

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES/INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAM 2008/2009

COURSE CODE : LANGUAGE MEANING AND USE
COURSE CODE : ENG 203
INSTRUCTION : ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS IN ALL, QUESTION 1
AND ANY 2 OTHERS.
EACH QUESTION IS WORTH 30 MARKS

DURATION : TWO HOURS

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL THE INVIGILATOR HAS
GRANTED PERMISSION TO DO SO.

QUESTION I – COMPULSORY

- i) How would you define a dictionary. [5marks]
- ii) With the aid of examples, critically discuss the general view that dictionaries have authority in matters of language usage of ALL types. [25marks]

QUESTION 2

For every interaction to be successful, speakers need to adhere to the basic rules of talk. Grice (1975) came up with the cooperative principle that governs talk. With the aid of examples discuss the cooperative principle and the four maxims entailed therein.

[30 marks]

QUESTION 3

When one knows a language, one knows how to react to the different speech genres within that language. Imagine you have been insulted by a stranger.

- i) Identify the linguistic structure of the insult.
- ii) The intention behind the insult.
- iii) The tone of the utterer of the insult.
- iv) The symbolic characteristics entailed in the insult.
- v) The degree/power of the insult.
- vi) How you reacted in self defence to the insult

[30 marks – 5marks each]

QUESTION 4

Pragmatics is the study of the invisible meanings of words. It is the study of 'speaker intended meaning'. According to Yule (1985:127) it is the study of how we recognize what is meant even when it is not actually said or written.

Closely examine the text below and find the implicit meanings entailed in the teenager's address to his parents. [30 marks]

To my elders

Do not let my 'bad habits' get me a lot of attention.

It only encourages me to continue them.

Do not correct me in front of people.

I will take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in private.

Do not try to discuss my behaviour in the heat of a conflict.

For some reason, my hearing is not very good at this time and my co-operation is even worse.

It is all right to take the action required, but let's not talk about it too late.

Do not try to preach to me.

You'd be surprised how well I know what's right and wrong.

Do not make me feel that my mistakes are sins.

I have to learn to make mistakes without feeling that I am no good.

Do not nag.

If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appearing deaf.

Do not demand explanations for my wrong behaviour.

I really do not know why I do it.

Do not tax my honesty too much.

I am easily frightened into telling lies.

Do not forget that I love and use experimenting.

I learn from it, so please put up with it.