of a determined intonation, repetitions, mood operators, and stress and/or emphasis.

**SUMMARY OF REALIZATION
PROCEDURES FOR THE ACT OF PROMISING**

Agent Type	Pronoun (<i>I, we</i>)
Time of the Action	Non-past verb tense
Agent's Capability	Inherent modality (<i>can</i>)
Addressee's Will	Stock expressions (<i>don't worry, I know you want one...</i>)
Cost-Benefit	Beneficiary satellites (<i>for you...</i>)
Optionality	Expressions of tentativeness (<i>I'll try...</i>), use of impersonal constructions (<i>There will be...</i>), level two epistemic mood operators (<i>I may...</i>)
Mitigation	Expressions of tentativeness (<i>I may...</i>), use of impersonal constructions (<i>There will be...</i>), level two epistemic mood operators (<i>I may...</i>)
Speaker's Will	Inherent modality (<i>will</i>), determined intonation, stress and/or emphasis repetitions, mood operators (<i>certainly...</i>)
Power	Vocatives, use of mitigating strategies if the addressee is more powerful than the speaker
Social Distance	Vocatives
Formality	

14. CONCLUSION

As stated in the introduction, this study constitutes an attempt to shed some new light on an old issue: the so-called indirect speech acts. The need for further research on this topic was made apparent by the general survey of the main theories of speech acts in chapter two, on the one hand, and the more specific cognitive revision of traditional speech act theory in chapter three. The main conclusions drawn there were the following:

(i) Regardless of the framework within which they have been carried out, speech act theories fall into one of two opposing groups, depending on the relative weight placed on *codification* or *inference* in the process of illocutionary performance. Those accounts which emphasize the role of inference share a complete rejection of the Literal Force Hypothesis and claim that the illocutionary force of an utterance is always the output of inferential processes (e.g. Bach and Harnish, 1979; Recanati, 1987; Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983). Those approaches in which codification occupies a more central position are a more heterogeneous group in which all members share the belief that inference on its own is not enough to explain illocutionary performance. In their weaker manifestations, these approaches accept the Literal Force Hypothesis and, therefore, hold that at least three speech act types are directly understood without the need of inference: those which are communicated by means of the three universal sentence types. The remaining illocutionary types are, however, indirect and need to be inferred from the literal meaning of the expression with the aid of contextual and background information (e.g. Searle, 1969, 1975; Gordon and Lakoff, 1975; Morgan, 1978; Sperber and Wilson, 1986). Other theories within this second group suggest that more than the three basic illocutions are linguistically codified and account for them in terms of grammatical conversions (e.g. Dik, 1986, 1997), c patterning of selections from the options offered by the language system (e.g. Halliday, 1994), or underlying performatives in the deep structure of sentences (e.g. Performative Hypothesis and Idiom Theory). In section 3.2 it was argued that both groups of theories abound with difficulties and that

neither is capable of accounting for all aspects of illocutionary production and understanding. On the one hand, theories based on inference overlook the typologically attested existence of three sentence types in most languages, and deny the relevance of codification as an available linguistic resource which brings about the advantages of speed and economy of processing. On the other hand, accounts based on codification present the following problems. The weaker versions (i.e. those which only recognize three basic types of codified illocutions) are also cognitively costly: most illocutionary types are regarded as indirect and need to be inferred with the added cost of having to grasp the literal meaning of the utterance prior to the inference of the ulterior or primary illocutionary force. The stronger versions (i.e. those which accept the existence of more codified illocutions than the three basic speech acts) do not account for the fact that there are occasions on which full codification is not either necessary or appropriate in communication. Moreover, it was shown that psychological experiments, carried out from the seventies onwards, have been unable to prove the pre-eminence of either codification or inference in the performance of speech acts. These facts called for a new integrated approach to illocutionary phenomena in which both inference and codification were considered.

(ii) Traditional speech act theories recognize a third type of illocution between literal and indirect acts, namely, conventional indirect speech acts. The latter category would come to bridge the gap between the other two and explain why some indirect speech acts are understood more readily and require less processing effort than others. Nevertheless, the concept of conventional indirect speech act was shown to be unsatisfactory in two respects (section 3.3). First, its traditional definition was somehow recursive: conventional speech acts are those which are more often used and the reason for this frequent use is that they are conventional. Furthermore, it was not explained why they are so frequently used in the first place. Second, the category of conventional illocutions was presented as having a discrete nature: no degrees of conventionality were distinguished, which clashes with the available linguistic evidence. A new definition of conventional speech acts, capable of capturing their scalar nature, is therefore desirable.

(iii) As was the case with the category of conventional speech acts, all illocutionary categories were understood in terms of the classical model of categorization as having clear boundaries and no degrees of membership. In this way, recent findings on the nature of human conceptualization, as captured by Prototype Theory, were being overlooked. The classical view of illocutionary categories held by traditional speech act theories was the origin of some of its flaws, such as the forcing of some illocutionary types within categories to which they did not fully belong. By way of illustration, consider the inclusion of threat or invitations within the category of directives in Searle (1979), or the positing of new *ad hoc* categories in order to account for

boundary illocutionary types, such as the category of commissive-directives in Bach and Harnish (1979). It was only logical to wonder whether an approach which is adequate from a cognitive point of view would be able to overcome these weaknesses.

(iv) Conversational theories of speech acts have revealed the advantages of corpus-based and context-embedded studies of illocutions. However, chapter two reveals some of the limitations of the conversational approaches in their use of context. They focused mainly on turn-taking and adjacency pairs phenomena. Little or no attention was paid to social or interactional aspects of context (e.g. power relationships between speakers, formality of context, etc.) and to the relevance of these aspects in the performance of speech acts.

Taking the above considerations as the point of departure, I set off to establish my own proposals on how to account for illocutionary performance, which were discussed in section 3.4.

(1) In relation to the need of integrating both inference and codification in the explanation of speech acts, it was hypothesized that both resources could be viewed as the extreme ends of a continuum with varying degrees of intermediate realizations. This proposal stems from a commitment to the findings of the prototype theory of categorization according to which concepts have a non-discrete nature. Illocutionary expressions can adopt different values along this codification-inference cline depending on the requirements of each concrete interactional situation (e.g. politeness needs, existence of greater or lesser amount of mutually manifest contextual information, economy requirements, etc.). The existence of a codification-inference continuum, however, was found to be incompatible with the orthodox version of the Literal Force Hypothesis, which only recognizes three codified basic illocutions and leaves the remaining illocutionary values to be inferred. Since the existence of three universal sentence types is a well-attested typological fact, a rejection of the Literal Force Hypothesis was not a reasonable solution to our problems. In this connection, it was observed that a weakened version of the Literal Force Hypothesis, such as the one put forward by Risselada (1993) was of use in integrating our proposal of a codification-inference cline with the existence of three universal sentence types. This weakened version redefines the relationship between the three sentence types and their corresponding illocutionary forces as one of compatibility. Each sentence type is compatible with a range of possible illocutionary forces, but their actual illocutionary value is extremely underspecified. The generic illocutionary meaning of each sentence type may be further specified through linguistic means, thus giving rise to more or less codified illocutionary acts.

(2) The above reflections lead to a constructional approach to the description of illocutionary acts such as the one suggested in Risselada (1993)

and Ruiz de Mendoza (1999). In section 3.4.1. I considered several ways in which these initial proposals could be refined and elaborated:

(a) Regarding the semantic side of illocutionary constructions, I argued for a systematic description of speech act categories in terms of propositional ICMs, which were shown to be a more comprehensive tool for the organization of meaning than similar constructs like frames, scenarios, scripts, etc. (see section 3.4.2). Illocutionary propositional ICMs would be the outcome of assessing each speech act type in relation to eleven variables of a scalar nature. Prototypical instances of each illocutionary category are expected to rate optimally for all variables under consideration. Less central members of speech act categories will display one or more of them non-optimally. This description of illocutionary categories in terms of propositional ICMs would be in accordance with the findings of prototype theory (in terms of non-discreteness and prototype effects).

(b) In relation to the formal side of illocutionary constructions, I advocated an inclusion of suprasegmental, suprasentential, and lexical features in our description (see section 3.4.3).

Moreover, in view of the high amount of diversity and creativity to which the expression of illocutionary acts can be subject, I opted for a constructional approach which sets off from the illocutionary meaning and then proceeds to determine what linguistic procedures are available for its expression. The reverse option would be less economical as was argued in section 3.4.4. Finally, it was hypothesized that the resulting illocutionary constructions could be ordered in a hierarchy according to their degree of codification: the higher the number of meaning conditions of a given illocutionary ICM that are activated through linguistic means (i.e. through realization procedures), the higher the degree of codification of the specific instance of speech act.

(3) The positing of a codification-inference continuum has paved the way for the formulation of a new definition of so-called conventional indirect speech acts. Conventional illocutions are expected to correspond to those which occupy the closest positions to the codification end of the continuum. In other words, conventional speech acts have been redefined as those which display a high degree of codification without having yet reached full codification. The understanding of conventional speech acts in these terms was shown to present two main advantages over the traditional definition in terms of conventions of use:

(a) To begin with, it offers an explanation of the origin of the convention of use that underlies this category of illocutions: those speech act instances which have a high degree of codification are, according to (1) and (2) above, those which activate a higher number of meaning conditions of a certain illocutionary ICM. This fact makes them good vehicles for the expression of a given speech act type, since the higher the number of meaning conditions that are instantiated, the smaller the processing cost to which the addressee is

subject in the interpretation of the utterance, and the lower the risk of misunderstanding. Because of these advantages, highly codified speech acts are more frequently used, and their frequent use in turn creates the habit which underlies the convention of use.

(b) The redefinition of conventional speech acts as simply instances of highly codified illocutions is moreover compatible with the existence of different degrees of conventionalization. While the traditional definition presented conventional speech acts as a discrete category with no degrees of membership, this new view of conventional speech acts as one segment of the codification-inference continuum -the segment closer to the codification end-accounts for the fact that it is possible to find conventional illocutions which are more highly conventional than others (see section 3.3).

The analysis carried out in chapters four to thirteen has mainly served to confirm these hypotheses, and it has also yielded several unexpected findings, some of which suggest that further research on the subject is still needed:

(1) Together with the use of hedges, the adverb *please*, disclaimers (e.g. *if it's not too much trouble*), impersonal sentences, prosodic devices (e.g. low volume, weakened stress, etc.), which have been summarized by Fraser (1980) and Holmes (1984) as those strategies used in the mitigation of illocutionary force, this study reveals the role played in this task by reason, conditional, and purpose satellites, time satellites of duration (e.g. a second, a minute, one moment, etc.), quantifying term operators (e.g. a little), manner satellites (e.g. roughly, approximately), and modality (e.g. possibly, perhaps, etc.).

(2) At the inception of speech act theory (Searle, 1979), power was regarded as an all-or-nothing feature: either a speech act type required a certain power relationship between the speakers (e.g. orders) or not (e.g. requests, warnings). Verschueren's (1985) work was a step forward in the consideration of power issues in relation to speech act performance. Thus, he noticed the existence of different types of power entering the definition of different illocutionary act types: while the act of ordering was related to institutional power, acts like advising or warning also involved a special power configuration, but in these cases the type of power to be considered arises from the speaker's higher knowledge or expertise rather than from an institution. In this study I have distinguished several other types of power involved in the performance of speech acts (e.g. self-defence authority, moral authority, addressee-granted authority, etc.). Furthermore, it has been observed that different types of power are not equally good members of their category: some of them result in a higher degree of imposition and restrict the addressee's optionality to a higher extent than others. Institutional and physical power lies at the centre of the category, while knowledge, self-defence, moral, or addressee-granted authority represent more peripheral members. The prototypical nature of the concept of power has significant consequences in the performance of those speech act types which require a particular power

relationship between the speakers. In this connection, the force of an order will diminish as the speaker's power instantiates a more peripheral member of the category of power. The performance of an order by a speaker with a non-prototypical type of power may, therefore, result in a less prototypical instance of order.

(3) The existence of a continuum between directive and commissive speech acts, which is hypothesized by some authors like Risselada (1993) or Vanparys (1996) on the basis of the open-ended prototypical nature of illocutionary categories, finds confirmation in the present analysis. As was observed in relation to the acts of offering and inviting, it is not appropriate to assign them to an *ad hoc* discrete category of commissive-directives, like the one put forward by Bach and Harnish (1979) or Hancher (1979), because the directive and commissive components which make them up are not equally important: the act of offering is closer to purely commissive acts (promising) than the act of inviting, which has a stronger directive component (see chapters eight and nine).

(4) The number of interrelations between variables, which are captured in the form of conventions within each illocutionary ICM, varies from one illocutionary type to another. This fact is not arbitrary, but largely motivated by the nature of the speech act under consideration. Orders and threats, for instance, are among those illocutionary categories which yield a smaller number of conventions. This is only natural since speakers who perform these acts are prototypically endowed with some kind of power, which makes it unnecessary for them to take other variables into consideration. The cost of the requested action or the need for mitigation required by large social distances can be overlooked if the speaker is in a position of authority. It has also been observed that speech acts which are (1) beneficial to both the speaker and the addressee (invitations), or (2) beneficial to the addressee and, at the same time, conditional to the addressee's acceptance (offerings), comprise a smaller number of conventions than those which are beneficial only to the speaker (requests, beggings), or non-conditional (promises) respectively. Again, a motivation may be found which accounts for these tendencies. On the one hand, those acts which are beneficial to both participants do not run the risk of provoking a social conflict and, therefore, it is not necessary to take so many variables into account. On the other hand, in spite of their inherently common beneficial nature, conditional acts (offering) are felt as less impositive than non-conditional acts (promising), which do not leave a chance for the addressee to stop the speaker from carrying out an action to his benefit.

(5) Other findings, such as the interplay between different variables of illocutionary ICMs captured in the corresponding conventions, require more detailed investigation. In chapters four to thirteen it can be observed that some of these variables appear as more central than others. The cost-benefit

parameter, for instance, stands out as one of the most central, since the values taken by it may influence the ratings of several other variables (e.g. speaker's and addressee's will, optionality, mitigation). The variable of social distance, to give just another example, may still influence the ratings of the speaker's and addressee's will, but it does not affect the cost-benefit parameter. Optionality and mitigation appear as two of the most peripheral parameters, since their ratings may be influenced by all other variables (i.e. cost-benefit, power, social distance, formality, will). These facts seem to point to a radial structure of the variables involved in the description of illocutionary ICMS, but future research is needed in order to determine the validity of this proposal. I would feel satisfied, however, if this study had at least made apparent the need for approaching the study of speech acts from a cognitive perspective.

CORPUS MATERIAL

Corpora

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