

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BA EXAMINATION

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Optional Subject (e): Philosophy of Language

Answer THREE questions.

1. 'A theory of truth for a natural language, along the lines of a Tarskian truth-definition, can serve as a theory of meaning for that language'. Discuss.
2. 'The meaning of a sentence is fully manifest in the use made of the sentence'. Discuss.
3. EITHER (a) Expound and assess Quine's doctrine of the indeterminacy of translation.

OR (b) Expound and assess Davidson's views on the inscrutability of reference.
4. Is there a satisfactory analysis of the concept of speaker's meaning in terms of intentions and beliefs?
5. In what sense, if any, can speakers be said to have tacit knowledge of a semantic theory of their language?
6. How should a semantic theory treat indexicals?
7. EITHER (a) Should a semantic theory treat proper names as predicates?

OR (b) Since names can change their denotations must we abandon the causal theory of names in favour of a description theory?

8. Do definite descriptions have two meanings, one quantificational and one referential?
9. Can we explain the truth-conditions of 'Most boys in the audience cried when Billie came on stage' using the universal or existential quantifiers of first-order logic? If not, what other account can be given of the meaning of 'most'?
10. 'Mary knows that John believes that Billie is the best thing since the Spice Girls'. What is Frege's view of the sense and reference of 'Billie' in this sentence? Are the problems with this view, if any, soluble?
11. EITHER (a) Can we give a purely pragmatic account of the apparent failure of substitutivity of co-referring names in belief reports?

OR (b) Discuss Davidson's proposal about the logical form of indirect speech.
12. Can non-indicative sentences be satisfactorily treated in a semantic theory whose principal concept is truth?
13. How should differences between 'and' and 'but' and differences between 'money' and 'dosh' be treated in an account of linguistic meaning?
14. 'There are no public languages; there are only idiolects'. Discuss.
15. Is there such a thing as metaphorical meaning?
16. EITHER (a) Can knowledge of language help to explain a priori knowledge?

OR (b) 'Quine and Putnam arrive at similar conclusions about the analytic/synthetic distinction by different routes'. Discuss.

END OF PAPER