Assessment guidelines and Key for ENG2157, Autumn 2020

The course

This course is an introduction to language and meaning for advanced undergraduates studying language or linguistics.

Students look into these questions (and more):

- How do we communicate with each other?
- What can we express in language?
- How can we say one thing and mean another?
- What does the structure of language have to do with the thoughts we use language to express?

The first part of the course is an introduction to the study of semantics on both word and sentence level. The second part gives insights into theories of language use, particularly the part of pragmatics dealing with how speakers communicate more than they literally say or write.

Learning outcomes

The exam tests the following general learning outcomes as specified in the course description (https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ilos/ENG2157/):

After completing this course you will have:

- developed an understanding of the relationship between language and meaning on word, sentence and utterance level.
- learned semantic theories about the understanding of different aspects of meaning in words, how they can be described, and how grammar and syntax contribute to meaning.
- learned pragmatic theories about how language users achieve their goals in verbal interaction with others.

Topics covered

How do we communicate?

How do humans communicate? How does it compare with animal signalling? What's the role of language? What's the evidence that we communicate more than the meaning of the words we use?
Relatedly: Why do we have two terms, 'semantics' and 'pragmatics'? What's the difference?
Includes brief previews of several topics that we will look at in depth later.

Key concepts: semantics, pragmatics, the distinction between sentences and utterances, properties of natural language or language use (arbitrariness, stimulus independence, displacement, systematicity, discrete infinity, productivity, compositionality), the code model of communication, calculability, implicatures, the linguistic underdeterminacy thesis.

Word meaning I: sense and reference

How can we use language to describe the world? How do words relate to concepts and how do they relate to the things that we use them to talk about? A crucial theoretical point today is that

a purely denotational approach can't work. So words must also have *senses*. But what are senses? Images? No. Concepts? Perhaps. But what are those? Definitions? Prototypes?

Key concepts: representational and denotational theories of meaning; sense, denotation, and the distinction between sense and reference (or denotation); ambiguity; referring and non-referring expressions and uses; definite and indefinite descriptions; descriptive and expressive meaning; theories of concepts: definitions and prototypes.

Word meaning II: sense relations

Relations between word meanings. Lexical ambiguity is widespread, but what are its limits? Is *cousin* in English ambiguous between "female cousin" and "male cousin"? What's the difference between homonymy (as with financial *bank* and river *bank*) and polysemy (e.g. the different senses of *book*)? Are words like *tall* and *bald* ambiguous? What other sense relations are there?

Key concepts: lexeme; sense (again); lexical ambiguity, vagueness, and indeterminacy, the 'Do so' test, the sense relations test, zeugma and the zeugma test; homonymy (homonym, homophone, and homograph); polysemy; synonymy; antonymy: complementary antonyms and gradeable antonyms, reverses, converses; hyponyms, hypernyms and taxonomic sisters; meronymy; states, inchoatives and causatives

Sentence meaning and truth

A key part of what speakers of a language know when they understand a sentence is how it describes the world. We can understand this in terms of 'truth conditions': i.e. what the world would have to be like for the sentence to be true. Speakers also know about meaning relations between sentences: e.g. if some sentence *p* is true, then some other sentence *q* must be true (or can't be true). These relations have been studied by logicians, in a simple system called 'propositional logic', so we look at that. This system also sheds light on the meanings of certain logical words: *and*, *or*, i*f… then*, and *not*.

Key concepts: truth values and truth conditions; propositions; relations between propositions: entailment, tautologies, contradictions, paraphrases, inconsistent, contradictory and independent propositions; truth and validity; truth-functional and non-truth functional operators; logical operators: conjunction, disjunction, material 'implication', the biconditional, negation; truth tables; rules of inference: modus ponens and modus tollens.

Situation type, tense and aspect

Languages allow us to talk about how events are positioned in time and how they 'occupy' time. Verb phrases generally refer to situations and there are various situation types: language distinguishes between states and processes, between processes that have an inherent end-point and those that are open-ended, and between temporally extended and point events. Situation type is related to (but not determined by) the lexical meaning of verbs. In addition, grammar encodes information about time in the tense and aspect systems, and we will look at Reichenbach's system for classifying these.

Key concepts: situation types: states, dynamic situations, stative verbs, durative/punctual distinction, telic/atelic distinction, semelfactives, iterative readings, 'activities', 'accomplishments', 'achievements', tests for semelfactives, tests for stativity, tests for telicity, tests for durativity; tense; aspect, progressive/simple distinction, perfect/simple distinction, perfective/imperfective distinction; Reichenbach's reference point theory.

Deixis, character and content; compositionality

Two separate topics. A theme that connects them is different types of meaning.
First, words which encode sensitivity to context, including personal pronouns (*I*, *you*, *they* etc.) demonstratives (*this*, *that* etc.), and many other words (*today*, *here*, *come*, *go*, *local*). We look at

the way the meanings of these words relate to speaker and hearer: so-called deictic centres. We also see that these words require us to distinguish two kinds of meaning: character and content. Second, compositionality – the fact that meanings of phrases depend on the meanings of their parts. A question: is that a fact about senses, or about denotations? Normally, denotations compose, but we see that there is a very interesting exception.

Key concepts: deixis, deictic centres; indexicals and indexicality, character, content, rigid designators; compositionality, predicate terms, the principle of substitutivity, empty terms, propositional attitudes, referential opacity, *de dicto*/ *de re* distinction

Quantification, binding and predicate logic

We look at quantifiers this week: words like *all*, *some*, and *none*. Part of what speakers know about their meaning is that they are involved in certain entailments. For example, if *John is hungry* is true, then *Someone is hungry* has to be true. These entailments have been investigated by logicians, so we look at the second-simplest logical system, predicate logic. This also draws on what we said last week about predicate terms (*green*, *cat*, *jump*) and how they contribute to sentence meanings.

Key concepts: predicates and 'arguments', adicity; quantifiers: universal and existential, binding, the translation of sentences with *all* and *some*; rules of inference: universal instantiation, existential generalization; scope ambiguity.

Speaker's meaning and implicatures

As we saw back in week 1, what a speaker means by her utterance is not in general identical to the meaning of the sentence she has uttered. But how does this work? How can speaker and addressee coordinate on a meaning which is different from the linguistically encoded meaning? We look at the most influential proposal, which launched the study of pragmatics: Grice's theory of conversation. We also look at another component of utterance meaning, presupposition, and some diagnostic tests for working out whether something is an entailment, a presupposition or an implicature.

Key concepts: conversational implicatures, the Cooperative Principle, the conversational maxims, violation of a maxim, apparent violation, maxim clashes, flouting of a maxim, the generalised/particularised distinction, conventional implicatures and non-truth-conditional meaning; properties of conversational implicatures: calculability, cancellability, nondetachability, reinforcability, presuppositions; distinguishing between components of utterance meaning.

Speech acts

Languages typically encode in their grammar a distinction between declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives, sentences whose main purpose is (respectively) to make statements, ask questions and give orders. But the connection between grammatical mood and the 'force' of a speech act is not straightforward: not every use of a declarative makes a statement, and there are many more types of speech act, including promising, betting, and requesting. We look at the distinction between constatives, speech acts which describe the world, and performatives, speech acts whose main purpose is to change it, such as promises and namings. This distinction was introduced by JL Austin, as a way to draw attention to different kinds of action performed by utterances: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. We read an extract from Austin's book, and also look at the most important refinements of the theory including the distinction between direct and indirect speech acts.

Key concepts: performatives, constatives, felicity conditions, misfires and abuses, explicit and implicit performatives, illocutionary force, locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, perlocutionary

acts, , the distinction between direct and indirect speech acts, Searle's distinctions between preparatory, sincerity, and essential conditions.

Politeness

It's obvious that social factors influence language use. For example, why do speakers use implicatures and indirect speech acts, when we could just say what we mean directly? Sometimes the motivation is to avoid being rude or impolite. So we look at the most influential work in sociopragmatics: Penelope Brown and Staphen Levinson's politeness theory. They propose that the driving force is the desire not to lose 'face' and not to cause loss of 'face' to others.

Key concepts: face, positive and negative face, Face Threatening Acts, politeness strategies, the 'on the record'/'off the record' distinction, positive and negative politeness redress; objections to Brown & Levinson's theory.

Pragmatics after Grice

This week we look at the most important development in pragmatics since Grice. What a speaker states/says/asserts/directly expresses is not fixed by the meaning of the sentence she utters. Consider a parent who says to a hurt child, *You're not going to die*. Intuitively, what she states or asserts is that the child is not going to die from her injury. We distinguish between different kinds of pragmatic contribution to the proposition expressed by the speaker, looking at Robyn Carston's defence of a pragmatic enrichment theory of some cases.

Key concepts: the linguistic underdeterminacy thesis, explicatures (and implicitures); pragmatic processes: disambiguation, reference assignment, saturation, enrichment; 'saturation' theories; sub-sentential utterances, the scope test

Lexical pragmatics

Speakers can and often do use words to express meanings that are not the same as their linguistically encoded meanings. There's metaphor –*My lawyer's a shark*; metonymy – *The collector recently bought two more Picassos;* loose use – *That bottle is empty;* hyperbole – *I haven't had any food since breakfast. I'm starving!*; and cases without traditional names: e.g. *Buying a house is easy if you've got money*.
We look at Deirdre Wilson and Robyn Carston's theory, which treats many of these cases as outcomes of a single process of narrowing or broadening the meanings of lexical items. As we will see, this is closely related to last week's topic.

Key concepts: established and non-established senses; metaphor (including the distinction between conventional and creative metaphors), hyperbole, loose use, category extension; lexical broadening and narrowing; lexical entries: encyclopaedic and logical properties; the relevance-theoretic comprehension heuristic; metonymy

Language, meaning and thought

We've looked at connections between language and communication, especially in the second half of this course. Another perspective on language asks about its connection with thought. We consider the following questions: Does the language we speak influence the way we think? If so, does it make certain thoughts unthinkable? Does (much of) our thought take place in a language-like medium of some sort? If so, do we think (mainly) in natural language? We see that these aren't purely theoretical questions; we look at evidence from recent work.

Key concepts: The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: weaker and stronger versions; the Language of Thought hypothesis

Reading
Students have to read selected excepts from these two books:

Book: Saeed, J. I. (2016). *Semantics* (4th ed.). Malden, Mass.: Wiley.

E-book: Kroeger, P. (2019). Analyzing *Meaning: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics* (Second corrected and slightly revised ed.). Berlin: Language Science Press. (Available free at: http://langsci-press.org/catalog/book/231)

In addition, students are required to read a selection of papers and book chapters made available on Canvas:

Allott, N. How do we communicate? (online document) (15 pages)
§§ 2.1 & 2.2, pp. 32–37, and §§3.1, 3.2, 3.4 & 3.5 of Kearns, K. (2011). *Semantics* (2nd ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (22 pages)
Austin, J. L. (2006). How to Do Things With Words [Excerpted From 1962 Book]. In A. Jaworski & N. Coupland (Eds.), *The Discourse Reader* (2nd ed., pp. 55-65). Abingdon: Routledge. (10 pages).
Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (2006). Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage. In A. Jaworski & N. Coupland (Eds.), *The Discourse Reader* (2nd ed., pp. 311-323). London: Routledge. (22 pages).
§§1, 2, 3.1, 3.2, & 6 of Carston, R. (2004). Relevance Theory and the Saying/implicating Distinction. In L. R. Horn & G. L. Ward (Eds.), *The Handbook of Pragmatics* (pp. 633-656). Malden, Mass: Blackwell. (14 pages)
Wilson, D., & Carston, R. (2007). A unitary approach to lexical pragmatics: Relevance, inference and ad hoc concepts. In N. Burton-Roberts (Ed.), *Pragmatics* (pp. 230-259). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. (27 pages)
Ch. 8, "Meaning and thought" of Elbourne, P. D. (2011). *Meaning : a Slim Guide to Semantics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (15 pages)

Additional optional reading includes:

Grice, P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax & Semantics 3: Speech Acts* (pp. 41-58). New York: Academic Press. (14 pages)

The exam

The exam tests students'

- knowledge of theories and the associated terminology (the key concepts listed above)
- ability to analyse data by applying theories
- ability to explain clearly both theoretical claims and their analysis of data.

The exam aims to give the students a chance to demonstrate both the breadth and depth of their knowledge and analytic skills.
Students have to answer one in-depth question on semantics and one in-depth question on pragmatics, plus a shorter first question which requires explanation of terms drawn from both fields.

The quality of the candidates' own written academic English is also assessed, with focus on clarity and on the correctness of terminology that is specific to semantics and pragmatics.

The submitted exam must comply with the normal rules for correct use of sources and citations, except that a bibliography is not required.

Grades are awarded according to the national qualitative descriptions of letter grades (https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grading-system/index.html):

Symbol	Description	General, qualitative description of evaluation criteria
A	Excellent	An excellent performance, clearly outstanding. The candidate demonstrates excellent judgement and a high degree of independent thinking.
B	Very good	A very good performance. The candidate demonstrates sound judgement and a very good degree of independent thinking.
C	Good	A good performance in most areas. The candidate demonstrates a reasonable degree of judgement and independent thinking in the most important areas.
D	Satisfactory	A satisfactory performance, but with significant shortcomings. The candidate demonstrates a limited degree of judgement and independent thinking.
E	Sufficient	A performance that meets the minimum criteria, but no more. The candidate demonstrates a very limited degree of judgement and independent thinking.
F	Fail	A performance that does not meet the minimum academic criteria. The candidate demonstrates an absence of both judgement and independent thinking.

Key (*not* model answers) for Autumn 2020 exam

Part I carries 20% of the overall mark.

QUESTION 1

Discuss briefly ANY THREE of the following topics. Give English examples to illustrate your discussion.

Candidates need to define (or at least characterise) the terms, and in some cases to compare /contrast them.

They also need to give examples. It's more important that these be relevant/accurate than novel, but good novel examples should get extra credit.

i. stimulus independence and displacement

Stimulus independence: the property of human language use (rather than human language, it seems) that speakers can say anything or nothing in the face of any circumstances. That is, utterances are not 'conditioned' (in the sense of behaviourist psychology) by stimuli. This is apparently in contrast to much animal signalling, the classic examples here being alarm signals, which are normally produced in response to the presence of a predator. Bee dances are also stimulus-dependent.

Displacement: the property of human language that it allows us to talk about events etc. that are not immediately present. We can talk about past, present and future events, events that are far away, possible but not actual events, and more: even impossible things like round squares. The tense and modal systems are relevant here. Animal signalling systems have the property in at most a limited form: even bees can only signal about actual food recently encountered, and can only indicate certain directions. ii. homonymy and polysemy

ii. homonymy and polysemy

These both come under the heading of lexical ambiguity, i.e. in both phenomena there is more than one sense corresponding to one surface form.

When there are two or more different words with the same form, they are ***homonyms***: e.g. *bat* [rodent] and *bat* [sports equipment] These are both homophones (same phon. form), and homographs (same orthographic form), but there are cases of each of these without the other: e.g. *their*/*there*; *sow*[noun]/*sow*[verb].

Not all cases where there is more than one sense for one form are homonyms. There are also ***polysemic*** words, where there is one word with two or more senses: e.g. *neck* [of a person/bottle], *book* [object/contents]. Polysemy can also go across word classes: e.g. *book* is also a verb with a related sense.

There are at least two different criteria for relatedness of senses: synchronic and diachronic. Which is used will affect which cases we categorise as homonyms and polysemes.

iii. deictic centres

Deixis is a technical term for linguistic items that encode sensitivity to the act of speaking (or writing) and therefore the context of utterance, and for uses of linguistic items that involve this kind of sensitivity. Many linguistic items have deictic uses, but it is usual to distinguish a set of linguistic items which are primarily deictic from those which are not but may be used deictically.

The deictic items are those elements whose linguistically encoded meaning includes a certain kind of sensitivity to context. They include pronouns like *you* and *we*, demonstratives like *this* and *that*, other indexicals, such as *here, there, now and then*, and terms that encode sensitivity to the social context, including second person singular pronouns in many European languages, such as French *tu* and *vous*.

It is usual to understand deixis in terms of deictic centres. The most important one is the location of the speaker. For example, different languages encode different distinctions in spatial deixis. The English demonstratives and locatives form a two-term system, with one or two centres: *here, this, this X* are said to be proximal (at or near to the speaker), while *there, that, that X* are said to be distal (i.e. further away from the speaker-centre), but can be addressee-proximal (i.e. near a second centre).

Languages with a three-way distinction suggest that we need at least two deictic centres in our theory in order to distinguish three 'positions': near speaker; near hearer; near neither

iv. face, including the distinction between positive and negative face

'Face' is a term used in Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, adopted from the work of the sociologist Erving Goffman. Face is defined as the public self-image that every (adult) person wants to claim for him/herself as a member of society.

Brown and Levinson divide it into negative and positive aspects.

Negative face is related to the desire to be free to pursue one's goals; positive face to the desire to be liked or approved of.

More specifically, negative face is defined as "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 61)

And positive face is defined as "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants" (Brown & Levinson, 2006: 311)

The theory concerns itself with situations that require the speaker perform a 'Face-Threatening Act' (FTA) such as making a complaint or a request, and specifically it postulates that attempts at politeness can be understood as attempts to avoid damaging someone's face or to mitigate the damage.

v. completion and enrichment

Both completion and expansion are concerned with cases where what the speaker states/asserts is not what her sentence itself means.

That is very clear in the case of completion because in completion cases the sentence itself doesn't encode enough information for one to say whether it is true or false.

e.g. *John is ready*[for what?]; *Paracetamol is suitable*[for what?]; *Fred is too old*[for what?]; *Amy is late*[for what?]; *Beatrice has finished* [what?].

Speakers don't (and presumably can't) assert that John is ready full stop i.e. that he's ready but not for any particular thing.

In contrast, in cases of expansion, the sentence itself does (or could) express a proposition, but it's not the one that the speaker intended to state/assert. Here pragmatic inference is required to add something or to 'enrich' in order to recover the proposition expressed by the speaker.

e.g. a parent saying to a hurt child *You're not going to die*

She doesn't mean: you are not going to die full stop, but rather (e.g.) you are not going to die from that cut.

More examples: *I have eaten* [a meal, this evening]; *I have nothing* [suitable for the party] *to wear* [to the party].

vi. linguistic relativity

The idea that what thoughts we (can) have is determined by ('relative to') the language or languages we speak. In the most general terms:
"the particular language we speak determine[s] the way that we think about the world" (Saeed, p. 39)
Or
"our own language predisposes us to see both reality and other languages through its own filter."(Saeed, p. 39)
There are lots of different linguistic relativity claims, some of which may be found in the work of Sapir and/or Whorf, hence the name 'Sapir-Whorf hypothesis' or 'hypotheses':

Paul Elbourne sets out three versions:

Strong Sapir-Whorf hypothesis:
Your native language determines the thoughts you can have. If there's no way of formulating a particular thought in your native language, then you can't have that thought (except by learning another language).

Restricted Sapir-Whorf hypothesis:
Your native language determines the thoughts you can have on some topic or topics: e.g. about colours. If there's no way of formulating a particular thought about that topic in your native language, then you can't have that thought (except by learning another language).

Watered-down Sapir-Whorf hypothesis:

Your native language has some influence on what thoughts you have. E.g. (1) if your native language distinguishes between green and blue (as English does, but some others don't) then it may be easier for you to perform a sorting task with blue and green colour chips. Or e.g. (2) if your native language has gender on nouns, then perhaps you are more likely to attribute properties to the referent of a male-gendered noun (e.g. to bridges) that stereotypically associated with men (e.g. toughness). (And *mutatis mutandis* for female-gendered nouns).

Part II carries 40% of the overall mark.

Answer ONE question from this part.

QUESTION 1

a. Situation types can be states or dynamic, durative or punctual, telic or non-telic. Explain these distinctions, giving examples.

Static situations (i.e. states) are (presented as) having no internal temporal structure. A state is simply the possession of a certain property: e.g. *John has blue eyes. Water boils at 100 degrees.* They can be temporary (stage-level) or hold of an individual (individual-level): e.g. *John is tired* / *John is intelligent*. In English some verb senses are stative: i.e. their semantics is such that they refer to states: e.g. *have* in the sense used above (approx. "possess").

All other situations are dynamic: they involve (or are presented as involving) change or at least as something happening rather than merely subsisting.

Durative situations are those that are presented as extended in time. On most accounts this includes states (see above for examples). It certainly includes activities (e.g. *John is running*) and accomplishments (e.g. *John ran to the park*). See below for the distinction between these.

Punctual situations are those that are presented as not extended in time, but taking place at one point in time. This includes achievements (e.g. *John found his keys*) and semelfactives (e.g *John coughed*). See below for the distinction between these.

Telic states are those that have an inherent goal or aim (Gk: 'telos'). These are divided into accomplishments (e.g. *John ran to the park*) and achievements (e.g. *John found his keys*). The goals here are reaching the park and knowing where the keys are respectively.

Atelic states are those that do not have an inherent goal or aim. These are divided into activities (e.g. *John is running*) and semelfactives (e.g. *John coughed*).

b. Categorise each of the following according to the properties you set out in (a), and give evidence for your answers.

i. Jens lost his keys.

Achievement: dynamic, punctual, telic.

What happened was that Jens lost his keys. OK -> not state

Jens {lost/has lost} his keys. Both entail the keys have disappeared. So this is telic.

Jens lost his keys in an hour/? for an hour. -> Telic.

?Jens finished losing his keys. -> Not accomplishment.

ii. George knocked on the door.

Semelfactive: dynamic, punctual, atelic.

What happened was that George knocked on the door. OK -> not state

George knocked on the door all night/for an hour. Iterative reading -> semelfactive.

iii. Olivia picked the lock.

Achievement: dynamic, durative, telic.

What happened was that Olivia picked the lock. OK -> not state

Olivia picked/has picked the lock. Both entail the lock is open. So this is telic.

Olivia picked the lock in an hour/# for an hour. -> Telic.

Olivia finished picking the lock. Ok -> Accomplishment.

iv. Ava watched.

Activity: dynamic, durative, atelic.

What happened was that Ava watched. OK -> not state

Ava watched #in an hour/ for an hour. -> Atelic. Also not an iterative reading -> not semelfactive

v. George was impressed.

State: static, durative.

?What happened was that George was impressed. Odd -> state

?*Be impressed, George!* Odd -> state

? *George was being impressed.* Odd -> state

vi. The soup cooled.

This can be seen as dynamic, durative and telic: i.e. an 'accomplishment'.

But it can also be understood as dynamic, durative and atelic: i.e. an 'activity'.

Tests for dynamicness:

What happened was that the soup cooled. OK -> not state

(The imperative test can't be relied on, since the subject here isn't an agent.)

Test for telicity: *The soup has cooled* entails (according to my intuitions) *The soup is cool.*

This suggests this is telic, hence an accomplishment.

But *The soup cooled* (again, by my intuitions) may not have this entailment

This points towards it being atelic, hence an activity.

And:

Tests for durativity and telicity: *The soup cooled in ten minutes*.

This is ok so it looks as though the situation here is durative and telic.

But the following is also ok: *The soup cooled for ten minutes*.

So it seems that the situation is durative and atelic.

??!?

What's going on? Well, the verb *cool* is derived from the gradable adjective, *cool*, and such verbs typically behave like this: i.e. switch between activity and accomplishment depending on the adverbial that is used (Saeed, 2016: 122).

OR

QUESTION 2

a. Translate the following sentences into propositional logic, analyzing in as much detail as possible, and giving a key for each one.

e.g. “If John is at the party then Mary is too”

In propositional logic: $(P \rightarrow Q)$

Key: P: “John is at the party.” Q: “Mary is at the party.”

i. Arthur isn't coming to the party.

$\neg P$

P: Arthur is coming to the party

ii. Mary doesn't smoke and neither does John.

$\neg P \wedge \neg Q$

P: Mary smokes; Q: John smokes

Equivalently (by De Morgan’s law): $\neg(P \vee Q)$ (with the same key)

iii. If it snowed yesterday and the policeman didn't walk in the garden, then either these footprints are the burglar’s or there has been another intruder.

$(P \wedge \neg Q) \rightarrow (R \vee S)$

P: It snowed yesterday

Q: The policeman walked in the garden

R: These footprints are the burglar’s

S: There has been another intruder.

b. Translate the following sentences into predicate logic, analyzing in as much detail as possible, and giving a key for each one.

For example if the sentence were ‘Bart does not like Milhouse’, your answer should be something like: $\neg L(b, m)$ (where $L(x, y) = x$ likes y; $b =$ Bart; $m =$ Milhouse)

i. Sophia respects Mia.

RESPECT(s, m)

Key: RESPECT(x, y) = x respects y; s = Sophia; m = Mia

ii. Alexander is not vegetarian.

¬VEG(a)

Key: VEG(x) = x is vegetarian; a = Alexander

iii. Claire admires herself.

ADMIRE(c, c)

Key: ADMIRE (x, y) = x admires y; c = Claire

iv. At least one person admires Ben.

∃x [PERSON(x) ∧ ADMIRE(x, b)]

Key: PERSON(x) = x is a person; ADMIRE (x, y) = x admires y; b = Ben

v. All cats respect Sophia.

∀x[CAT(x) → RESPECT(x, s)]

Key: CAT(x) = x is a cat; RESPECT(x, y) = x respects y; s = Sophia

vi. Some cat admires everyone.

Because of the two quantifiers, this has two readings.

1) The indiscriminate cat reading:

∃x[CAT(x) ∧ ∀y[PERSON (y) → ADMIRE (x, y)]]

'There is at least one individual such that it is a cat and for all individuals, if an individual is a person, that cat admires that individual.'

2) The possibly-different-admirer-for-each-person reading:

∀y[PERSON(y) → ∃x[CAT(x) ∧ ADMIRE (x, y)]]

'For all individuals, if an individual is a person, then there is at least one individual such that it is a cat and admires that (first-mentioned) individual.'

Key: CAT(x) = x is a cat; PERSON(x) = x is a person; ADMIRE (x, y) = x admires y

Part III carries 40% of the overall mark.

Answer ONE question from this part.

QUESTION 1

a. Explain the following terms from speech act theory, using examples: explicit performative, felicity conditions, illocutionary force.

Performatives are defined as utterances whose main purpose is to change the world rather than to describe it. For example, a speaker who says *I promise to buy you lunch* creates an obligation (imposed on her future self).

Explicit performatives are speech acts that name the act that is being performed: e.g. *I order you to leave; I bet you 50 Kr that she wins*. (They are in contrast to implicit or 'primary' performatives, which are ones that don't: e.g. *Go now!; 50 Kr says she wins*.) Explicit performatives are usually (but not always) utterances of declarative first person present tense sentences.

Felicity conditions are defined as the conditions that must be satisfied for a speech act to come off successfully. If they are not satisfied then the act is either a misfire (i.e. the action is not really accomplished) or an abuse (the action is accomplished, but insincerely). For example, if the person at a wedding ceremony who says "I now pronounce you man and wife" is not qualified to officiate, then no marriage has taken place: a misfire. But if the bride and groom only got married to comply with the terms of a will and have no intention to live together as a married couple, then the marriage does come into existence but the act is an abuse.

In Austin's work, the general form of felicity conditions is:

I) There is a conventional procedure with a conventional effect, and the situation and participants involved are suitable according to the procedure.

II) The procedure is carried out correctly and completely by all the participants.

III) If the procedure specifies attitudes for the participants, they have those attitudes, and if the procedure specifies actions to be subsequently carried out by the participants, those actions are carried out.

I and II relate to misfires; III is a sincerity condition and relates to abuses.

The ***illocutionary force*** is whatever the difference is between e.g. an order, a statement and question, assuming they have the same content:

Put the cat on the mat

The cat is on the mat

Is the cat on the mat?

Other illocutionary forces include: betting, promising, naming (these are all performatives, speaking loosely), warning …

The illocutionary force is part of the meaning of the utterance (in Gricean terms, what the speaker intended to convey). Some other effects of the utterance are perlocutionary.

E.g. suppose A says to B, *Put the cat on the mat*, with illocutionary force of ordering. The utterance is understood if B grasps that content ("cat on mat") and force ("make it so"). (This is called 'uptake'.) It is a separate matter whether B obeys the order: that is a potential *per*locutionary effect.

b. Analyse the following in the terms of speech act theory:

i. I would like you to stop treading on my foot.

The main purpose here is presumably directive: a request, order or similar. The sentence type is declarative, so the directive is an indirect speech act. The direct speech act is a representative act – stating or asserting.

ii. Get off my foot!

Again, the main purpose is presumably directive: an order or similar. The sentence type is imperative, so the directive is an direct speech act. This can be seen as an implicit performative since, in contrast to the next example, it doesn't name the act that is being performed.

iii. I order you to get off my foot!

Again, the main purpose is presumably directive: an order. It is an explicit performative since, in contrast to the previous example, it does name the act that is being performed. The sentence type is declarative, so the directive can be seen as an indirect speech act. One could argue that the direct speech act here is a representative act – stating or asserting. (Actually whether explicit performatives are also assertions is controversial.)

As Austin noted, such sentences are not always performatives. E.g. in this context, it would be a constative: an assertion or statement:

A: Remind me: How do you make me jump in the air whenever we meet?

B: I order you to get off my foot!

iv. I'm sorry, but I wonder whether I could have a word with you.

I'm sorry is a declarative sentence whose 'original' use is presumably as an (indirect) expressive speech act: namely apologising. The direct speech act is a representative. But here it seems to be used in a conventional idiomatic way to attract the addressee's attention and let him know that something else will follow. This is a speech act whose illocutionary force is hard to categorise.

I wonder whether I could have a word with you may well have as its main purpose a directive: a request, it seems. The sentence type is declarative, so the directive is an indirect speech act. The direct speech act is a representative act – stating or asserting.

OR

QUESTION 2

a) What are implicatures?

When a speaker of an utterance intentionally implies something that she does not say or state, we say she has ***implicated*** something. This is a name for an distinction – which is supposed to be intuitive – between ***what is said*** and ***what is meant but not said.*** Conversational implicatures are not part of the encoded linguistic meaning of the words/sentence uttered, and are therefore cancellable (see b below).

(Students might but needn't contrast these with conventional implicatures, which are also not stated, but are different in being part of lexical meaning: e.g. the contrast conveyed by *but*.)

b) Explain what is meant by *cancellability* of implicatures, giving examples.

Conversational implicatures are not part of the encoded linguistic meaning of the words/sentence uttered, and are therefore cancellable.

For example, utterances of the following:

John lives in Stavanger or Bergen

would usually implicate that the speaker doesn't know which of the two cities John lives in.

But this is felicitous:

John lives in Stavanger or Bergen. Actually, I do know which (but I'm not telling you.)

In contrast, trying to cancel the linguistically encoded meaning is very odd:

John lives in Stavanger or Bergen. # But he doesn't live in Stavanger or Bergen.

'Contextual cancellability' refers to the fact that implicatures can be suppressed by a different context.

E.g. if the utterance above is made as a move in a guessing game where it's obvious that the speaker is not giving away everything she knows it may well not have the usual implicature.

c) Explain how Grice's theory of conversation may be applied to the examples below:

i. Student A: Are you coming out this evening?

Student B: I have to work on my term paper.

What is said: B has to work on her term paper.

What is implicated: B is not coming out this evening.

Derivation: What is said here is not in itself relevant to A's question. He asks whether B is coming out, but what she says is on a different topic. This is a violation of the maxim of relation at the level of what is said. A can preserve his assumption that B is aiming to be cooperative nonetheless if he takes her to have implicated that she is not coming out, since then her utterance meaning (what is said + implicature) is relevant as required. And he knows that she knows (etc.) that he can think this way. So he is rationally justified in taking that to be implicated.

ii. Oliver signed up for a Japanese course and learned Japanese.

What is said: Oliver signed up for a Japanese course & learned Japanese. [where & is logical conjunction]

What is implicated: Oliver learned Japanese at the course for which he signed up.

Derivation: Grice argued that the linguistic meaning of 'and' is just logical conjunction, so what is said here is just that two facts are true: i) Oliver signed up for a Japanese course; ii) Oliver learned Japanese. But these facts are presented in the utterance in a temporal order: i) before ii), and if we assume that the speaker was being cooperative, she must have been obeying the maxims, including the Manner maxim: Be orderly. In that case, she must have intended to convey that Oliver's signing up for the course preceded his learning Japanese: if it was the other way around, she should have uttered the clauses in the other order.

The addressee can think this way, and the speaker knows that (etc.). So he is rationally justified in taking that to be implicated.

This doesn't explain the part of the implicature that connects the course with the learning. Grice didn't discuss examples like this, and it's not clear how he could account for them fully.

iii. It takes forever to get served in this café.

What seems to be said: It takes forever to get served in this café.

What is implicated: It takes a very long time to get served in this café.

Derivation: What seems to be said here is blatantly false (unless this is a very unusual and self-defeating café), so this is a flouting of the first Quality maxim. The addressee can assume that the speaker is aiming to be cooperative nonetheless if he takes her to have implicated that it takes a very long time to get served in this café, since that is (presumably) something she believed to be true. And he knows that she knows (etc.) that he can think this way. So he is rationally justified in taking that to be implicated.

This is a case of hyperbole, where what the speaker utters is stronger than what she means.

Note that strictly speaking nothing is said here, since the speaker doesn't mean that it takes forever to get served in this café, and for Grice saying is an aspect of meaning. To put it another way: the speaker doesn't state or assert that it takes forever to get served in this café, so in Grice's terms, she doesn't say that (or anything).

OR

QUESTION 3

a) What are hyperbole, loose use and metaphor? Explain, giving examples.

Hyperbole is where what the speaker utters is stronger than what she means. The surface meaning is an exaggeration of the intended communicated meaning.

Utterance i below is a good example. Another example: *I'm starving* [said in the afternoon by someone who had breakfast but skipped lunch]

Loose use: Often a statement is not false but imprecise enough that it is not clear whether it is strictly, literally true, as in Austin's famous example 'France is hexagonal'. This is not entirely false, but it is far from being precise. In some contexts it would be acceptable as 'true enough'. This phenomenon, loose use, is very common. A speaker who says 'I live sixty miles from London' does not mean that he lives at exactly that distance, but is probably committed to 60 being closer to the correct figure than 50.

Metaphor is a type of figurative speech. Typically, a metaphor ascribes to an entity a property that it does not, strictly and literally speaking, possess, although not all metaphors fit this definition, for reasons explained below. Metaphors are often said to involve a comparison that is intended to highlight features of the entity that they are attributed of: e.g.

Metaphors are not restricted to any particular type of word or phrase. The metaphorical element of a sentence can be a noun phrase, as in (1):

(1) My lawyer is a shark.

Verbs can also be used metaphorically, as in (2):

(2) Flintoff drilled the ball to the boundary.

Not all metaphors are strictly and literally false. There is no doubt that John Donne's 'No man is an island' is metaphorical, but if taken literally it is obviously true, as is any utterance of 'You're no angel' addressed to a human being.

b) In lexical pragmatics, what are broadening and narrowing? Illustrate your explanations with examples.

Wilson and Carston's account of lexical pragmatics is founded on the claim that whenever a lexical word is used there is a process of interpretation that draws on the concept associated with that word to form a communicated concept, with no presumption that the concept communicated = the lexicalised concept

In many cases there will be adjustment of the concept: broadening and/or narrowing

For example, hyperbole for them is always broadening:

e.g. The set of people who are very hungry is broader than the set of people who are literally dying of hunger.

Metaphor for them will always involve broadening, and typically also narrowing. The set of vicious, voracious individuals is broader than the set of sharks: it includes my lawyer, but it is also narrower than that set, since not all literal sharks are vicious and voracious.

They analyse loose use as broadening. The set of shapes that contains shapes like the shape of France as well as geometric hexagons is a bigger set than the one that contains only geometric hexagons, for example.

c) Explain the distinctions set out in (a) and (b) may be applied to the examples below:

i. It takes forever to get served in this café.

Hyperbole, and hence broadening. The idea here is that the time indicated is a member of a set of long time periods (which includes the duration forever) but also includes (e.g.) five minutes, or however long it actually takes to get served there.

ii. The seminar begins at ten o'clock.

Loose use, and hence broadening. The seminar is very unlikely to start at exactly ten o'clock. The speaker is asserting that it starts at a time that falls in a set of times around ten o'clock. The context would normally help to determine how loosely the speaker is speaking: i.e. how broad the set is.

iii. It was the 1970s. All journalists drank.

Hyperbole, and hence broadening (of the meaning of *all journalists*), plus narrowing (of the meaning of *drank*). Hyperbole is as above, although it's not easy to put in terms of broadening. We can imagine a set that includes just one point that stands for all journalists. What the speaker means is a set that is broader: a set that contains a point for all journalists, a point for all journalists minus one, a point for all journalists minus two etc.

Here *drank* is narrowed from "drink liquid" which denotes a the set of events of drinking any liquid to "drink alcohol" which denotes a set which is a subset of the previous one.

iv. No man is an island.

Metaphor. Broadening, from the set denoting literal geographical islands to the set denoting entities that are radically separated from their neighbouring entities (roughly). Then the claim is that no person is a member of that second set. There may also be narrowing here, since it may be that not every geographical island is a member of the set of entities that are radically separated from their neighbouring entities: e.g. some islands are joined to the mainland at low tide.