

# UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

## B A EXAMINATION

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

## PHILOSOPHY

Optional Subject (e): Philosophy of Language

Answer THREE questions.

1. EITHER (a) Assess the view that the concept of sense is central to the philosophy of language.

OR (b) How, if at all, can a theory of truth cast light on the notion of meaning?

2. What is the principle of compositionality? What constraint does it place on the relationship between the syntactic structure and the semantic interpretation of an expression?

3. EITHER (a) Do Quine's arguments in 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' undermine the concept of meaning?

OR (b) What relation is there between the theses of the inscrutability of reference and the indeterminacy of translation? Should we accept either?

4. According to Kripke's sceptic, there are no facts about an individual speaker which

could determine whether he or she means 'quus' or 'plus' by the addition sign. Is there any adequate response to the sceptic?

5. EITHER (a) Can illocutionary acts be distinguished clearly from locutionary and perlocutionary acts?

OR (b) How does the grammatical mood of a sentence relate to the force of utterances of the sentence?

6. Do we need to appeal to conventions to account for linguistic communication?

7. Does the communication-intention conception of meaning have a special problem with word meaning?

8. What is meant by 'conversational implicature'? What role does this notion play in an overall theory of language?

9. What is it for a speaker to refer to an object?

10. EITHER (a) Is it necessary to posit tacit knowledge of linguistic rules in order to explain human linguistic abilities?

OR (b) Why does Dummett think a theory of meaning should be a theory of understanding? What constraint, if any, would this put on a theory of meaning?

11. EITHER (a) 'In the sentence "John believes that the earth is round" the expression "the earth" plays its usual semantic role.' Discuss.

OR (b) Explain and evaluate Davidson's proposal about the logical form of

indirect speech.

12. What is Kripke's puzzle about belief? How should we solve it?

13. In giving a theory of meaning for a natural language, what is the best way to treat adjectives?

14. Critically assess the claim that 'the' works like a demonstrative.

15. How should a theory of meaning treat indexical expressions?

16. Expound and assess the view that proper names in singular use are really complex demonstratives.

17. 'The sentence "Tolstoy is a great moralizing infant" says no more than that Tolstoy is a great moralizing infant.' Discuss.

**END OF PAPER**