

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES & INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION PAPER

JULY 2014

TITLE OF PAPER: LANGUAGE MEANING AND USE

COURSE CODE: ENG 203/ IDE-ENG 203

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. This paper has four (4) questions.
2. Question 1 is compulsory.
3. Choose one other question from Questions 2 to Question 4.
4. Question 1 is worth thirty (30) marks and Questions 2-4 are worth twenty (20) marks each.
5. Presentation of answers should follow linguistic conventions where necessary, and good language use will attract credit.

This paper should not be opened until permission has been granted by the invigilator.

QUESTION 1 (COMPULSORY)

92

(a) Define the following terms:

- (i) Pragmatic competence [2 marks]
- (ii) Grammatical competence [2 marks]
- (iii) Linguistic competence [2 marks]

(b) Explain what pragmatic failure is, and cite three instances in which pragmatic failure may occur in discourse. [8 marks]

(c) Read the following conversation between a parent and a child. The child has just made coffee for her mother.

Parent: Is this coffee sugared?

Child: I don't think so. Does it taste as if it is?

Answer the following questions based on the conversation:

- (i) In the conversation above, pragmatic failure has occurred. Explain what caused this failure. [4 marks]
- (ii) What is the implicature of the parent's utterance? [2 marks]
- (iii) What was the intended effect of the parent's utterance? [2 marks]
- (iv) Write the appropriate response that the child was supposed to give to her parent's question. [2 marks]

- (v) Which Gricean maxim has been flouted due to the child's inability to recognize the pragmatic force the parent's utterance? Explain how that maxim has been flouted. [3 marks]
- (vi) What is likely to be the situational context of the above discourse? [3 marks]

[TOTAL: 30 MARKS]

QUESTION 2

- (a) Briefly explain what denotation is, and discuss its limitations in explaining the nature of meaning. Illustrate your answer using relevant examples. [10 marks]
- (b) Arrange the following sets of words in tree diagrams to show which words are hyponyms of which. The tree diagrams should not show linear order but hierarchical order.
- (i) Bus, truck, car, sedan, vehicle, convertible, coach, breakdown, double decker, tanker. [5 marks]
- (ii) Raspberries, limes, fruits, citrus, blackberries, tropical fruits, berries, papaya, mango, oranges. [5 marks]

[TOTAL: 20 MARKS]

QUESTION 3

(a) Define the following terms:

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| (i) | Social meaning | [2 marks] |
| (ii) | Denotative meaning | [2 marks] |
| (iii) | Idiom | [2 marks] |
| (iv) | Syntagmatic sense relations | [2 marks] |
| (v) | Thematic role | [2 marks] |

(b) Explain what connotation is, and discuss its limitations in explaining the nature of meaning. Illustrate your answer using relevant examples. [10 marks]

[TOTAL: 20 MARKS]

QUESTION 4

Read the extract below and answer the questions that will follow.

Craig was horrified when his children who are in Grade 6 and 7 came home one day and complained about the behaviour of some teachers at Wilgehof Primary School in Bloemfontein. They told him the Social Science teacher, Leonard McKay, displayed a large apartheid era flag at the front of the class and often referred to black people as k****rs in front of the black children in class. According to his children, the teacher had a poster in the classroom showing apes hanging on a rope under which was an image of former ANCYL president, Julius Malema. The caption read, **“Amazing natural phenomenon! Studies were conducted to determine why these primates made these expressions and findings showed they were as a result of their primitive brains wanting to speak but they could only make confusing noises.”** Craig was outraged and complained to the principal about what was happening but he says no action was taken. ... “I won’t allow a few people to poison the minds of

my children", says Craig. "It's despicable that racism is present in this day and age – and shockingly at a primary school. We should stand up and condemn such racism directed to our children!"

(Extract taken from Drum magazine of 20 June 2013.)

(a) Discuss the type of meaning expressed by the utterance written in bold. [5 marks]

(b) Which face want of the black population has been threatened by the utterance written in bold? Explain how the utterance has been a threat to face. [5 marks]

(c) What is the implicature of this utterance? [5 marks]

(d) State the thematic roles of the following phrases in the passage:

(i) Craig (line 1) [1 mark]

(ii) Home (line 1) [1 mark]

(iii) Leonard McKay (line 3) [1 mark]

(iv) My children (line 12) [1 mark]

(v) In class (line 5) [1 mark]

[TOTAL: 20 MARKS]