

Center for Cognitive Science

University at Buffalo, State University of New York

Wednesday, January 22, 2003

280 Park Hall
North Campus
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

“Reflective Speech Acts”

Ingvar Johansson, Ph.D.
Dept. of Philosophy, Umea University, Sweden

Searle distinguishes between five basic kinds of illocutionary acts: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Within each of these kinds, now, one can make a further distinction between reflective and non-reflective illocutionarity. Thus, the utterance ‘The cat is on the mat’ is a non-reflective assertive, where ‘I assert that the cat is on the mat’ is a reflective assertive. What is the communicative point and linguistic structure of this and similar oppositions? This is the overarching topic of my talk. I will argue, among other things, that the “two-truth-value thesis” for reflective assertives can be generalized into a “two-conditions-of-satisfaction thesis” for all speech acts with a direction of fit.

(The ideas to be presented are part of a paper, “Performatives and Antiperformatives,” forthcoming in Linguistics and Philosophy. Copies are available from the author: Ingvar.Johansson@ifomis.uni-leipzig.de.)

Refreshments will be available. Everyone is welcome to attend!