

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

577 0100

**MA Examination**  
for Internal Students

**PHILOSOPHY**

**Philosophy of Language**

Tuesday 19 May 2009 : 10.00 – 1.00 pm

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions. Avoid overlap in your answers.

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1. Explain and assess the claim that linguistic investigations are concerned with I-languages, not with E-languages.
2. What do I know when I know a language?
3. Assess Strawson's criticism of Russell's theory of definite descriptions.
4. What is Frege's argument for the distinction between sense and reference? Is it successful?
5. Is there good reason to distinguish between indeterminacy of translation and underdetermination of theory by evidence?
6. 'The inscrutability of reference admits of trivial proof' (Quine). Discuss.
7. In what sense, if any, did Tarski define truth?
8. 'Indexicals are a big fly in the ointment' (Davidson). Can Davidson's truth-conditional theory of meaning give a convincing account of the meaning of indexical sentences?
9. Does Perry give us a good reason to believe that Frege's theory of sense and reference does not apply to indexicals and demonstratives?
10. What role does radical interpretation play in Davidson's theory of meaning? Can it play its role successfully?
11. 'Even if one knew an interpretative theory of truth for English, one would not be able to understand utterances of English.' Discuss.
12. What role, if any, is played by conventions in an account of linguistic meaning?
13. What are the prospects for a pragmatist theory of meaning?
14. 'Grice's notion of *what is said* is a philosophical myth.' Discuss.
15. Can meaning be explicated in terms of communicative-intentions?
16. What problems do vague expressions present for semantic theory? How should these problems be solved?

17. EITHER (a) Is there a coherent notion of an utterance's illocutionary force?  
OR (b) Is telling inviting to trust?

**END OF PAPER**