

## From performatives to performances

**Intro** Some demonstration-based content (in the broad sense of Davidson 2015) can be compositionally integrated into larger utterances in a straight-forward way, as properties of individuals or events of the form ‘such that it resembles “DEMONSTRATION”’. I propose that, in addition, we regularly make use of a general mechanism of turning performative expression of (affective, social, ritualistic, etc.) non-truth-conditional meaning into demonstrations of such expression within pieces of truth-conditional content of the general form ‘such that it would make me/one go “DEMONSTRATION”’, which we can then combine as modifiers or supplements with other truth-conditional content. I show that this mechanism of going “from performatives to performances” emerges for meaning–form mappings of varied conventionalization status and for various types of forms (lexicalized spoken morphemes, gesture, prosody, etc.).

**Affective degree modification** First, I show how this mechanism works for affective degree modification via fully lexicalized spoken segmental morphemes and via gesture (+ prosody). Cross-linguistically, lexicalized spoken expressives routinely re-lexicalize as degree intensifiers:

- (1) a. She is {fucking, damn, bloody} smart.  $\approx$  ‘She is very smart + I’m expressing feelings.’  
 b. Ona {pizdec / zaebis’} (kakaja) umnaja. (Russian)  
 she {EXPR / EXPR} (what.ADJ) smart  
 $\approx$  ‘She is the “Pizdec / Zaebis!” degree of smart.’

*Pizdec*: N ‘bad situation’; obscene; can be a standalone utterance ( $\approx$  ‘Fuck!’)

*Zaebis’*: IMP of *zaebat’sja* ‘get tired’; obscene; often a standalone utterance ( $\approx$  ‘Great!’)

The relevant Russian items cannot possibly be a noun and an imperative, respectively, in their syntactic context in (1b), but, notably, both can be used as standalone utterances expressing one’s immediate heightened emotions performatively (i.e., the goal of expressing said emotions is achieved by virtue of uttering the expression), which provides the key insight for the demonstration-based analysis. I adopt a version of Potts 2007 for performative meaning contributions, modeling them as direct altering of some parameter of the context of utterance; in the case of expressive meanings, it is the expressive index  $c_e$ . I furthermore completely separate such performative context-altering effects of uttering a given expression (which are non-truth-conditional) from its compositional meaning contribution (which is non-performative and truth-conditional); each expression has both specified as part of its lexical meaning. Purely expressive uses of the relevant items in (1) only make performative contributions as in (2a); they either don’t compose with anything, or their compositional contribution is vacuous (they pass on their input unchanged). But in (1b), we build additional compositional structure around these expressive utterances, turning them into pieces of truth-conditional content, namely, degree modifiers of the form ‘such that it would make me/one go “Pizdec / Zaebis’!”’ ((2b) would need to be adjusted for expressives like *fucking* that cannot be used as standalone utterances, e.g., ‘*d* meets the  $\alpha$ -specific standard for reacting to it with affect normally expressed by *expr*’):

(2) Expressive degree intensifiers within a version of Potts 2007

- a. Performative context-altering effect of uttering  $expr_{deg}$ :  
 $c \rightarrow c'$ , where  $c'$  is just like  $c$ , except  $feels(c'_s, c'_e)$ , i.e.,  $c'_e$  has been altered to reflect that the speaker  $c'_s$  is experiencing the relevant feeling in  $c'$
- b. Truth-conditional effect of composing  $expr_{deg}$  with its sister:  
 $\llbracket expr_{deg} \rrbracket^c(\llbracket \alpha_{\langle d, \langle \tau_1 \dots \tau_n, t \rangle} \rangle \rrbracket^c) = \lambda d \lambda X_{\tau_1}^1 \dots X_{\tau_n}^n. \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^c(d)(X^1) \dots (X^n) \wedge \text{“expr”}_{\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^c}(d)$ ,  
 where “ $expr$ ” $_{\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^c}(d)$  means  $d$  meets the  $\alpha$ -specific standard for reacting to it with  $expr$

Note that at least the relevant items in (1) preserve their performative potential when used as degree intensifiers, i.e., the act of uttering the “strong” word/root can still serve as an outlet for one’s immediate affect there, in which case the items in (1) are both mentioned (in the description of the degree) and used (performatively).

