

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

MA PHILOSOPHY OLD REGULATIONS
for Internal Students

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Monday 18 September 2000: 10.00 - 1.00

Answer THREE questions.

1. Explain and critically assess Russell's theory of singular definite descriptions.
2. 'The meaning of a word is its use.' Discuss.
3. Does Quine provide good reasons for doubting the cogency of the analytic/synthetic distinction?
4. How, if at all, can a Tarskian truth theory for a language provide the basis of a theory of meaning for that language?
5. What is the Sorites paradox? What is the most promising solution to it?
6. What is the alleged distinction between de re and de dicto propositional attitude ascriptions? Is the distinction well founded?
7. Critically evaluate a causal theory of proper names.
8. What is the role of literal meaning in metaphor?
9. Does the meaning of a word ultimately depend upon the communicative intentions of those who use it?
10. 'Language is an essentially social phenomenon.' Discuss.
11. How should a theory of language account for the similarities and differences between 'Close the window' and 'The window is closed'?
12. What reasons are there to suppose that speakers have tacit knowledge of a semantic theory of their language? Are these reasons compelling?

END OF PAPER