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Metadialogues and Redefinitions

Dialogue games provide rules to establish the relationship between a move and a possible effect on commitments. However, such games are highly abstract, and the moves are reduced to logical operations between symbols indicating sentences. The type of speech act performed is not considered, nor is the kind of relation between the predicates in the sentence taken into account. However, a statement affects the commitment store differently from an order or a reminder, and a relation of classification leaves to the interlocutor a range of possible rebuttals different from an analogical relation. In order to apply such games to actual dialogues, we need to go a step further and analyze the nature of the moves and the structure of the sentences. In this chapter we will apply dialogue games to a particular type of move, the act of defining or redefining. As seen in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, definitions can be distinguished according to their pragmatic nature and their propositional structure. In our dialectical approach, definitions can be thought of as moves in a dialogue game, which open different possibilities of continuation of the dialogue and refutation according to the definitional act performed and the type of definitional sentence. For this reason, we will examine the dialectical structures of the different types of definitional sentences and combine them with the commitment effects of the different acts of defining.

1. Types of Definitions and Dialogue Moves

As seen in Chapter 3, there can be different types of definitional sentences. Each of these definitions is characterized by different logical properties, which affect both its effects on the interlocutor and the possible refutation strategies. On the one hand, every definition can be used for arguments characterized by specific rules, or axioms, of reasoning. For instance, a genus-difference definition can be used to support the attribution of the genus to the species by *modus ponens*, a definition by parts can trigger arguments proceeding from disjunctive syllogism, and a definition by negation can

be grounded on arguments characterized by the axiom of *modus tollens*. Moreover, the structure of the definition affects the force of the arguments based on it. For instance, the same reasoning from verbal classification proceeding from a definition to an entity will be much weaker in the case of definitions by metaphor or by example, as in these cases it is grounded on implicit reasoning from analogy or from example. On the other hand, every definition opens a range of possible strategies of refutations in addition to the simple attack on the factual premise (*x* is not *S*, therefore it cannot be classified as the definition of *S*). For instance, one of the strongest refutations for a genus-difference definition consists in showing that one of the defined concepts cannot fall within the genus, while definitions by essential parts can be rebutted easily by pointing out the existence of a species not included in the definition. Moreover, every definition different from genus-difference can be rejected by claiming that it does not explain what the concept is, but only provides a criterion for classification or a description. For this reason, all the other definitions can be attacked by opposing a genus-difference one.

1.1. *Genus-Difference Definition*

This definition is characterized by singling out a more generic predicate, the genus, and a characteristic that distinguishes the definiendum, or species, from the other concepts falling under the same genus. For this reason, it explains the meaning of the concept by providing simpler and more generic predicates. The force of this definition is grounded on the dialectical topics of the genus, rules commonly considered as irrefutable. For this reason, if the interlocutor grants the definition, he also needs to grant the conclusion following from it. The only refutations possible are the factual premise (*x* is *S*) or the definition itself, and in particular the rightful attribution of the genus or difference. We can represent the dialectical structure of this definition as follows:

I. Genus (*G*) – Difference (*D*) Definition			
S (Species) is *GD*			
Ex: *Peace is freedom from want.*			
Effects		**Possible Refutations of the Definition**	
1. If *x* is *S*, then *x* is *GD* (MP; MT). 2. If *x* is *GD*, then *x* is *S* (MP; MT). 3. If *x* is *S*, then *x* is *G* (MP; MT).	1. In Libya people are not free from want. Therefore they are not at peace. 2. We free people from want. Therefore our actions are peaceful. 3. They are not free. Therefore there cannot be peace there.	1. *S₁* is not a *G*. 2. *G* is *Cat* (Category). But *S* is not *Cat*. 3. *x* is *S* but not *G*.	1. Cold peace is not freedom. 2. Freedom is affection, but peace is a quality. 3. Russia is at peace, but it is not free.

4. If *x* is G, then it can be *S*. 5. If *x* is *S*, then it cannot be *non-G*. 6. If *x* is not *D*, then *x* is not *S*. *G* is *Q* (Qualification). Therefore *S* is *Q*. 7. *G* is *Q* (Qualification). Therefore *S* is *Q*	4. There is freedom in Russia. Therefore there may be peace there. 5. In the U.S. there is peace. Therefore there are no restrictions of human rights. 6. In Libya people desire human rights. Therefore there cannot be peace there. 7. Freedom is something worth fighting for. Therefore it is worth fighting for peace.	4. *S* is not the definition of the Genus (*Def.G*).	4. Freedom is an exemption from an onerous condition. But peace is not an exemption from an onerous condition (there can be peace without war).

1.2. *Definite Description*

As mentioned in Chapter 3, definite descriptions consist in the attribution of a genus and a property, a predicate that distinguishes the *definiendum* from any other concept, either absolutely or relatively. For instance, the definition of man as the animal able to laugh was considered the typical definition by property. However, this concept can be extended to attributes that simply describe the *definiendum*, without any claim to distinguish it from other concepts. For this reason, the strength of this definition lies in the properties of the genus, but its weak point is the property. The definite description does not explain the meaning of the concept; it is only useful to classify entities, and therefore a genus-difference definition can be opposed. Moreover, the property can be attacked.

II. Definite description – Genus and Property (*P*)			
S is *GP*.			
Ex: *Terrorists are bandits who hide behind political, religious or nationalist slogans to try to resolve questions that have nothing to do with what they publicly state.*			
Effects		**Possible Refutations of the Definition**	
1. If *x* is *S*, then *x* is *P*. 2. If *x* is *GP*, then *x* is *S* (MP; MT).	1. Chechens are terrorists. Therefore, they try to achieve something that has nothing to do with what they state. 2. Chechens are bandits that hide… Therefore, they are terrorists.	1. *S* is *GD*. 2. *x* is *S* but not *P*.	1. A terrorist is one who systematicaly uses violence and intimidation to achieve some goal. 2. Anarchists are terrorists, but they do pursue what they state.

3. If x is S, then x is GP (MP; MT). 4. If x is S, then x is G (MP; MT). 5. If x is G, then x can be S. 6. If x is S, then x cannot be *non-G*.	3. Chechens are terrorists. Therefore they are bandits who hide behind political, religious or nationalist slogans. 4. Chechens are terrorists. Therefore, they are bandits. 5. Chechens are bandits. Therefore, they can be terrorists. 6. Chechens are terrorists. Therefore, they cannot be lawful combatants.	3. x is P but not S. 4. S is not G. 5. G is *Cat* (Category). But S is not *Cat*. 6. x is S but not G. 7. S is not *Def.G*.	3. Mafia bosses are outlaws hiding behind the slogan of honor to gain money, but they are not terrorists. 4. A terrorist is not a bandit. 5. A bandit is an outlaw, but terrorists are not outlaws. 6. The Contras were terrorists but not bandits. 7. A terrorist is not an outlaw that lives by plunder.

1.3. *Definition by Etymology*

Definition by etymology is defining a term by reference to its origin and historical development, or even by finding its origins in other languages. For instance, a classical example is the definition of trust (*fides*) as "when what is said is also carried out (*fit*)" (Victorini, *Liber de Definitionibus*, 15, 14–15). Etymology establishes equivalence, but only between names. It can only support a classification, as the origin can explain the meaning of a word. For this reason, the classificatory conclusion is only plausible, given the hearer's acceptance of the definition. It can be rejected by advancing a stronger definition or criterion of classification, or by attacking the actual word origin or interpretation.

III. Etymology – Interpretation (*Int.*) of the Old Noun (N_{old}) S means $IntN_{old}$			
Ex: Maiestas minuta *means diminishing (minuere) the amplitude of a state.*			
Effects		**Possible Refutations of the Definition**	
1. If x falls within $IntN_{old}$, then x can fall within S.	1. Saturninus diminished the treasury of the state. Therefore he is guilty of *maieslas minuta*.	1. S is *GD*.	1. *Maiestas minuta* is the damage to the sovereignty of the Roman people or the tribunate.
2. If x is S, then x can fall within $IntN_{old}$.	2. Caepio is guilty of *maiestas minuta*.	2. S does not derive from N_{old}.	2. *Maiestas* is not the simple nominalization of *maius* (great, ample).

	3. N_{old} does not mean $IntN_{old}$. 4. S means $IntN_{old}$, but it does not follow that if an x is $IntN_{old}$, then it is S.	3. *Maiestas minuta* does not mean make something. 4. A crime of *maiestas minuta* does not necessarily affect the amplitude of a state.

Therefore he diminished the state instead of making it richer,

1.4. *Definition by Essential Parts*

Definition by essential parts consists in a list of the possible specific instances of the concept to be defined. This definition allows a form of *modus tollens* reasoning, in which the negation of the *definiendum* follows from the negation of all its possible more specific concepts (species). Such a definition by essential parts does not explain the meaning of the concept, nor does it contain a genus that can support other forms of reasoning. It can be defeated by pointing out the existence of a further specific case.

IV. Definition by Essential Parts			
S is either S_i, or S_2, or $S_{3...}$ or S_n			
Ex: *If someone has not been freed by either having his name entered in the census-roll or by being touched with the rod or by a provision in a will, then he is not free.*			
Effects		**Possible Refutations of the Definition**	
1. If x is S_1, then x is S. 2. If x is not S_1, nor S_2, nor S_1...nor S_n, then x is not S.	1. Socrates was freed by provision in a will. Therefore he is free. 2. Socrates has not had his name in the census-roll, nor has he been touched with the rod, nor has he been freed by a provision in a will. Therefore he is not free.	1. S can be also S_{n+1}. 2. S is GD, and x is GD but not S_1, nor S_2, nor S_3...nor S_n.	1. A man can be freed also by decision of the consul, or when his master dies. 2. To free a man means to set him at liberty. Socrates was set at liberty, but in none of the aforementioned ways.

1.5. *Definition by Material Parts*

Definition by material parts depends on the relation between them. If the parts constituting the whole are simply listed, the definition is not convertible, as the simple gathering of the parts cannot make a whole (a motor, four wheels, a body, and four seats do not make a car, unless they are all joined somehow). Even if the conjunction is specified, the predication of a property to a part does not imply its predication to the whole, and vice versa. This definition can be easily rejected by contesting the essentiality of a part, or the incompleteness of the list provided, or the nature of the conjunction (Tarello 1980: 213).

V. Definition by Material Parts (P)

S is P_1, P_2, $P_{3...}$ and P_n

Ex: *For "Tuscan flask" is meant a glass recipient made up of a body approximately the shape of a rotated ellipse, joined along its longest axes to a tapered neck, the total height of which is not less than half and not three times bigger the diameter of the body, covered in part in reed, straw or other natural vegetable plaiting material. The base can be with flat or slightly concave (Decreto Ministero della Salute no. 299, 22 December 2005).*

Effects		Possible Refutations of the Definition	
1. *If x is P_1, P_2, $P_{3...}$ and P_n then x is S.* 2. If *x* is not characterized by P_1 (or P_2, or P_{3}...or P_n), then *x* is not *S*.	1. This bottle is shaped as a rotated ellipse, it has a tapered neck, it is a bit higher than the diameter of the body, and it is covered in reed. 2. This bottle is not covered in reed or other materials. Therefore it is not a Tuscan flask.	1. *S* can be also P_{n+1}. 2. *x* can be *S* even if *x* does not P_1. 3. If P_1 is destructed, *x* is still *S*. 4. The addition of P_1, P_2, $P_{3...}$ and P_n does not result in a Tuscan flask.	1. The cork is a fundamental part of the Tuscan flask. 2. A flask without the reed cover can be still a Tuscan flask. 3. If we take the cover off, it is still a Tuscan flask. 4. If we put a flask under a heap of reed, is it still a Tuscan flask?

1.6. *Definition by Operation*

Operational definitions consist in describing not the concept but the fragment of reality it refers to, and are therefore strategies of classification more than definitions. They provide the efficient or final cause of the thing the *definiendum* refers to, and are useful especially in science, where the cause is often known and can be reduced to an operation. When the cause is only plausible the conclusion can only be presumptive.

VI. Definitions by Operation			
S is *Function(x)* (*Fx* = efficient/final cause)			
Ex: *Democracy is the form of government which gives, or tries to give, the people the illusion of their own sovereignty.*			
Effects		**Possible Refutations of the Definition**	
1. If *Fx* is the case, then *x* is *S*.	1. The Italian government gives the people the illusion of their own sovereignty. Therefore Italy is a democracy.	1. *S* is *GD*.	1. Democracy is a form of government in which all the people have an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives.
2. If *x* is *S*, then *F* applies to X.	2. Italy is a democracy. Therefore it gives the people the illusion of their own sovereignty.	2. *F* is not the final/ efficient cause of *S*.	2. Giving the people the illusion of their sovereignty is not the effect or purpose of democracy.
3. *Fx* is *Q.* Therefore *S* is also *Q.*	3. Pretenses are bad. Therefore democracy is bad.	3. Not all *Fx's* are *S*. 4. *F* can be the result/ cause of many other things.	3. Only degenerate democracies are based on illusion and falsity. 4. Tyranny and dictatorships give the people the illusion of their sovereignty.

1.7. *Definition by Negation*

A definition by negation consists in the negation of the other member of a binary paradigm. For instance, the paradigm of 'work' can be divided into two species: administrative and productive work. One of the opposites is defined through the negation of the other. This definition does not explain what the concept means or is. It allows a form of defaultive reasoning, subject to the condition that the opposites exhaust the paradigm and that the denied concept has been defined somewhere else. If these conditions apply, the reasoning based on a definition by negation can support a classificatory conclusion, but not the attribution of a property; otherwise it is simply a strategy of shifting the burden of proof onto the interlocutor, providing a solely presumptive classification. In both cases it can be rejected by a definition by providing a positive description of the *definiendum*. In its weaker formulation, the paradigm can be attacked, or the contrary concept defined, by negating the original *definiendum* and shifting the burden of proof back to the speaker.

VII. Definition by Negation
S_1 is what is not S_2 (*x* can be only either S_1 or S_2)
Ex: *Administrative work is what is not productive work.*

Effects		Possible Refutations of the Definition	
1. If *x* is not S_2, then *x* is S_1. 2. If *x* is S_1, then *x* is not S_2. 3. If S_1 is *P*, then S_2 is *non-P* (*P* and *non-P* characterize the genus of *S*).	1. The defendant performed criminal investigations, which cannot be production work. Therefore he performed an administrative work. 2. The defendant produced goods, which are part of production work. Therefore he was not performing an administrative work. 3. Administrative work involves management. Therefore production work does not involve management.	1. S_1 is *GD*. 2. *x* can be also S_3. 3. S_2 is what is not S_1.	1. Administrative work provides support to the operational or production employees. 2. An employee can also perform an operational work. 3. Productive work is what is not administrative work (The defendant was not a manager, therefore he performed production work).

1.8. *Inductive Definition*

Inductive definitions consist in a list of the possible instances of a concept and do not explain the meaning of the *definiendum*. Their force lies in the completeness of knowledge, which rarely can be presupposed. In the contrary case, they are incomplete, as new instances can be found. They are powerful strategies for shifting the burden of proving the contrary, advancing a presumptive classification.

VIII. Inductive definition
S is either x_1 or x_2, or x_3... or x_n,
Ex: *For the purpose of this section, no consent is obtained where the complainant submits or does not resist by reason of:*   *1. the application of force to the complainant or to a person other than the complainant;*   *2. threats or fear of the application of force to the complainant or to a person other than the complainant;*   *3. fraud;*   *4. the exercise of authority.*

Effects		Possible Refutations of the Definition	
1. If *x* is x_1, or x_2, or x_3,... or x_n, then *x* is (can be) *S*.	1. The defendant was the complainant's boss and threatened her. Therefore there was no consent.	1. *S* is *GD*. 2. *x* is x_1, but *x* is not *S* (because of argument *A*).	1. Consent is possession and exercise of sufficient mental capacity to make an intelligent decision.

2. If x is not x_1, nor x_2, nor x_3,…nor x_n, then x is (may be) not *S*.	2. The defendant was not in a position of authority, nor did he use fraud, threats or fear against the complainant, nor did he use force against her.	3. Also x_{n+1} can be *S* (because of *GD*)	2. The defendant exercised his authority and complainant did not resist, but she was consentient (she stated so). 3. A person can also be not consentient when she is under the effect of substances.

1.9. *Definition by Example*

Definitions by example are only presumptive criteria of classification relying on reasoning from example. They provide the most prototypical (or strategically significant) cases in order to elicit a classification or judgment. From a dialectical point of view they cannot be considered as instruments of classification, but from a rhetorical perspective they are effective because they can be used to trigger a value judgment or provide a criterion of classification in the absence of a definition.

IX. Definitions by Example
S is what is similar to x_1.
Ex: '*Peacekeeping missions' as 'missions such as Operation Restoring Hope in Somalia.'*
Ex: *My living will states that if I would not recover from a disability I "not be kept alive by artificial means or 'heroic measures', including, but not limited to, any resuscitation efforts, the transplant of any vital organ, or the use of a respirator."*

Effects		**Possible Refutations of the Definition**	
1. If x is (not) similar to x_1, then x can be presumed (not) to be *S*. 2. x_1 is *Q* (Qualification), therefore also *S* can be *Q*. 3. x_1 falls within *G*; therefore *S (x)* also can fall within *G*.	1. This mission is (not) similar to Operation Restoring Hope. Therefore, it is (not) a peacekeeping mission. 2. Operation Restoring Hope was good (bad). Therefore also peacekeeping missions are good (bad). 3. Operation Restoring Hope was an act of war. Therefore, peacekeeping missions (this mission) are (is) acts (an act) of war.	1. *S* is *GD*. 2. x_1 is not a prototypical *S*. 3. x is (not) similar to x_1, but it is not *S*.	1. Peacekeeping is the process of maintaining peace by the use of neutral troops to enforce a truce or separate hostile groups. 2. Operation Restoring Hope actually involved large-scale operations, which is not usual of peacekeeping. 3. The mission in Libya is similar to Operation Restoring Hope, but it is an actual invasion.

		4. x_1 is P, but x is not P. 5. x_1 falls within G, but S (x) is not a G	4. Operation Restoring Hope tried to save lives, but the operation in Libya does not. 5. Operation Restoring Hope was a peaceful operation, but the operation in Libya is not.

1.10. *Definition by Metaphor*

Comparable to a definition by example, definition by metaphor can be considered as a definition only *latu sensu.* The classificatory conclusion relies on a pattern of reasoning from analogy and can provide only a tentative conclusion, useful when associated with other arguments. This definition is useful for drawing value judgments.

X. Definitions by Metaphor S is M. Ex: *Terrorism is Nazism of the 21st century.*			
Effects		**Possible Refutations of the Definition**	
1. If *x* is S, then *x* is presumptively like M.	1. Chechens are terrorists. Therefore, they are like Nazis.	1. S is GD.	1. Terrorism is the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, especially for political purposes.
2. M is Q. Therefore S is presumptively also Q.	2. Nazism is horrible. Therefore terrorism is horrible.	2. S has nothing essential in common with M.	2. Terrorism and Nazism are completely different.
3. M is Q. Therefore what is S can be also Q.	3. Nazism is horrible. Therefore Chechens are horrible.	3. S cannot be compared to M because of A.	3. Nazism was a totalitarian regime. Terrorism is the use of violence for a specific purpose.

The different types of definitions are characterized by the different types of inferences, or effects, that they allow. Such effects can be dialectical or rhetorical, or rather conclusive or simply presumptive. For instance, the inferences that can be drawn from a genus-difference definition are much stronger than the ones of a definition by example or metaphor, whose

conclusions are only presumptive or rhetorical. In other cases, further assumptions need to be made in order for inferences to be dialectical. For instance, in cases of definitions by negation it is necessary to presuppose that the paradigm is binary. All definitions can be rejected by stronger ones, as a criterion providing a stronger and better grounded classificatory inference can defeat a presumptive or defeasible one. Moreover, definitions have internal critical points toward which the attacks can be directed.

2. Acts of Defining and Dialogue Commitment Structure

The structure of definitional sentences opens possible strategies of attack. However, the possibility and reasonableness of carrying out such attacks depends on how the definitional move affects the commitment structure. Taking for granted an unshared definition alters the hearer's commitment store differently from advancing it as a standpoint or stipulating it. Building on the pragmatic analysis of the acts of defining of Chapter 4, we can provide sets of possibilities of reply opened by each definitional move.

2.1. A. *Advancing a Definition*

The act of advancing a definition is the most similar to the typical move of a dialogue game. The speaker advances a standpoint and is committed to defending it. The interlocutor can accept it, reject it, question it, or advance a contrary standpoint. He can also accept it tentatively (in the following table, indicated in parentheses). However, the speaker can also anticipate the possible rejections and counterarguments, increasing the acceptability of the argument and preventing the hearer from advancing a possible dangerous move that has already been rejected.

R	Move of the Speaker (α)	Commitments α	Commitments β	Possible Moves of the Hearer (β)	Possible Moves of the Speaker (α)
1.	$F_{adv}Def(S)$	1. *Def(S)*. 2. *Def(S)* is not accepted by β.			Prolepsis (anticipation): 1. Rejection *X* is not acceptable because of argument *A*. 2. No $Def_2(S)$ (because of argument β).
2			1. *Def(S), {Def(S)}*. 2. *[]* 3. *[]* 4. $Def_2(S)$.	1. Accept *Def(S)*. 2. Question *Def(S)*. 3. Reject *Def(S)*. 4. Advance $Def_2(S)$.	

3			*Def(S),*		Defense: 1. Argument *C,* therefore no rejection *X*/ no *Def₂(S)*

Obama provides a clear case of advancing a definition as a standpoint when he redefines peace as "freedom from want." He takes for granted that this definition conflicts with the ordinary one, which he rejects in his argument. He provides reasons for supporting his view, showing how stability is the foundation of peace. The interlocutors could have attacked his argument, or the structure of his definition. Since the definition provides a generic property and a specification, it could fall within the category of genus-difference definition, leaving open the possible attacks analyzed in Subsection 1:

REJECT *Def(S)*:

1. S_1 is not a *G.*
2. *G* is *Cat* (Category). But *S* is not *Cat.*
3. *x* is *S* but not *G.*
4. *S* is not the definition of the genus (*Def.G.*)

This analysis of the prototypical case of advancing a definition combines the two dimensions of definition. If we consider other acts of defining, the structure of the commitments change and the possibilities of reply are restricted.

2.2. B. *Defining for Informing*

As seen in Chapter 4, definitions can be advanced to inform the interlocutors of a commonly accepted meaning. The act of informing presupposes that the definition is shared, and that the interlocutor may not be committed to it yet. This act is an implicit argument: as the definition is commonly known, it should be accepted by the hearer too. The effect is that the definition becomes part of the commitment store of both the participants unless the presuppositions of the act of informing are contested. The speaker can support his move by providing reasons to believe the common acceptance of such a meaning, but he does not have to provide an argument for its correctness. On the contrary, the hearer needs to reject the common acceptance of such a proposition in order to delete it from its commitment store. We can represent the illocutionary force as *F*, specifying the specific type of act (informing, reminding, etc.) and the propositional content, in this case the definition, as *Def(S).*

R	Move of the Speaker (α)	Commitments α	Commitments β	Possible Moves of the Hearer (β)	Possible Moves of the Speaker (α)
1	$F_{inf}Def(S)$	1. *Def(S)*. 2. *Def(S)* is commonly accepted. 3. β may not know *Def(S)*.			Prolepsis (anticipation): *Def(S)* is shared because of Arguments.

2			1A. *[]*
			1B. *[]*
			2. *Def(S)*, *{Def(S)}*
			3. *[]*
				1. Attack (F_{inf}):
				   A) *Def(S)* is not commonly known.
				   B) *Def(S)* is different from the commonly known definition.
				2. Accept *Def(S)*.
				3. Provide reasons for not commitment.	

3			Def(S),		Defense: *Def(S)* is shared because of Argument *A*

In order to explain the structure of this move, we can consider the example of Obama's act of informing his audience of the meaning of 'just war.' He takes for granted that such a meaning is not a stipulated one, but it is and shall be commonly shared. However, he prevents possible objections to the possibility of such an act by providing the authorities on which the sharedness of the concept lies. He mentions legal and philosophical sources, so that the audience cannot claim that the act is not allowed.

2.3. C. *Defining for Reminding*

The act of reminding presupposes that the reminded proposition is already a commitment of the interlocutor. It is a form of dark-side commitment, based not only on a presumption grounded on common knowledge but also on shared knowledge. The effect is shifting the burden of proof. The hearer needs to retract a commitment or prove that the conditions of the act of reminding are not met. While the act of informing is the advancing of a proposition on the basis of an implicit appeal to common ground, the act of reminding brings a dark-side commitment to the light side, or rather inserts a commitment in the hearer's commitment store.

R	Move of the speaker (α)	Commitments α	Commitments β	Possible Moves of the Hearer (β)	Possible Moves of the Speaker (α)
1	$F_{rem}Def(S)$	*1. Def(S)* is/ shall be known by the hearer.	1. *Def(S)*		Prolepsis (anticipation): *1. Def(S)* is /shall be shared because of a previous commitment.
2			1 A. Delete *Def(S)* 1B. Delete *Def(S)* 2. *Def(S)*	1. Attack *(F_{rem}):* A) No previous commitment to *Def(S).* B) *Def(S)* is different from the accepted definition. 2. Acknowledge *Def(S).*	
3					Defense: 1. *Def(S)* is shared because of a previous commitment.

The definition as a reminder changes the object of retraction. The hearer needs to reject the move (F_{rem}), not simply the definition. He needs to start a meta-dialogue, or a dialogue on the conditions of a move in which he brings forward arguments against its presuppositions. For instance, the hearer can deny his previous commitment and provide reasons for it, if needed. Or he can claim that his commitment was different.

2.4. D. *Declaring a Definition*
The act of declaring a definition imposes a commitment onto the hearer and the speaker, and presupposes that the definition is a new one, or is not the only one, and that the speaker holds the authority to do it. The definition does not need to be grounded on reasons, and in order to refuse his commitment the hearer needs to reject the possibility of the act, or attack the reasonableness of the act of imposing such a definition.

R	Move of the Speaker (α)	Commitments α	Commitments β	Possible Moves of the hearer (β)	Possible moves of the speaker (α)
1	$F_{dec}Def(S).$	1. β is not committed to (only to) *Def(S).* 2. α is in position of performing F_{dec}. 3. *Def(S).*	1. *Def(S).*		

| 2 | | | 1. Delete *Def(S)*. | 1. Attack (F_{dec}): A) α is not in position of performing F_{dec}. B) *Def(S)* can have bad consequences. | |
| 3 | | | | | Defense: *Def(S)* is good because of argument *A* |

The imposition of a definition leaves open to the interlocutor only the possibility of attacking the decision or rejecting the move. For instance, the criticisms against the redefinitions of 'wetland' could point out the unreasonableness of having different successive definitions for the same concept, but could not delete the audience's commitments.

2.5. E. *Defining for Committing*

The act of committing the speaker to a definition is the most usual strategy to impose a criterion of interpretation. The speaker commits himself to use a word with a specific meaning, which can be shared, even if not unique, or new. The speaker imposes a commitment only on himself. However, such a move also implicitly alters the hearer's commitment store, as the hearer becomes bound to the speaker's intended meaning. The hearer's commitment can be regarded as a limit to the freedom of the speaker's self-committing, as the chosen meaning can introduce ambiguity and therefore have negative consequences on the dialogue. The hearer can attack the move, and the definition, based on its negative consequences.

R	Move of the Speaker (α)	Commitments α	Commitments β	Possible Moves of the Hearer (β)	Possible Moves of the Speaker (α)
1	$F_{com}Def(S)$	1. *Def(S)*.	1. When used by α, *S* means *Def(S)*. 2. β shall interpret *S* as *Def(S)*, when used by α.		
2			1. Delete commitment β 1,2.	1. Attack (F_{com}): A) E_{com} hinders the dialogue (introduces ambiguity) because of $Def_2(S)$.	
3					Defense: *Def(S)* specifies the meaning of *S* (*Def(S)* is shared).

The act of committing to a definition can be an instrument to avoid or introduce ambiguity. In the first case, the speaker chooses one of the possible meanings ('we' shall also include the audience, which is not a *pluralis maiestatis*), so that the hearer does not have interpretative doubts. In the second case, the speaker stipulates a new meaning and imposes on the hearer an interpretative rule. In this case, the hearer can reject the move based on its consequences on the dialogue.

2.6. F. *Implicit Definition*

An implicit definition can be considered an act when the speaker is not simply using a dark-side commitment, but also when he is treating a new commitment as a dark-side one, when he is presupposing it (F_{pp}). He commits the hearer to a proposition that he never accepted and places on him the burden of disproving it. The shifting of the burden makes this move extremely powerful, as the hearer needs to provide arguments in order not to be committed. The speaker can increase the burden by redefining vague words or omitting the definitions of crucial concepts in order to take their definitions for granted later.

R	Move of the Speaker(α)	Commitments α	Commitments β	Possible Moves of the Hearer (β)	Possible Moves of the Speaker(α)
1	$F_{pp}Def(S)$	1. *Def(S)*. 2. β is committed to *Def(S)*.	1. *Def(S)*.		
2			1. Delete *Def(S)*.	1. Attack (F_{pp}) No previous commitment to *Def(S)* because of argument A (*S* means Def_2S).	
3		1. *Def(S)* 2. *Def(S)* 3. *Def(S)* 4. $Def_3(S)$			Defense: 1. *Def(S) is* commonly known. 2. No alternative definitions of *S*. 3. Def_2S is not shared. 4. β misinterpreted *Def(S); S* means $Def_3(S)$.

The dialogue game opened by an implicit redefinition is a meta-dialogue attacking the conditions of the move. The hearer needs to reject the move by showing that he cannot be presumed to be committed to the presupposed

definition. In this meta-dialogue game, the speaker is playing with the interlocutor's commitments. He can reject his arguments, and the effect of his defenses consists in preventing the hearer from deleting a commitment that should remain in place. The strength of this move lies in the nature and number of possible defenses of the speaker, which make any meta-attacks of the hearer more difficult and less effective.

3. Conclusion

Dialogue theory provides an abstract framework in which the participants perform certain moves and follow specific rules. One of its crucial limits is applicability. How is it possible to determine which moves shall be made? If we move from formal dialogue models to actual speech acts, we notice that formal dialogue structures are of little use, as they cannot predict the possible future moves. However, if we describe dialogical moves in terms of the moves that they allow the interlocutor to perform, we can build a potentially predictive system. In this chapter we have shown how the act of defining and the structures of definitional sentences can outline the possible reasonable replies and exclude other possible moves. The force of a definition can be described in terms of its dialectical effects on the hearer, or rather the moves that it allows the hearer to perform and the arguments that he can use to reject them. Obviously, the dialogue sequence in which a definition is left open can be conceived as the most complex scenario, where strict rules define the boundaries of reasonableness. This dialectically worst case scenario can become much less complicated in contexts where the hearer can simply refuse a standpoint without providing any argument, or retract a commitment without any reason or counter-reaction by the speaker. The dialectical structures of the moves of defining provided here are aimed at showing how a definition can potentially affect the dialectical setting.

The framework provided describes definitions according to two dimensions: their pragmatic nature (listed in letters) and their sentential structure (in numbers). The combination of the two dimensions can be used to provide a means to reveal the structure of the possible rejections of a definition (and the effects thereof), based on its limits. We have shown in the case of the act of advancing a definition how this mechanism works for the genus-difference definition mentioned in the example. Other definitional acts allow only meta-dialogical rejections, aimed at undermining the reasonableness or acceptability of the speech act.