Widdowson's Use of Speech Act Theory in his Approach to Analyzing Discourse

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My aims in this article are to discuss Widdowson's (1978) ideas on cohesion and coherence and the underlying philosophy that is used to establish the distinction, then to examine whether the definition of cohesion can be changed in order to make an analysis of stretches of discourse easier for language teachers. While Widdowson uses his analysis of discourse to argue for the use of certain kinds of written texts in language teaching, the analysis of discourse itself, particularly in relation to correcting students' written work, or providing reading texts for students, is an important part of most teachers' work. I argue that Widdowson's analysis of discourse, while giving support to his teaching ideas, is not easy to use as a framework of analysis in this more practical everyday aspect of teaching. Consequently, I explore the underlying philosophy and propose a change to the definition of cohesion.

This article is focused primarily on one book, Widdowson's Teaching Language as Communication. In a previous article (Davies, 2010), I noted that Widdowson draws on the ideas that emerge in the philosophy of language to develop ideas on teaching languages. In this article I consider how he links the two fields, by examining his use of ideas drawn from John (L.) Austin and John Searle. I argue that he uses a hybrid approach, based on the ideas of both philosophers, and that this creates ambiguity in the analysis. I argue that Widdowson has much more in common with the ordinary language philosophy of Austin, where problems are analyzed through natural language rather than through the analyses of Searle, who incorporates symbolic devices drawn from logic. I then consider whether an analysis of discourse using Austin's concept of the *locutionary act* gives greater clarity than Searle's concept of the *propositional act*, and examine the implications of this change on the concept of cohesion.

In the first section, I give a brief summary of Teaching Language as Communication, particularly with reference to its first chapter, which sets up the overarching ideas of 'usage' and 'use' that are a constant theme within the book. In the second section, I consider the link to the two philosophers of language, J. L. Austin and John Searle, examining some of the differences between them, particularly in relation to the difference between a *locutionary act* and a *propositional act*.

In the third section, I consider Widdowson's chapter on discourse, where he takes the concepts of the *propositional act* and *illocutionary act*, and uses them in developing the ideas of cohesion and coherence, which can aid the analysis of stretches of language. I then consider two key problems connected to the use of Searle's concepts, given that Widdowson's analysis is primarily based on an ordinary language approach. These problems are the absence of

definition of the *proposition*, and the overlap that exists between *propositional acts* and *illocutionary acts*. Finally, I consider the implications of using the concept of the *locutionary act* in contrast to the *propositional act*, and re-define the concept of cohesion.

Several points should initially be made in relation to Teaching Language as Communication, these being the spirit in which the book is written, the differences between philosophy and applied linguistics, the limitations of the analysis, and the necessity of prescriptivism in language teaching.

In his introduction, Widdowson (1978) makes clear the spirit in which he has written the book. He distinguishes between the classical view on publication, where a writer has essentially worked out all the ideas he/she is writing about and reveals them in a way that is as definitive and precise as possible. In contrast to this he describes the romantic approach as one which is less cautious, and regards the aim as a device for public speculation. He notes "the aim here is to stimulate interest by exposure, to suggest rather than to specify, to allow the public access to personal thinking" (p. x). Widdowson subscribes to this latter view, and it is in this spirit that I have written this article. I treat the book as open to interpretation and discussion. Given that it is a book on applied linguistics, I make my case in this field rather than in relation to issues that emerge in the philosophy of language. While applied linguistics draws from the philosophy of language, I argue that it is a different discipline with different overall aims. Some of the analysis in this article focuses on the purposes of the three thinkers (Austin, Searle, Widdowson). In philosophy, I have argued that Austin was a pioneer (Davies, 2010), breaking philosophy at Oxford University out of the strait-jacket of logical positivism; having established the concept of the speech act, he attempted to identify, categorize, and list speech acts through the use of *illocutionary verbs*. Searle is also a philosopher, one with several clear aims for his research, who seeks to develop precise tools for achieving these. Widdowson, an applied linguist, draws on the philosophy of language to shed light on language teaching and open possibilities for teaching methodology and materials development. This leads to differences in stress and emphasis when the same sets of ideas are being used. Issues that may be central to an argument in philosophy may have less centrality when they are used to develop ideas in applied linguistics.

A further consideration in applied linguistics relates to the usefulness of an analysis of discourse for the purposes to which it is put. This article is written from an applied linguistics perspective, with a focus on the limitations of a particular set of ideas. Widdowson (1990) notes that researchers working in applied linguistics "continually fall into the error of supposing a solution designed to match one problem must be applicable to a quite different problem as well" (p. 8). In terms of the discourse analyzed in Teaching Language as Communication, his examples are oriented towards facts and processes. While Widdowson (1992) has examined areas such as poetry in later work, the discourse examined in Teaching Language as Communication, is different. Widdowson (1978) argues that English language teachers could teach English through other subjects on the curriculum, but his examples tend to focus on a narrow range, where the communication of facts and processes are very important. Most of his examples are taken from geography, chemistry, and physics. In one example he also uses history, but this example is

more to do with the conveying of established knowledge rather than historical interpretation.

Given that the discourse examined is of a particular type, it is important to consider the issue of prescriptivism in language teaching. While linguistics itself is categorized as a descriptive science, Stern (1983) argues that language teaching involves a prescriptive approach. Language teachers are ultimately involved in raising the level of English of their students. Widdowson (1978) is making his analyses based on clear ideas of what 'good' writing involves, with a particular kind of discourse in mind: clear, empirical and concise, eliminating unnecessary repetition, and taking into account the levels of knowledge of the interlocutors in spoken discourse and the target audience in written discourse.

In analyzing Widdowson's (1978) arguments, I wish to state my own position, which is agonistic: In this article, I suggest that Widdowson's analysis leads to certain problems in relation to the defining of a *propositional act* and the ability to demarcate between cohesion and coherence on the basis of *illocutionary acts* and *propositional acts*. I suggest an alternative definition of cohesion, which I do not believe alters most of the key arguments relating to teaching in the book. In using the concept of the *locutionary act*, rather than the *propositional act,* and in re-defining the concept of cohesion, something is gained and something is lost. My argument is that the re-definition of cohesion brings it closer to the ordinary language of teachers, and so makes it easier for a teacher to analyze discourse, whether this is in assessing materials for classes or students' writing. Against this position, critics can argue that a certain tightness of analysis is lost. In applied linguistics, conceptual schemes are used as tools in the process of analysis. It is up to teachers to decide whether they are useful or not, and I leave it to the individual readers of this article to judge the merits of my suggestions.

USAGE AND USE

As the title of the book clearly shows, its key theme is teaching language as communication, where the target language is used in a way that would be natural to a competent speaker of the language, rather than in a way that is unnatural beyond the confines of the language classroom. Widdowson notes that the ability to produce syntactically correct sentences, while important, is not a sufficient condition to be able to communicate in a language. Consequently he makes the important distinction between "usage" and "use". In terms of usage, Widdowson gives the example of a teacher-student dialogue:

Teacher: What is on the table?
Students: There is a book on the table. (p. 6)

He points out that the exercise is unnatural for several reasons. The students' response is too long: it would be natural to respond with "A book". In addition, if the book is clearly in view to everyone in the classroom, then it is an unnatural dialogue. Consequently, he categorizes such activities under "usage". In contrast, instances of use occur in situations that are natural to the

classroom. Also, depending on context, a grammatical structure may be used to focus either on usage or on use: Widdowson observes that "This is a pen" is an instance of usage because all the people in the classroom will know what a pen is, but "This is a barometer" is an instance of use where a teacher is introducing a new piece of equipment to students.

In order to achieve his aim, Widdowson raises the question of what should be taught, and his provisional answer to this is that the foreign language should be used as a medium for teaching other subjects on the school curriculum. By doing this he creates a focal point for deciding what should be taught and how language might be organized into units. It is also important to note that, while the analysis of language covers all the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, the main focus of the book in relation to teaching language is on the skills of reading and writing. A further point of importance is that Widdowson accepts that language teaching designed to focus on usage is useful:

> This does not mean that exercises in particular aspects of usage cannot be introduced where necessary; but these would be auxiliary to the communicative purposes of the course as a whole and not introduced as an end in themselves. (pp. 19–20)

This then creates the overall structure of the book: Teaching language as a medium for teaching other subjects on the curriculum.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE: AUSTIN AND SEARLE

In relation to Teaching Language as Communication, Widdowson cites both Searle and Austin in his notes to Chapter 2 (Discourse). However, the pairing of terms he uses in his analyses, *propositional acts/illocutionary acts,* are Searle's rather than Austin's, whose paired terms are *locutionary acts* and *illocutionary acts.* Searle (1973) argues that this is not a simple change in nomenclature, rather it underpins an important difference between the two thinkers. The argument is explored in this section to clarify the analysis used by Widdowson.

John Austin

Austin's work, cited in Teaching Language as Communication, is How to Do Things with Words, a book compiled by Urmson & Sbisa from Austin's original lecture notes for the 1955 William James lectures at Harvard University. The ideas contained in the book are developments on and re-workings of a set of lectures that Austin gave in the early 1950s, which he called "Words and Deeds".

The original distinction that Austin (1961; 1962; 1971) chooses to make is between utterances that state facts and those which are clearly meaningful but cannot be evaluated on the basis of truth and falsity. The former are labelled 'constatives', and an example would be "Paris is in France", while the latter are labelled 'performatives', and an example would be "I bet £5 that Silver Blaze will win the 2:30 at Epsom". Where constatives are true or false, performatives are

felicitous or infelicitous (successful or unsuccessful). In investigating this division, he comes to the conclusion that the constatives also have felicity conditions and performatives have truth conditions. The clearest example of the felicity conditions connected to a constative is Moore's statement "The cat is on the mat but I do not believe it". This is a nonsensical utterance, because to say the sentence also signals a belief in it to which the speaker commits. In relation to a performative involving truth conditions, a verdict of "guilty" is associated with a set of facts that are true or false. Consequently, Austin comes to the conclusion that to say something is to do something and to perform a *speech act*. Thus, he abandons the original distinction, eliminating both categories and replacing them with this general term *speech act*. The resulting analysis of the *speech act* leads to key ideas that are used by Widdowson in Teaching Language as Communication.

In How to Do Things with Words, Austin divides the *speech act* into six component acts: *phonetic, phatic,* and *rhetic* acts; *locutionary, illocutionary,* and *perlocutionary* acts. In terms of the first triplet, to say something is to utter certain noises (*phonetic act*), to utter words following a certain syntax and vocabulary belonging to a particular language (*phatic act*), and to utter these words with a certain sense and reference (*rhetic act*). In terms of the second triplet, the key terms are the *locutionary* and *illocutionary acts*, illustrated by Austin in the following way:

Act (A) or locution
    He said to me, "You can't do that."

Act (B) or illocution
    He protested against my doing it.
(p. 102)

In the case of reporting direct speech, there is no judgement of how the original words were meant. In the case of reporting an utterance through indirect speech, a judgement is made of what the speaker did by using those words. It is important to note here that the examples cited by Austin are 'reports' of the *locutionary act* and the *illocutionary act*, and this creates a certain amount of ambiguity when Widdowson analyzes discourse.

A further key point involves the generality or specificity of *illocutionary acts*. Austin seeks to categorize speech acts according to *illocutionary verbs* such as 'warn' and 'promise'. However, the full *illocutionary act* reported above, could be made explicit, an example being 'I protest against your doing it'. In this article I make a distinction between *general illocutionary acts* (warnings, promises, requests) and *specific illocutionary acts* (a warning not to smoke, a promise to be at the station at 10:00).

John Searle

Searle, whose work Speech Acts is also cited by Widdowson (1978), further develops Austin's ideas. However, he also has a variety of important criticisms of Austin's original analysis. It is important to consider these because a Searle-type analysis of speech acts is different from an Austin-type analysis, and the purposes of the two philosophers are slightly different. Austin, an ordinary language philosopher, produces an analysis using ordinary language. Once he has established the component acts of the *speech act* as a whole, he uses reported speech to collect and categorize sets of *illocutionary verbs*, which he feels are the best linguistic indicators of the variety of speech acts. In examining Austin's analysis, Searle (1971; 1973) argues that there are a variety of weaknesses and these lead Searle, in contrast to Austin's *locutionary/ illocutionary acts*, to use a different pairing: the *propositional act* and the *illocutionary act*. In defining the *propositional act*, Searle (1973) is very clear that the terms *locutionary act* and *propositional act* are not interchangeable.

Searle observes that Austin works with ordinary language and uses direct speech and indirect speech to illustrate differences between *phatic acts* and *rhetic acts*, and also between *locutionary acts* and *illocutionary acts*. Thus, "He said 'Is it Oxford or Cambridge?'" reports a phatic act, and "He asked whether it was Oxford or Cambridge" reports a *rhetic act*. By using direct speech, the speaker does not make an interpretation of the reported words. He/she simply reports the actual words. By using indirect speech, the speaker ascribes sense and reference to what was said. Similarly, an example of reporting a locution and illocution is given by Austin (1962):

He said to me "You can't do that."
He protested against my doing it. (p. 102)

Searle (1973) argues that in reporting the *rhetic act*, Austin is using *illocutionary verbs* of a rather general type. He notes that there is a problem with the six categories that make up the *speech act*. In creating the categories, Austin states that to perform a *phatic act*, a speaker must also perform a *phonetic act*. Similarly, to perform a *rhetic act*, a speaker must also perform a *phatic act*. A *rhetic act* is a *phatic act* spoken with sense and reference. However, at the next stage of the analysis, Austin introduces the term *locutionary act* which appears to be a simple re-naming of the *rhetic act*. The *locutionary act* and the *rhetic act* are one and the same. Consequently, one or other of the terms can be dropped, leaving four acts relating to the speaker:

phonetic act
phatic act
locutionary act (rhetic act)
illocutionary act

However, Searle remains dissatisfied with the categorization because, using Austin's method of direct and indirect speech to make distinctions, he notes that problems still remain. In my example below, direct speech is used to report the locution while indirect speech is used to report the illocution:

He said, "I'll do it tomorrow." (Reported locution)
He promised to do it tomorrow/the next day. (Reported illocution)

Searle (1973) argues that the 'direct speech/indirect speech' way of differentiating between the *phatic act* and the *rhetic act* is the same as the way of differentiating between the *locutionary act* and *illocutionary act*. In fact, as the *locutionary act* is the *rhetic act*, the *locutionary (rhetic) act* is sometimes established through reporting direct speech and sometimes through reporting indirect speech.

A further important criticism by Searle (1973) is that there is often an overlap between *locutionary acts* and *illocutionary acts*. In the example above, the promise is reported in indirect speech. However, Searle observes that there are many cases where a promise is made specific in direct speech, and he argues that the *locutionary act* and the *illocutionary act* are then the same. "I promise to do it tomorrow" is consequently both a *locution* and an *illocution*.

In his analysis, Searle (1969) makes the distinction between *propositional content* and *illocutionary force-indicating devices*. Using a different approach from Austin, he argues that, in the case of utterances, the *propositional content* can always be separated from the *illocutionary force-indicating device*. *Propositional acts* can be evaluated on the basis of truth or falsity, *illocutionary acts* can be evaluated on the basis of felicity or infelicity. To illustrate this, Searle (1973) uses a symbolic device:

Symbolically, we might represent the sentence as containing an illocutionary force-indicating device and a propositional content indicator. Thus:

$$F(p),$$

Where the range of possible values for F will determine the range of illocutionary forces, and the p is a variable over the infinite range of propositions. (p. 156)

In this way Searle (1969) is able to make a strong distinction between *propositional* and *illocutionary* aspects of a sentence. However, to do this, he uses a partially symbolic system to represent utterances:

Thus, "How many people were at the party?" is represented as

?(X number of people were at the party)

"Why did he do it?" is represented as

?(He did it because…) (p. 31)

Widdowson's hybrid approach

Depending on the analysis used (Austin's or Searle's), different problems arise. Widdowson (1978) cites both philosophers in his chapter on discourse, so that the analysis appears to be a hybrid of the two thinkers. This leads to some ambiguity in his analysis. From a very surface level, with regard to Searle's terminology (*propositional act /illocutionary act*), it seems that his (Searle's) framework of analysis is used in Teaching Language as Communication. However, much is also drawn from Austin: On the level of terminology, Widdowson's deployment of similar sounding terms, such as 'usage' and 'use', and 'cohesion' and 'coherence', seems to echo Austin, who favoured such terms as 'misexecution' and 'misapplication'; from the much more important perspective of approach, Widdowson's preference for an analysis free of logical symbols also has more in common with Austin than with Searle. There therefore appears to be an ambivalence in the writing between an Austin-style approach to discourse and a Searle-style one. However, as noted above, the two thinkers work with slightly different conceptual schemes based on different philosophical approaches. My argument is that Searle did identify some weaknesses in Austin's argument. However, his work is not simply an upgrading of Austin's system. It is related, but the two philosophies exist to some extent in parallel.

The challenge in this article is to evaluate both philosophies in the light of language and language teaching, and to establish a framework that is effective within the discipline of applied linguistics. While Widdowson (1978) produces a generally powerful analysis of discourse, the hybrid approach he uses leads to the important problems of defining *propositions*, and clearly separating *illocutionary acts* from *propositional acts*. In the next section, I examine Widdowson's arguments and consider these problems that emerge from what appears to be a hybrid approach.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

One of the purposes of this article is to clarify terms in a way that makes them easy to use in evaluating discourse. Central to this section is the question of classification: What is a *proposition*? What is an *illocution*? How are they related?

The elusive proposition

I have noted that one of the criticisms of Austin was his line-by-line approach to an analysis of texts (Davies, 2010). Widdowson's (1978) main focus is to examine stretches of text (discourse) from the perspective of *propositional acts* and *illocutionary acts*. In his chapter on discourse, Widdowson starts with an analysis that almost exactly replicates Austin's approach, introducing an example in which a speaker (A) makes a remark to a listener (B):

A: My husband will return the parcel tomorrow. (p. 22)

Widdowson notes that if B talks to a third party, then two ways of doing so are to use direct and indirect speech:

B: She said: 'My husband will return the parcel tomorrow.' (p. 22)

B: She said that her husband would return the parcel tomorrow. (p. 22)

Regarding the first (direct speech) example, Widdowson states that B is reporting A's *sentence*. In relation to the reported speech, Widdowson makes the following observation: "In this case it is not A's sentence that is being reported but the *proposition* that her sentence is being used to express" (p. 22). The introduction of the concept of a *proposition* is important as Widdowson observes that the proposition can be reported in a variety of ways:

B: (i) She said that the parcel would be returned by her husband tomorrow.
   (ii) She said that it would be her husband who would return the parcel tomorrow.
   (iii) She said that it would be the parcel that her husband would return tomorrow.
   (iv) She said that what her husband would do tomorrow would be to return the parcel. (p. 23)

He then notes that B can also specify what *illocutionary act* he thought that A performed, a way that at the same time reports A's *proposition*:

B: She promised that her husband would return the parcel tomorrow.
   She threatened that her husband would return the parcel tomorrow.
   She warned me that her husband would return the parcel tomorrow.
   She predicted that her husband would return the parcel tomorrow.
   She mentioned in passing that her husband would return the parcel tomorrow. (p. 23)

Most of the analysis to this point appears to reflect Austin: The argument is couched in ordinary language, and Widdowson uses direct and indirect speech to highlight the difference between *propositions* and *illocutionary acts*. However, he has carefully chosen the term *proposition* over *locution*, and he has introduced the term *sentence*. Thus, in B's direct speech report of A's utterance "She said: 'My husband will return the parcel tomorrow'" B reports A's *sentence*. Given the method that Widdowson is using, where B reports the sentence, it is very straightforward to identify the sentence itself: 'My husband will return the parcel tomorrow.' In the indirect speech example, "She said that her husband would return the parcel tomorrow" B reports the *proposition*. Widdowson gives an example of the *sentence* and the report of the *proposition*, but he does not give the *proposition* itself. With direct speech the *sentence* is clear. However, in

indirect speech, what is the *proposition*? It appears to be an unspecified abstraction that floats above the level of the *sentence*. This problem is addressed by Searle (1969) through a combination of symbols drawn from logic and through the re-writing of the utterance on the basis of F*(p)*. However, Widdowson is using Austin's ordinary language approach and avoiding Searle's symbolism. Consequently, when Widdowson writes about *propositional development*, he does in fact refer to a set of unspecified abstractions that the reader is expected to infer on the basis of sentences and reported speech. The questions that I raise in the discussion section are whether this is satisfactory and whether Austin's *locutionary/illocutionary* distinction can be used to avoid this problem.

Propositional and illocutionary demarcation

Having chosen and explained the categories of the *proposition* and the *illocutionary act*, Widdowson then uses them to analyze discourse, initially through an examination of conversational exchanges, and later through an examination of written texts. In developing his analysis, he introduces two key terms: 'Cohesion' is used to describe the links between *propositions*, and 'coherence' is used to describe the links between *illocutionary acts*. Widdowson notes that "we may say that a discourse is cohesive to the extent that it allows for effective propositional development. Further, this appropriacy will often require sentences not to express complete propositions" (p. 27). An example of cohesion is given by the following dialogue:

A: What happened to the crops?
B: They were destroyed by the rain.
A: When?
B: Last week. (p. 26)

In contrast, Widdowson examines *illocutionary development*, where it is possible to make sense of discourse that is not cohesive, by focusing on the *illocutionary acts* the speakers are performing. One of his key examples is the following exchange:

A: That's the telephone.
B: I'm in the bath.
A: OK. (p. 29)

In this example, Widdowson points out that there are no *propositional links* between the three lines, arguing that the text is not cohesive. However, it is reasonably easy to identify an *illocutionary link* between the lines, and he consequently expands the example to make it into a cohesive text:

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

A: OK. (I'll answer it). (p. 29)

Once again, the question arises whether the analysis is following Searle or Austin. Given the focus on *propositions*, there remains the issue of whether he is drawing on Searle. As noted earlier, Searle aims for a strict separation between the *illocutionary* part and *propositional* part of the utterance through the use of *F(p)*. His decision to use this approach is based on his observation that, while Austin's examples involve reported speech to draw out *illocutionary verbs*, it is possible to have a situation where an utterance includes an *illocutionary verb*. To take a hypothetical stretch of discourse that resembles Widdowson's bathroom example, the following dialogue is possible:

A: That's the front door.
B: I'm busy, Mum.
A: With what?
B: Errm.
A: Look I'm telling you to answer the front door.
B: Errm, I would if I could, but the handle's come off the bathroom door.

In this case, the *illocutionary verb* is explicit in the direct speech: "I'm telling you... ". It is due to cases such as these that Searle uses the more complex strategy of representing *illocutionary force-indicating devices* by various symbols and formulating *propositions* in ways which have little similarity to ordinary language. Searle registers his dissatisfaction with Austin's approach on the basis that there is an overlap between *locutions* and *illocutions* in the form of direct speech involving *illocutionary verbs*.

Another case of overlap occurs with certain forms of *illocutionary marker*. In his discussion of written texts, Widdowson examines what happens when two sentences are combined to form a discourse or part of a discourse, using the following:

The committee decided to continue with its arrangements. Morgan left London on the midnight train. (p. 30)

He notes that when the sentences are put together, the reader starts to look for a connection between them. Once the reader has inferred the *illocutionary value* of the sentences, he/she can use an *illocutionary marker* to make the situation clearer:

We might, for example, interpret the second proposition as having the value of a qualifying statement of some kind which in some sense 'corrects' what is stated in the first proposition. We can make this interpretation explicit by using what we will call an illocutionary marker: *however*. (p. 30)

In the case of this category of *illocutionary markers*, a related problem emerges as with the inclusion of *illocutionary verbs* in utterances: The *illocutionary marker* has both an *illocutionary* and a *propositional* aspect. From the point of view of Widdowson's *propositional development*, it links sentences. It also signals a qualification. It is both *propositional* and *illocutionary*, in contrast to pronouns, which usually help with *propositional development* only. In this case, it is not possible to demarcate clearly between *illocutions* and *propositions*. Another example of this difficulty occurs when Widdowson examines the following sentences, and considers what happens if they are combined into a paragraph:

1. Rocks are composed of a number of different substances.
2. The different substances of which rocks are composed are called minerals.
3. It is according to their chemical composition that minerals are classified.
4. Some minerals are oxides.
5. Some minerals are sulphides.
6. Some minerals are silicates.
7. Ores are minerals from which we extract metals.
8. What gold is is an ore. (p. 32)

He analyzes the paragraph from the point of cohesion and coherence. One problem he describes in his analysis of cohesion relates to Sentence 3. He notes that it is an example of a cleft sentence, which is normally used to correct something written earlier. However, there is nothing to correct in the previous sentence, and so he re-writes Sentence 3 as "Minerals are classified according to their chemical composition" (p. 36). This argument does not appear to have much to do with cohesion. His re-writing of the cleft sentence is because it 'does' something: It corrects previous information. His argument deals with the *illocutionary* effect of a cleft sentence, and consequently with coherence. It is coherence that is dominant, with cohesion dependent upon it. Thus, the attempt to separate an analysis into coherence and cohesion on the basis of *illocutionary* and *propositional* development becomes increasingly difficult. Yet cohesion and coherence are very useful terms. If they are not about *propositional* and *illocutionary development*, what are they about? My provisional answer is that they relate much more to what is overt in the text and what is not overt, and if this is so, the use of Austin's *locutionary/illocutionary* distinction has a number of advantages.

RE-DEFINING COHESION USING LOCUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

So far, I have argued that there are two problems with Widdowson's analysis: The lack of definition of the *proposition* itself, and the overlap of *illocutionary markers* with *propositional links*. Of these two problems, the first seems more important, and there seem to be two possible solutions. The first is to accept that the *propositions* are generally undefined, but to accept that they are theoretically definable through a Searle-type analysis. Returning to

Widdowson's earlier example, the following are all sentences related to one *proposition*:

B: (i) She said that the parcel would be returned by her husband tomorrow.
   (ii) She said that it would be her husband who would return the parcel tomorrow.
   (iii) She said that it would be the parcel that her husband would return tomorrow.
   (iv) She said that what her husband would do tomorrow would be to return the parcel. (p. 23)

For this example, the *proposition* seems to hover close to the sentences themselves. However, an example taken from Searle (1969) is less intuitively easy to follow. Searle observes that the same proposition is expressed in the following five sentences:

1. Sam smokes habitually. (p. 22)
2. Does Sam smoke habitually? (p. 22)
3. Sam, smoke habitually! (p. 22)
4. Would that Sam smoked habitually. (p. 22)
5. Mr Samuel Martin is a regular smoker of tobacco (p. 24)

    There seems to be something generally unsatisfactory with assuming an undefined *proposition* that can be abstracted from all sentences. An alternative approach is to remove the concept of a *proposition* and to focus on the *sentence* itself, which is Austin's concept of a *locution*. How then would this differ from the *proposition/illocutionary act* distinction? In considering this it is useful to try moving away from *reports* to actually stating *locutions* and *illocutions*; one of the problems that emerges from Widdowson's example is in the use of reported speech itself. This does not seem to be necessary, and Austin, in his early chapters of <u>How to Do Things with Words</u>, when he is considering the constative/performative distinction, uses a different approach:

    (1) Primary utterance: 'I shall be there.'
    (2) Explicit performative: 'I promise I shall be there.' (p. 69)

After collapsing the distinction, Austin prefers to use reported speech for his analysis of speech acts, and while this is helpful in distinguishing the *locutionary act* from the *illocutionary act*, there are alternatives. For example, his basic argument is that all communicative utterances are performatives; constatives are essentially incorporated into the performative category, and both are re-labelled as speech acts; they 'do' something. In Widdowson's example of the parcel, there is a primary utterance and an explicit performative:

    Primary utterance: My husband will return it tomorrow.
    Explicit performative: I promise that my husband will return it tomorrow.

Here, the primary utterance can be identified with the *locution* and the explicit performative

with the *explicit specific illocution.* Searle's criticism of the *locutionary act* is that some *locutionary acts* overtly signal the *illocution.* For example, "I promise that I'll do it tomorrow" shows that the speaker is making a promise. In the case of primary and explicit utterances this is unsatisfactory in a Searle-type analysis:

> *Locution:* I promise I'll do it tomorrow.
> *Explicit specific Illocution:* I promise I'll do it tomorrow.

Searle wishes to separate *propositional content* from *illocutionary force-indicating devices.* However, as noted earlier, applied linguistics is a different discipline with different aims, and does not require a total separation of the *propositional content* from the *illocutionary force-indicating device.* If the *illocutionary force-indicating device* is overt in the utterance, this makes the interpretation of the message much easier. Similarly, the use of various grammatical devices appearing in the text to link sentences helps the reader interpret the text. Cohesion, therefore, is concerned with overt links between sentences. Coherence, the dominant term of the pair, is related to *illocutionary development,* which is both overt and non-overt. In reading a text, a reader creates a coherent understanding by identifying illocutionary signals in the text and bringing his/her experience and knowledge to bear on the text. A reader can analyze a text by considering what each sentence is doing, and is aided in this by its cohesion. *Locutionary development* is now connected with cohesion, while *illocutionary development* remains connected to coherence.

In re-defining cohesion and coherence, does this damage Widdowson's overall arguments in Teaching Language as Communication? In general, the main arguments do not appear to be affected. Widdowson is arguing for a kind of teaching that primarily focuses on 'use' rather than 'usage' on the basis that there is always an element of interpretation in communication. Teaching that focuses on use has more chance of helping students to develop this interpretative faculty. The key argument for reading is that there are linguistic clues in the text that students can use to build up their understandings of the text. Meaning emerges through the interaction of a reader with a text; it is not contained solely in the text. This argument is central to Teaching Language as Communication. It is about the overt signals in a text and the skills of the reader to interpret the signals and construct meaning. Cohesion is about the overt signals which link the text together, coherence is about building an understanding of the text by trying to establish the writer's intent for each sentence as part of an overall discourse. Similarly, with writing, the writer tries to give enough explicit signals to his/her readership to allow them to follow his/her line of thought. The move to a *locutionary/illocutionary* analysis does not affect this overall argument.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I have argued that Widdowson's use of Searle's conceptual structure (*propositional acts* and *illocutionary acts*) creates ambiguity in his analysis. He draws on Searle's conceptual structure combined with Austin's ordinary language style of analysis. My main concerns have been the absence of definition of *propositions*, and the difficulty of separating out the analysis into cohesion and coherence on the basis of *propositional* and *illocutionary development*. I have argued that the units of analysis most relevant to an applied linguist are the utterances in spoken language and the written sentences in terms of written language. These, I have defined in Austin's terminology as *locutions*. The structure of the locutions is dependent on their *illocutionary purpose*. Cohesion relates to the overt signals contained within and between the *locutions*, while coherence relates to both the overt *illocutionary markers* and non-overt *illocutionary links* that the reader is able to discern in the discourse.

As I noted at the beginning of the article, my position in relation to the analysis is agonistic. My view is that, by changing from a *propositional/illocutionary* analysis to a *locutionary/illocutionary* analysis, something is gained and something is lost. On the loss side, the removal of the concept of a *proposition* removes a superordinate term. In Widdowson's analysis, the same proposition can be represented through a number of different sentences:

(i) The parcel will be returned by my husband tomorrow.
(ii) It will be my husband who returns the parcel tomorrow.
(iii) It will be the parcel that my husband returns tomorrow.
(iv) What my husband will do tomorrow will be to return the parcel.

Using a *locutionary/illocutionary* analysis, a *locution* may be re-written to form a related *locution*, but this lacks the elegance and simplicity of saying that different messages can be conveyed using the same *propositional* content.

On the gain-side, I have noted that when a *propositional/illocutionary* analysis is applied to discourse and, in particular, more complicated discourse, it becomes very difficult to demarcate the analysis: *Illocutionary markers* and *links* appear alongside *non-illocutionary links* and content. Cohesion is much more about overt links within the discourse than with a narrower analysis of links between factual content. Coherence is about establishing what the *locutions* in the discourse are doing.

It has not been possible to address a number of key issues in an article of this length. In this article I have closely examined the theoretical framework that Widdowson uses, and I have suggested changes in it. However, it is beyond the scope of this article to see how such changes work in analyzing texts, and to establish more fully the advantages of a *locutionary/illocutionary* analysis of discourse in contrast to a *propositional/illocutionary* one. In addition, one distinction that has emerged in the course of writing this article is the difference between a general and a specific *illocutionary act*. While Searle criticises Austin for having too many component acts that make up the overall speech act, a new issue has developed in relation to

the number of acts: Is the *specific illocutionary act* equal to the overall *speech act*? If the component acts are like a set of Russian dolls, with the *phonetic act* as the smallest, central doll, then does the *specific illocutionary act*, incorporating all the other acts, then become the *speech act*? Finally, there lies the question of method. I have argued that Widdowson uses an ordinary language analysis in a way that is similar to Austin. However, Austin tended to use reports of *speech acts* in his analyses and to work towards surfacing *illocutionary verbs* for the purposes of categorization. For the purposes of applied linguistics, other methods for investigating *speech acts* through ordinary language analysis might help in the analysis of discourse.

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要　約

談話分析における Widdowson の発話行為理論の利用

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　本論文では，とりわけ結束性（cohesion），意味的連結性（coherence）の概念に関連して談話分析における Widdowson の発話行為理論の捉え方を考察する。Widdowson は，John Austin と John Searle の著作に依拠しながら，Austin のアプローチと Searle が主張した命題的行為・発話内行為（propositional/illocutionary acts）という二組の対概念を結びつける分析を試みている。しかし，この分析では，(1) Widdowson が直接的に命題そのものを明らかにし得ていないこと，(2) 前述の二組の対概念に基づく分析では，結束性と意味的連結性とを区別することが困難になること，といった二つの問題が生じてくる。こうした問題があるために，学習者のライティングを分析したり，テキストを吟味する上で結束性・意味的連結性という概念を教師が用いることが難しくなる。そこで，筆者は，命題という概念を談話分析の対象外とし，文レベルに焦点化した分析を提案する。文を単位とするこのアプローチは，Austin の発話（locution）と一致する捉え方でもある。このようなアプローチによって，結束性という概念が発話内や発話間の明確な橋渡しとして容易に定義することが可能となる。