

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
MPHIL EXAMINATIONS 2001
for internal students

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Monday 14th May 2001: 10:00 – 1:00

Candidates should answer THREE of the following questions. Please avoid overlap in your answers.

1. 'Appeals to the communicative intentions of speakers in accounting for meaning can only work at the sentential level. It offers no hope of an account of the meaning of individual words.' Discuss.
2. 'Appeals to convention do not help to explain linguistic communication.' Discuss.
3. 'Communication is essentially an attempt to manipulate beliefs about what the communicator believes.' Discuss.
4. What is the best way to account for the relationship between the semantics of the comparative and positive forms of adjectives?
5. 'Proper names should be parsed as predicates in a formal semantical theory.' Discuss.
6. 'Natural language pronouns function like the bound variables of quantification.' Discuss.
7. 'Peter buttered the toast slowly in the kitchen at noon.' What is the best account of the logical form of this sentence?

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8. Precisely what role does the Tarskian project of defining truth play in the Davidsonian project of giving a theory of meaning? Critically assess that role.
9. Expound and assess Quine's argument for the indeterminacy of translation.
10. Can direct reference theories give a plausible explanation of the intuition that "Peter believes that Hesperus is a planet" and "Peter believes that Phosphorus is a planet" can differ in truth value, although Hesperus is Phosphorus?
11. In order to account for our understanding of metaphorical utterances, do we need to posit metaphorical meanings, in addition to literal meanings, for the words used in those utterances?

END OF PAPER