The Influence of J. L. Austin

Walter DAVIES
Institute of Foreign Language Research and Education
Hiroshima University

John Langshaw Austin is best known in applied linguistics for How to Do Things with Words, a book based on his lecture notes for the William James lectures at Harvard University in 1955. The purpose of this article is to examine Austin's ideas in a broader context, examining both his life and his published works. In terms of his ideas, I focus on his two posthumously published lecture courses, and then consider the current relevance of his philosophy of language to linguistics.

Given that Austin is considered a significant figure in analytic philosophy, his output of articles was small; Pears (1969) notes that he only published seven papers in his lifetime. All of these, and several previously unpublished articles, are contained in the Philosophical Papers. Since his death, two books have been published based on his lecture notes: Sense and Sensibilia is G.J. Warnock's imaginative recreation of what Austin might have written, based on Austin's relatively thin notes; How to Do Things with Words was created from much more extensive lecture notes, edited by Urmson and Sbisa. As this article focuses on books which were created after his death, recollections of his students and colleagues help to give a broader insight into his method of research; regarding his life, Austin left no autobiography or diaries, and a portrait of him only emerges through the recollections and biographical work of those who knew him.

The first part of this article is biographical, focusing on Austin's intellectual background, and examining various sketches of him. Following this, I consider some general aspects of Austin's approach to philosophy, and then examine Sense and Sensibilia in the context of Logical Positivism. In the final sections of the article, I consider the William James lectures and examine their influence on linguistics.

1. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

As Strum (2000) observes, Austin left behind no personal account of his life. However, Warnock (1969) has written a long biographical piece, and several authors have written vignettes of Austin (Berlin, 1973; Pitcher, 1973; Rees, 1972; Strum, 2000; Warnock, 1973). These offer some insight into both Austin's personality and his approach to philosophy.

Born in Lancaster in 1911, the son of an architect, Austin grew up in St Andrews and won a scholarship to study classics at Shrewsbury school. As Warnock (1973) notes, he was considered "an accurate and sensitive scholar, particularly in Greek" (p. 3). In 1929, he won a scholarship to read classics at Balliol College, Oxford University. There, he obtained first class honours and in 1933, after examination, became the only Prize Fellow elected to All Souls, a prestigious arts-based college at the university, very focused on research, and with no undergraduate or

postgraduate students. Rowse (1993), a contemporary, observes that "the examination is held every October, and is a gruelling affair. Competitors enter from the other colleges - no point unless one has already got a first in the Schools, or a university prize, perhaps both" (p. 14).

In 1935, Austin left his appointment at All Souls to become a Fellow and tutor at the university's Magdalen College. Warnock (1969) argues that for Austin it was important to teach philosophy to develop clarity of thought, noting that "what was vitally important was that as many as possible should acquire the habit, and some skill in, clear methodical thinking" (p. 7). Also, Berlin (1973) states that "he had a strong desire to do something more practical, a job of work, something for which, at the end of the day, there was more to show" (p. 1).

Austin did have the opportunity to do something more "practical": With the advent of the Second World War, he became involved in British intelligence and in 1940 was posted to London, where he worked for GHQ (General Headquarters) Home Forces. Here, he worked for a small section which gathered preliminary intelligence for the invasion of continental Europe. In 1943, the section was enlarged, becoming the "Theatre Intelligence Section". When S.H.A.E.F. (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) was created, Austin became a lieutenant-colonel. His contribution to the war effort through detailed intelligence work and planning was recognized in Britain, France and the USA, so that by the time he left the army in September 1945, he had been awarded the O.B.E. (Order of the British Empire) as well as the Croix de Guerre and he had become an Officer in the Legion of Merit. During the war he married Jane Coutts, and they subsequently had four children.

After returning to Oxford, Austin produced much of his seminal work in philosophy. In 1952 he became White's Professor of Moral Philosophy, a position he held until his early death in 1960. In addition to his essays and lectures, he was also involved in a variety of important administrative duties. In particular, he became one of the Delegates of the Press, the group that has responsibility for the work of the vast Oxford University Press. From 1957 he was Chairman of the Delegates' Finance Committee, the most important office.

Given Austin's commitment to teaching, and the relative scarcity of his articles, it is useful to consider his colleagues' recollections of him. Berlin (1973) writes about him both before and after the Second World War, while Pitcher (1973) and Warnock (1973) focus on his post-war teaching.

Berlin (1973), another Prize Fellow at All Souls, knew Austin well. He recollects walks spent discussing philosophical issues, teaching a course jointly with Austin, based on C.I. Lewis's Mind and the World Order, and a Thursday evening discussion group at the college, which involved a small number of philosophers including A.J. Ayer, whose ideas Austin went on to criticize in Sense and Sensibilia. Berlin argues that in the thirties, Austin did not appear to have an established doctrine: "He treated problems piecemeal as they came, not as part of a systematic reinterpretation" (p. 4). The development of a systematic body of ideas appears to have come later, with Austin's development of ideas in the philosophy of language. The emphasis here should be placed on overarching theory, as Warnock (1972) argues that Austin did hold to theories: "It ought to be remembered that, though he regarded very general theories with

instinctive suspicion, and thought that they were launched into the world prematurely and recklessly, he very often did have such theories at the back of his mind - and very often kept them there" (p. 40). The key point is that he did not seem to believe in grand theory, only the use of theory appropriate to solving particular problems. Warnock (1969) also observes that Austin's background as a scholar of Greek led him to draw on Aristotle in his later work:

> He owed in large measure to his classical education both his intense concern for linguistic accuracy and his perennial, even passionate, interest in the phenomenon of language itself... He wrote out very fully, and must have delivered almost verbatim, richly detailed and learned lectures on the Nichomachean Ethics. (p. 4)

In addition to his work on Aristotle, Austin undertook research on Liebniz, Kant and Plato, although it is for his work on the philosophy of language, particularly speech acts, that he is most remembered. In relation to this, most recollections of Austin give the impression of a philosopher who was able to bring a dry humour to an intense scrutiny of language. The colourful Goronwy Rees (1972), Estates Bursar of All Souls in the 1950s, enjoyed the company of Austin's young group of philosophers on his visits to the college:

> Their intellectual labours may have been arid but they themselves were not; on the contrary, they had the gaiety and light-heartedness of the single-minded. They were like young men who were engaged in a crusade, who felt at last that the mysteries of the universe were to be, if not solved, at least eliminated as the product of mere verbal confusions, and they applied themselves in this process of mental hygiene with the zeal of a highly efficient municipal cleansing department. (p. 230)

However, this observation glosses over the more substantial side of Austin's philosophy. Although he clearly did think it was possible to become trapped in language, particularly in certain forms of discourse, he did not think that all problems were the product of verbal confusion, and this emerges from the idea of ordinary language philosophy discussed in the next section. In terms of a more visual portrait, Pitcher (1973) gives the following description of Austin on his visit to Harvard in 1955 to give the William James lectures:

> He came in dressed in a perfectly ordinary, not very well pressed, blue suit, which will always be in my mind as an essential part of his appearance: he looked like an intelligent tax lawyer, I thought or a highly competent perhaps rather too strict teacher of Latin in a boys' school, but he did not correspond at all closely to my idea of what a distinguished philosopher should look like. He began to talk at once from notes, producing measured phrases and deadly accurate sentences in a lean but not in the least unpleasant tenor voice. He was assured, unflustered, all efficiency and directness. He resorted to no stage effects of any kind, or anyway no obvious ones. There was something of the dry legal expert in his

style as well as in his appearance. (pp. 17-18)

In another context, Warnock (1973) gives a description of "Saturday mornings" at Oxford University in the 1950s, where Austin would organize a group of philosophers for the discussion of philosophical issues. This included the young H.P. Grice, who referred to the meetings as "The Play Group". Warnock notes that within the meetings discussion was open, but not in a specifically antagonistic way: "No one was trying to win, no one was conscious of defending a position, there was to be no dialectical victim at the end of the morning, stretched out in humiliating defeat" (p. 34). He further observes that the object was to reach consensus, if possible, because if a "dozen professional arguers" could reach agreement on something it stood a good chance of being right. This seems to be in keeping with his comment that in planning the D-Day landings, Austin was involved in a strongly collaborative endeavour involving a team, and this approach to project work and problem solving may have carried over into his approach to small seminars of colleagues.

The picture that emerges of Austin in the 1950s is of a formal man, addressing close colleagues by surname only, but very open to collaborative discussion provided it was focused on issues rather than personalities. There is a strong emphasis on working together to find agreement, but where philosophers are in groups, there is no sense of delegation of work, rather that different minds working collaboratively may develop ideas more thoroughly than one philosopher working alone. Publishing articles appears secondary to lecturing and seminars, so that the development of thinking abilities is given priority, with a strong focus on methodical and well-organized thought, and a sensitivity to the range and subtlety of language. There is also a broader commitment to organizational development. Austin clearly gave a lot of his time to Oxford University Press, not only devoting himself to the ideas side of publishing but also visiting production facilities and warehouses.

2. AUSTIN'S LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO PHILOSOPHY

Austin is generally categorized as an ordinary language philosopher. He was very critical of the specialised way in which philosophers used what appeared to be ordinary words, or specialised terminology, when he felt that they obscured the varied and diverse problems that emerged from human experience. Ordinary language, which had developed in the context of such experience, was a good place to start a philosophical investigation; while some philosophers were often frustrated with what they considered to be the deficiencies of natural languages and sought a more logical language, Austin (1961) was initially in total opposition to this, believing that an exploration of ordinary language terms was the "first word," though not the "last word":

> First words are our tools, and, as a minimum, we should use clean tools: we should know what we mean and what we do not, and we must forearm ourselves against the traps that language sets us. Secondly, words are not (except in their own little corner) facts or things:

we need therefore to prise them off the world, to hold them apart from and against it, so that we can realize their inadequacies and arbitrariness, and can re-look at the world without blinkers. Thirdly and more hopefully, our common stock of words embodies all the distinctions that men have found worth drawing, and the connexions they have found worth marking, in the lifetimes of many generations: these surely are likely to be more numerous, more sound, since they have stood up to the longest test of the survival of the fittest, and more subtle, at least in all ordinary and reasonable practical matters, than any that you or I are likely to think up in our arm-chairs of an afternoon - the most favoured alternative method. (pp. 129-130)

Then for the Last Word. Certainly ordinary language has no claim to be the last word, if there is such a thing. It embodies, indeed, something better than the metaphysics of the Stone Age, namely, as was said, the inherited experience and acumen of many generations of men. But then, that acumen has been concentrated primarily upon the practical business of life. If a distinction works well for practical purposes in ordinary life (no mean feat, for even ordinary life is full of hard cases), then there is likely to be something in it, it will not mark nothing: yet this is likely enough not to be the best way of arranging things if our interests are more extensive or intellectual than the ordinary. . . . Certainly, then, ordinary language is not the last word: in principle it can everywhere be supplemented and improved upon and superseded. Only remember, it is the first word. (p. 133)

Critics of Austin's ordinary language philosophy have often attacked him on the basis that he was either reflecting on his own sense of language use or coming to agreement with other professional philosophers. In this sense, the language was not ordinary at all, and reflected the language of only a small group of professionals. As Strum (2000) notes "the complaint is that none of this is genuine research in the way that a field linguist might conduct it" (p. 179). What, then, is meant by "ordinary language philosophy"? The answer to this question lies in Austin's method, and gives an indication of why he moved from the philosophy of perception to the philosophy of language. His method was to work with the commonly accepted usage of words, with what would now be termed "standard English". Another way in which it can be considered ordinary language is that it is the language Austin might consider using to anyone: describing a situation to another passenger on a bus, or another pedestrian, or another customer in a shop. Although a terminology develops around this, the central focus of his arguments lies in this commonly held usage. In exploring it, Austin (1961) himself notes that there are two ways to respond to a question about the meaning of a particular word such as *racy*:

I may reply *in words*, trying to describe what raciness is and what it is not, to give examples of the sentences in which one might use the word *racy*, and of others in which one should not. Let us call this *sort* of thing 'explaining the syntactics' of the word 'racy' in the English language. (p. 25)

The other way would be to "demonstrate the semantics" by imagining various situations where the word "racy" would be used and situations where it would not. Recollections of Austin in his post-war seminars give a description of him following this latter procedure, where he would examine related words in detail, often using short illustrative stories to highlight differences. An example of one of these is Austin's (1961) exploration of the distinction between "by accident" and "by mistake":

> You have a donkey and so have I, and they graze in the same field. The day comes when I conceive a dislike for mine. I go to shoot it, draw a bead on it, fire: The brute falls in its tracks. I inspect the victim, and find to my horror that it is *your* donkey. I appear on your doorstep with the remains and say – what? 'I say, old sport, I'm awfully sorry, &c., I've shot your donkey *by accident*'? Or '*by mistake*'? Then again, I go to shoot my donkey as before, draw a bead on it, fire – but as I do so, the beasts move, and to my horror yours falls. Again the scene on the doorstep – what do I say? 'By mistake'? Or 'by accident'? (p. 133)

What emerges from these examples is a picture of a philosopher who finds his way into a philosophical problem through a very careful consideration of language and its use in relation to context. While another philosopher might start at the level of a concept and then find words to describe it, Austin appears to be sceptical that we really know what a concept is until we have carefully considered the meanings of the terms used in an initial philosophical question. This is a slow careful process of considering the terms of a question before trying to answer it.

3. ENGAGING WITH LOGICAL POSITIVISM: SENSE AND SENSIBILIA

In terms of the background to Austin's contribution to philosophy, the particular school with which he initially engaged as a Fellow of All Souls was that of the Logical Positivists, a movement that is strongly associated with developments in both Cambridge and Vienna, being most strongly associated with the Vienna Circle, a group of thinkers that included Carnap, Schlick and Neurath. A strong connection between the two locations is Wittgenstein, who came to Cambridge and refined his ideas under the tutelage of Bertrand Russell. Russell in turn had been a student of G.E. Moore, who had begun the revolt against Idealism, the philosophical doctrine that reality was ultimately mental. Moore was reacting to a system of philosophy that often seemed to create a labyrinth of terminology based on abstract ideas that had little bearing on everyday existence and experience. The following example from Hegel (1977) illustrates the focus of the Vienna Circle's attack:

> The pure essence itself has no difference in it; consequently, the way in which it does obtain a difference is that two such pure essences exhibit themselves for consciousness, or there is a twofold consciousness of the essence. Pure absolute Being is only in pure thought, or

rather it is pure thought itself, and therefore utterly *beyond* the finite, *beyond self*-consciousness, and is only Being in a negative sense. (p. 351)

In contrast, Moore took an empirical approach, avoiding grand system building, and instead focusing on detail and careful argumentation. Such an approach was used by Russell, and also Wittgenstein, whose Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus had an influence on the Vienna Circle. The Circle's arguments started to influence philosophical ideas at Oxford University; Berlin (1973) notes that among the young philosophers at the university, there "was the mounting revolt against the entire conception of philosophy as a source of knowledge about the universe. It was led by A.J. Ayer, whose paper on Wittgenstein's Tractatus, . . . was the opening shot in the positivist campaign" (pp. 2-3).

Logical Positivism revolved around the issue of meaningful statements, which were defined as falling into two categories: Contingent truths that are knowable synthetically a posteriori, and necessary truths, knowable analytically and a priori. Contingent truths are verifiable, so that the statement "There are four chairs in this room" can be verified through observation. Necessary truths are either tautologies or can be reduced to simpler statements that are tautologies, an example of a tautology being "All oceans contain water". Statements that did not conform to these categories were usually described as meaningless. Ayer (1971) outlined these positions in his most famous work, Language, Truth and Logic. In furthering his arguments in relation to contingent truths, Ayer (1961) produced The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge. It is this work that Austin attacks in Sense and Sensibilia.

As noted above, Sense and Sensibilia is an imaginative recreation of Austin's lectures from his lecture notes (The extent of the recreation is beyond the scope of this article). While it deals with the philosophy of perception rather than the philosophy of language, and is negative in the sense of being a detailed criticism of another's work, it highlights some of the key elements of Austin's way of dealing with philosophical problems and his strong emphasis on language. Austin himself was one of the "dangerous new empiricists" (Berlin, 1973) challenging Idealist orthodoxy. Consequently, he had some sympathy with Logical Positivism, but in many of its aspects he found it problematic, especially with regard to language and its ordinary usage, and he brought the power of his intellect to bear on it. In this respect, Berlin (1973) notes that as a young Fellow of All Souls, Austin liked to drill holes into solutions by others rather than produce a body of theory himself, so much so that on one occasion an exasperated Ayer exclaimed, "You are like a greyhound who does not want to run himself, and bites the other greyhounds, so they cannot run either" (p. 10). This seems partly due to Austin's intense scrutiny of language before committing to any broad theory.

In Sense and Sensibilia, Austin develops a number of ideas through an engagement with The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge. The argument that he attacks runs as follows: In reality we never directly perceive material things such as tables, chairs, trees, etc. This can be demonstrated by examining cases where we are deceived by our senses: Sometimes we see mirages, sometimes we have hallucinations, sticks look bent when they are half immersed in

water. In the case of the last example, the stick looks bent but in reality it is unchanged. Consequently, our perception of the stick is different from the real situation of the stick, and what we are perceiving is not the stick itself but a sense-datum. The unusual case of the stick in water, reveals to us that all we ever perceive are sense-data, some of these accurately representing the situation in reality, and therefore veridical, some of them being misleading and therefore delusive. Although we only perceive sense-data our purpose relates to establishing the veracity of the world of material objects. The foundations of empirical knowledge are our sense experiences, but "propositions about material things go beyond the data; they are not directly verifiable" (Warnock, 1991, pp. 22-23), and need to be supported by evidence. However, this can never be sufficient to make their truth certain.

Austin's attack on the book is through a close reading of the arguments in the text with an analysis of the language used. Of particular interest to him is the use of the term "sense data". However, as noted above, Austin was sympathetic to the move away from Idealism, and it is important to consider what he does in Sense and Sensibilia. He attacks Ayer's contention that we never see things directly, arguing that this is not the sort of phrase that ordinary people use; he defends the ordinary language use of what he conceives to be the ordinary person, and he observes that in Ayer's argument "sense-data" are bound up with material things, particularly a certain category of "dry goods" such as tables and chairs, and that this ignores the wider experiences of ordinary people, such as seeing rainbows, the sky, and other non-material things; he attacks Ayer's "argument from illusion" by distinguishing carefully between an illusion and a delusion; he carefully examines the difference between the terms "look", "seem" and "appear", and he launches an attack on the idea of "veridical" and "delusive" perceptions. He then considers how we use the term "real".

It is in the final chapters of the book that he launches his most powerful attacks. Ayer's book is about the foundations of empirical knowledge, and his arguments about perception are a lead-in to his core ideas about such knowledge. Austin identifies that the way the argument is constructed leads Ayer to talk about propositions, some of these relating to language about sense data, and some of these relating to material objects. Austin has a variety of observations to make about this: Propositions about sense-data are corrigible as they are a report on sense-data and we may use inaccurate language to describe such sense-data. Similarly, propositions about the material world are often verifiable, and do not require evidence to make them certain. He gives the example of seeing a pig. If Austin sees evidence of a pig, he sees pig-like marks in the ground, buckets of pig food and so on. However, when the pig itself arrives it is not "evidence" of a pig; it is a pig. Austin's most important point is that we cannot divide language up into sense-data language and material object language, we just have language. His key point appears to be that the construction of Ayer's argument is not helpful in analysing the problems of perception and empirical knowledge.

Austin's main criticism in the early chapters appears to be that Ayer's model is clumsy. While it seems likely that he would not have objected to discussing a particular problem, such as a bent stick in water, this is a topic in itself, which requires a careful analysis of the terms

used in the initial formulation of the problem, followed by its analysis. In the later chapters he focuses on the importance of considering propositions, which can be wrong both in terms of sense data and in terms of material objects. His criticisms are that Ayer's philosophical system builds far too quickly towards generalisation, so that the general terms, which become dominant in philosophical discourse, are not examined for their philosophical weaknesses. This may explain why Ayer treated Austin as the greyhound who would not run but prevents others from running. Austin in contrast, does not appear to have an established philosophical system. After formulating a problem, he searches for a way of solving it, starting with a careful analysis of the words initially used in the formulation of the problem and the words that suggest themselves as ways towards solving it. However, it is also important to state that Sense and Sensibilia is a critique of the set of ideas of another philosopher. It is in his work on the philosophy of language that Austin starts to develop his own philosophical system, and it remains to be seen whether his own ideas are vulnerable to similar fine readings.

4. HOW TO DO THINGS WITH WORDS

Austin is most famous for his posthumously published William James lectures. Strum (2000) notes that in addition to How to Do Things with Words (1962), a number of Austin's articles involve the philosophy of language. Several are reprinted in the Philosophical Papers (1961): Other Minds (1946); How to Talk (1953-4); Performative Utterances (1956). One further paper, Performative-Constative (1958), is re-printed in The Philosophy of Language. One issue that emerges in assessing these writings is their order. In his analysis, Strum (2000) begins by considering Performative Utterances, which he argues is then extended into the more detailed analysis of How to Do Things with Words. However, it is important to note that the William James lectures were given in 1955, while Performative Utterances was published in 1956. Berlin (1973) notes of Austin that "one of the criticisms made of him. . . was that he refused to advance rather than face the smallest risk of successful counter-argument" (p. 6). It seems likely that Austin was much more careful when committing himself to print than in his own lecture notes. Performative Utterances has the feel of a partial summary of How to Do Things with Words, focusing on the key issue of the "performative utterance" and contrasting it to the "statement" preferred by philosophers at that time. However, in the article he omits many of the key terms, such as "illocution" which have become part of the terminology of applied linguistics.

In terms of the philosophical background noted above, there was considerable debate over Logical Positivism, and this led to consideration of the truth and falsity of statements, leading to a highly restricted area of study, with a focus on logic and a focus on empirical propositions about material things. From the position of the Logical Positivists most other statements were considered meaningless. Consequently, within the philosophical community at Oxford University, there was intense discussion of what was meaningful and what was nonsense. Austin clearly felt that although people often did talk nonsense, the categorization of what was nonsense and what was meaningful was too restrictive. It led him to his initial categorization of meaningful utterances into constatives and performatives. This categorization is used in How to Do Things

with Words. In its chapters, Austin develops his arguments on language in the greatest depth, framing the area of his concern, and then proceeding through a linguistic method to the development of a framework of categorization for what he calls "speech acts".

The framing of the problem connects strongly with the focus of philosophy on the truth and falsity of statements, and therefore has a link to the arguments propounded by Ayer. Austin (1961) makes a distinction between "utterances which report facts" and can be evaluated as true or false, and the "kind of utterance which looks like a statement and grammatically... would be classed as a statement, which is not nonsensical, and yet is not true or false" (p. 222). Examples of the latter are "I do," spoken in a marriage ceremony, "I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth," spoken in the naming ceremony of a ship, and "I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow." In all these cases, Austin argues that the utterance is not a case of reporting a state of affairs, but actually performing an action. These kinds of utterance he categorizes as "performative". In contrast to the true/false judgements made of statements which he labels as "constative", Austin introduces the terms felicitous/infelicitous, where the use of a performative to achieve an action is successful or unsuccessful. He then goes on to consider ways in which performatives can be felicitous or infelicitous.

Having made an initial definition of the performative, Austin then starts to explore it through a linguistic method. While he acknowledges that instances of performatives may be very varied, we might in principle be able to convert all instances of performatives into explicit performatives. For example the utterance "It's dangerous!" can be converted into the explicit performative "I warn you that it's dangerous." The purpose of this manoeuvre is to draw out the key verbs used to categorize and define particular performatives, in this case "warn". The performatives are eventually grouped under five provisional categories:

1. Verdictives (delivering a finding): acquit, hold, calculate, ...
2. Exercitives (giving a decision): order, command, direct, ...
3. Commissives (committing to an action): promise, vow, pledge, ...
4. Behabitives (reacting to others' behaviour): apologize, deplore, thank, ...
5. Expositives (expounding a view): affirm, emphasize, illustrate, ...

Austin breaks down speech acts in order to consider their component parts. He does this by describing a set of acts, which fall into two groups of three. The first set consists of the phonetic act, the phatic act and the rhetic act, summarised by Austin (1962) as follows:

> We may agree, without insisting on formulations or refinements, that to say anything is
>
> (A.a) always to perform the act of uttering noises (A 'phonetic' act) and the utterance is a phone;
> (A.b) always to perform the act of uttering... noises of a certain type belonging to... to a certain vocabulary... conforming to a certain grammar, with a certain intonation. This we

may call a 'phatic act' and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'pheme. . . and (A.c) generally to perform the act of using that pheme or its constituents with a more or less definite 'sense' and 'reference' (which together are equivalent to 'meaning'). This act we may call a 'rhetic' act, and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'rheme'. (pp. 92-93)

The more important triplet is that of the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. These are best illustrated in relation to one of Austin's examples:

Act (A) or Locution
He said to me, 'You can't do that'.
Act (B) or Illocution
He protested against my doing it.
Act (C) or Perlocution
He pulled me up, checked me. (p. 102)

The locution is the sentence uttered with sense and reference, the illocution is the force of the utterance, and the perlocution is the effect on the behaviour of the person to whom the sentence was uttered. Austin's main purpose is to establish the category of the illocutionary act, which he believes is often subsumed under the locutionary and perlocutionary acts.

In developing the argument, on the basis of the explicit performative, Austin then has to consider whether to include "I state that. . ." in the list of the performatives. This is crucial, as it goes to the heart of the performative/constative division. "Stating" something allows the inclusion of propositions which may be considered true or false. In addition, Austin also points out that there is a true/false aspect to performatives, further blurring the distinction. This leads him to the conclusion that "to say" something is "to do" something, so that the constative/performative distinction fades away, and he is left with a number of acts that make up the speech act (phonetic act, phatic act, rhetic act, locutionary act, illocutionary act, perlocutionary act) and a provisional taxonomy of five general categories of speech act: Verdictives, Exercitives, Commissives, Behabitives, and Expositives.

Given Austin's reputation for drilling holes in arguments, especially in Sense and Sensibilia, it is worth considering how well his own techniques can be used on in his arguments. For example, Austin also rules out language spoken by an actor in the performance of a play, describing this as "parasitic" on everyday language. However, by the standards he applied to Ayer's writing, "parasitic" language presumably drains the vitality of everyday language. For many people it might be considered dependent on the understandings developed in everyday language, but if a biological metaphor is to be used then would it not be better expressed as "dependent but symbiotic?"

Although Austin tends to be quite adept at finding his own exceptions to the ideas and categories developing in his arguments, there is something slightly strange about the first

examples of speech acts:

"I do." (Wedding)
"I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth." (Ship-naming)
"I give and bequeath my watch to my brother." (Will)
"I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow." (No context given)

The first two examples are of spoken language used in ceremonies, so that the range of words used in the ceremony are very restricted. The third relates to a legal document. Austin gives no context for the fourth example. On the basis of these he develops an analysis rich with terminology, such as "misfire", "misinvocation", "misapplication", "misexecution", yet most of his argument over the course of the lectures relates to items much closer to the fourth example. Does it require three whole lectures (chapters) to reach the stage where he starts to analyse everyday performatives? His analysis leads to an extensive terminology, and furthermore, if Austin believes strongly in the use of ordinary language, why does he use terms which are not connected to ordinary usage? Why does a performative have to be "felicitous" or "infelicitous", rather than "successful" or "unsuccessful"?

In relation to speech acts, there are six acts: The phonetic act, the phatic act, the rhetic act, the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary act. Searle (1971) makes the observation that there seems to be no difference between the rhetic act and the locutionary act, so there are in reality only five acts, but is it useful to consider all of these as "acts"? It seems clearer to call them "aspects," so that within a speech act, there is a phonetic aspect, a phatic aspect, a locutionary aspect, an illocutionary aspect, and a perlocutionary aspect.

In relation to illocution, Austin also collocates it with the word *force*, but this seems to be slightly ambiguous. The illocutionary act is about what the speaker is trying to do, and is connected to the speaker's purpose. However, the force of an utterance is more likely to be bound up with factors such as the situation in which it is uttered, the relationship between the speakers, their strength of character, and so on. Again, given the nature of the analysis, is it better to avoid the use of the term "force"?

Austin notes that there are problems with "I imply..." and "I insinuate..." which cannot be made into explicit performatives within the grammatical structure that he uses. However, if you imply or insinuate, you are by definition not being explicit. While he correctly raises the issue of whether these items are performatives, he does not clearly re-categorize them; surely a speech act may be made by implying or insinuating, which are ways of delivering the speech act implicitly. Has he trapped himself in his own method of making performatives explicit? The analysis falls within a categorization of explicit speech acts such as "I warn you that Farmer Giles is about to shoot your dog." I can also say, "I saw your dog chasing cows in Farmer Giles' field, and I saw him three minutes ago run out of his farmhouse with a shotgun in his hands."

In defence of some of these criticisms it is important to note that Austin died relatively young, so that his ideas in the philosophy of language were at an early stage. How To Do Things

with Words was published after his death because his William James lectures were considered important. He is certainly cautious about his analysis in his final lecture. Also, his published article, Performative Utterances, does not include his five categories of speech act. In the same way that he eventually finds the performative-constative distinction untenable, it seems likely that he would have re-worked his categories of speech act if he had lived longer. Many of the ideas have been re-worked and further developed by Searle, who built on the initial speech act research.

5. AUSTIN'S INFLUENCE ON LINGUISTICS

Austin's influence in linguistics comes partly from the particular approach to philosophy that he inspired: John Searle is the philosopher subsequently most closely associated with the development of speech act theory, and whose contribution to the field is extensive; Paul Grice added to the area, producing ideas that were complementary to speech act theory. Austin was in many ways a major contributor to the climate in which these philosophers flourished, as he started to open up the field of the philosophy of language, promoting it mainly through lectures and seminars rather than his own writing.

The use of the theory of speech acts became integral to applied linguistics: With the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching in the 1970s, linguists found in it a useful body of ideas that fitted with the new ideas on teaching language as communication. Speech act theory has become a recognized part of many books on linguistics, particularly in relation to discourse analysis and pragmatics (Widdowson, 1978, 1996; Yule, 1996; Cook, 1989; Schiffrin, 1994). A particularly clear example of an applied linguist making the theory relevant to language classrooms is Widdowson (1978), who uses the general framework of the speech act to develop ideas on cohesion and coherence. Widdowson prefers Searle's (1973) adaptation of Austin, using the term "proposition" in place of "locution." In Teaching Language as Communication, Widdowson focuses on discourse, showing how speech act theory can help develop an understanding of the development of texts, and examining the difference between cohesion and coherence. One of the weaknesses of Austin's approach is the heavy emphasis on the sentence as the key unit of meaning, and while this works well to illuminate the different possible explicit speech acts, it has limitations. Warnock (1973) notes that Austin tended to focus on the sentence as the key unit for discussion, which worked out reasonably well for analysing a book such as Wittgenstein's Tractatus, but not for something like the Philosophical Investigations. Widdowson examines both spoken and written discourse. On spoken discourse, he works in a way that is similar to Austin, making the discourse more explicit, as in the example below:

A: That's the telephone. (Can you answer it, please?)
B: (No, I can't answer it because) I'm in the bath.
A: O.K. (I'll answer it). (p. 29)

He then takes the analysis into written discourse by examining certain texts. This helps to

illuminate the difference between coherence and cohesion. In terms of cohesion, the text involves a variety of references, so that the propositions are all recognisably linked together. However, Widdowson (1978) observes that cohesive links are not enough, and uses the technique of rearranging the sentences of the original text to create alternative texts. He argues that some of these texts are better than others because they are more coherent:

> A discourse is coherent to the extent that we recognize it as representative of normal language use, to the extent that we can accept the sequence of illocutionary acts as conforming to known conventions. (p. 44)

This contrast between coherence and cohesion in texts is directly linked to the distinction between illocutions and propositions (locutions).

With the development of ideas on Communicative Language Teaching in the 1970s, the move from a purely grammatical syllabus to a notional/functional one is another area where speech act theory had some influence. Although the term "function" has become dominant, functions could equally well be described as speech acts.

CONCLUSION

This article has focused on both Austin's life and his ideas, with a strong focus on the development of speech act theory. In relation to his life, Austin's work on the theory forms only part of a much wider set of activities. As noted earlier, he had a strong desire to do something practical, "something for which at the end of the day there was more to show" (Berlin, 1973, p. 1). Opportunities for this seem to have emerged twice in his life, once out of necessity and once out of choice. In relation to the former, Austin demonstrated his worth in wartime intelligence. In relation to other work, he was considered one of the best delegates of the Oxford University Press, involving himself in children's books, books on language and linguistics, and initiating a new series of translations of Aristotle's work.

His second influence was in teaching, where he set great store in developing clear methodical thinking in his students. Although he was elected to All Souls and could have spent his years focused on the production of books and articles at Oxford University, he very quickly took up a teaching post at Magdalen College, where he had a strong influence on colleagues and graduate students, through discussions and seminars, developing a collaborative approach to solving linguistic problems after his war experiences

While Austin was one of the "dangerous new empiricists" (Berlin, 1973) of his time, he was one of those who rejected the straightjacket of Logical Positivism and developed a broader view of philosophy. The publication for which Austin is most remembered is How to Do Things With Words, and in consequence the start of speech act theory, which has been developed and re-worked extensively by Searle. These ideas have been incorporated into linguistic theory, and contributed to the development of new approaches to teaching emerging in the 1970s, and described under the umbrella term of Communicative Language Teaching.

It should be noted that this article has been predominantly based upon two posthumously published works. The extent to which the editors have had to fill gaps in such notes to produce the books is beyond the scope of this article, but part of the reason for examining Austin's life and published articles has been to examine the two books with as much supporting evidence as possible.

Finally, this article has examined the life and ideas of Austin, with a heavy weighting towards his contribution to the philosophy of language, which in turn had an effect on linguistics. However, it is almost impossible to cite Austin, without referring to the work of John Searle, who has written extensively on speech acts. Searle's contribution will be considered in a subsequent article.

REFERENCES

Austin, J. L. (1961). *Philosophical Papers.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to Do Things with Words* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Austin, J. L. & Warnock, G.J. (1964). *Sense and Sensibilia.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Austin, J. L. (1971). Performative-Constative. In Searle, J. (Ed.). *The Philosophy of Language.* (pp. 1-12) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ayer, A. J. (1964). The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge London: Macmillan.

Berlin I. (1973) Austin and the early beginnings of Oxford Philosophy. In Berlin, I. (Ed.) *Essays on J. L. Austin.* (pp. 1-16). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cook, G. (1989). *Discourse.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hegel, G. W. F. (1977). *Phenomenology of Spirit.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1807)

Howatt, A. P. R. & Widdowson, H.G. (2004). *A History of English Language Teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pitcher (1973) Austin: a personal memoir. In Berlin, I. (Ed.) *Essays on J. L. Austin.* (pp. 1-16). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rees, G. (1972) *A Chapter of Accidents.* New York: The Library Press.

Rowse, A. L. (1993). *All Souls in My Time.* London: Duckworth.

Schiffrin, D. (1994). *Approaches to Discourse.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Searle, J. (1971). What is a speech act? In Searle, J. (Ed.). *The Philosophy of Language.* (pp. 39-53). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Searle, J. (1979). *Expression and Meaning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Strum, A. (2000). *Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Warnock, G. J. (1991). *J. L. Austin.* London: Routledge.

Warnock G. J. (1973). Saturday mornings. In Berlin, I. (Ed.) *Essays on J. L. Austin.* (pp.1-16). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Warnock, G. J. (1969). John Langshaw Austin, a biographical sketch. In Fann, K. T. (Ed.).

Symposium on J. L. Austin. (pp. 3-21). New York: Humanities Press.
Widdowson, H. G. (1996). *Linguistics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Teaching Language as Communication.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

要　約

J. L. Austinの影響

デービス・ウォルター
広島大学外国語教育研究センター

John Langshaw Austinは，応用言語学の分野において*How to Do Things with Words*（Harvard University Press, 1962［坂本百大 訳『言語と行為』大修館書店，1978年］）で広く知られており，この本の内容は1955にハーバード大学でのWilliam James講義に基づいている。本論文の目的は，従来の研究と比べもう少し広い文脈でAustinの考えを吟味することである。具体的には，没後に出版された二つの講義を中心に振り返り，彼の言語哲学と言語学との現代における関連意義を考えてみる。

本論文の初めでは，Austinの生涯について，彼の学問的背景に焦点を当てるとともに，元同僚と門下生による様々な記述をもとにまとめる。次に彼の哲学に対する基本的な捉え方と，何故「（オックスフォード）日常言語学派」と呼ばれるに至ったかを考えてみる。さらに，もう一つの著名な講義メモである*Sense and Sensibilia,*（Oxford University Press, 1964［丹治信春・守屋唱進 訳『知覚の言語 ―センスとセンシビリア―』勁草書房，1984年］）を論理実証主義（Logical Positivism）の視点から吟味する。そして最後に，William James講義の価値と言語学研究に貢献したことを，Widdowsonの一貫性と結束性との関わりの中で述べてみたい。