I. Administrative

A. Problem set #1 due Thursday, February 4
B. Go through problems in the problem set
C. Questions?

II. Linguistic Acts – review (2.2 & 2.3)

III. Speech Acts

A. By turning our attention to speech acts, we locate the utterances in the life of the speaker.

1. What is the speaker doing with the utterance?
2. What relationship does the utterance have to the speaker’s intentions?
3. From our authors: “A speech act is the conventional move that a remark makes in a language exchange. It is what is done in saying something” (26).

B. Kinds of speech acts

1. Pretty much anything we do with language is some sort of speech act or other, and possibly more than one at once. (3.1)
2. **Examples**
   
a. These include things like asserting, questioning, and commanding, as well thicker and more interesting acts like promising, resigning, and apologizing.

b. These differ from linguistic acts, since the same linguistic act can be uttered to perform different speech acts.

c. Ch. 2, Ex. III (even numbered items; 3.2)

3. One type of speech act that has received a lot of attention is the *explicit performative*.
   
a. When using these, you do more than merely say or state something—you actually perform an action.

b. These include things like christening, stipulating, admitting, bidding.

c. These need to be in the “first-person singular indicative noncontinuous present” (24)

d. One way to tell: the “thereby” test

e. Ch. 2, Ex. II (odd numbered sentences; 3.3)

C. **Speech act rules**

1. Speech acts are conventional acts, and so must conform to the rules that frame those conventions

2. These can be identified with the following questions: (Are all of these questions alike? Are there others?)

   a. Are special words required?

   b. Must the audience respond in a particular way?

   c. Must the speaker or audience (or both) hold a special position to perform the act?

   d. What must the context of utterance be like?

   e. Must the speaker have certain psychological states to perform the act?
f. What “general purpose” is served by the act?

3. *Example:* to congratulate

IV. **Conversational Acts**

A. Typically, we don’t talk just to hear ourselves talk – language is often used in the context of social exchange, as a part of conversations, lectures, debates, etc.

B. In these social contexts, a speech act is also a *conversational act:* the act of *“using a speech act to cause a standard effect in another”* (32).

C. These are sometimes flagged by verbs: *assure, frighten, persuade*. But they aren’t always so flagged, and often the aims we have are complex and distributed.

D. Ch. 2, Ex. V (#11–15)

E. **Conversational rules**

1. Conversational acts are also conventional and so correspond to rules.

2. One of the principal rules, identified by Paul Grice, is the Cooperative Principle: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (49).

3. This is analyzed in terms of four “maxims”:

   a. **Quantity** – say only as much as you need to say and no more ⇒ *overstatement, understatement*

   b. **Quality** – speak truthfully or at least in a way supported by evidence ⇒ *irony, metaphor*

   c. **Relevance** – make contributions to the conversation that are relevant ⇒ “*Is there a restroom near by?*”

   d. **Manner** – don't use a style that is obscure or confusing or disorderly or ambiguous ⇒ “*I think the dog wants some F.O.O.D.*”
F. **Conversational Implicature** – Ch. 2, Ex. VI.

1. That these rules are conventional enables us to exploit them

2. This allows for the generation of *implicatures*, or additional, implicit pieces of meaning introduced into the conversation by the speaker that are identified by the listener as necessary to explain the speaker’s utterance

3. These can be generated by tacit “violations” and explicit violations of the rules (3.4)

4. Exaggerations and other forms of figurative speech can be analyzed in terms of these – Ch. 2, Ex. VIII (odd numbered items)

   a. **Ex. 1**: China’s Chairman Mao Tse-tung is reported to have said, “A revolution is not the same as inviting people to dinner, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing fancy needle-work.”

   b. **Ex. 2**: He had to eat his words.