



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA
PLOT 91, CADASTRAL ZONE
NNAMDI AZIKIWE EXPRESSWAY, JABI, ABUJA.
2021_1 EXAMINATION

COURSE CODE: ENG833 COURSE TITLE: Pragmatics **Time allowed:** Three (3) Hrs

INSTRUCTION: Answer ANY four (4) questions. All questions carry equal marks.

1. From the assertion that “pragmatics is a dynamic process involving the negotiation of meaning”, define pragmatics, explain its evolution and clearly justify its relationship with semantics. **(17.5 marks)**
2. With adequate illustrations, explain the relationship between pragmatics and (i) Nonverbal language (ii) Phonology (iii) Semantics **(17.5 marks)**
3. Consider the following text (from a bankruptcy court order, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, by Judge Jack B. Schmaetterer, *in re* the petition for relief by the well-known bankrupted bicycle manufacturing company Schwinn, December 28, 1992):

Enclosed is a form of a Proof of Claim. Each Proof of Claim must be filed ... on or before 4:30 p.m. Chicago, Illinois time, on January 6, 1993 ...

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT ... ANY HOLDER OF A CLAIM WHO FAILS TO FILE A PROOF OF CLAIM ON OR BEFORE 4:30 P.M. CHICAGO TIME, ON JANUARY 6, 1993, ... SHALL BE FOREVER BARRED, ESTOPPED, AND ENJOINED FROM ASSERTING SUCH CLAIM (OR FILING A PROOF OF CLAIM WITH RESPECT THERETO).

Now answer the following questions:

- i. What type of text is this?
 - ii. How many speech acts can you identify in the above text?
 - iii. How are the speech acts expressed?
 - iv. Why is this kind of language used for this type of text?
 - v. What does this text make explicit between speech acts and verbs? **(17.5 marks)**
4. Read Texts A and B below carefully before attempting the questions that follow:

A: The following text was found on the back wall of an airline toilet (in an American Airlines Boeing 757) on April 1995:

PLEASE USE THE TRASH CONTAINER
FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN
TOILET PAPER

B: Now consider the following notice found on the back wall of the men's toilets in the Universidade Federal Brasilia, Brasilia D.F., on March 25, 2000:

SEA EDUCADO
JOGUE O PAPEL NO LIXO

('Be educated
Throw the Paper in the Waste Basket')

- i. Based on your general 'education' in matters of toilets and proper sanitary behaviour, would you say this notice is ambiguous?
- ii. Would a person from Mars be able to understand it without further explanation?
- iii. How is understanding of these contradictory messages dependent on the context?
- iv. How do they both make sense, even if objectively contradictory, when they are put in proper context?
- v. What do the words 'anything other' in the above American instructions mean?
- vi. What is the 'paper' referred to in the Brazilian notice?
- vii. How do we know this? **(17.5 marks)**

5. Read the passage below carefully and respond to the questions that follow:

When my daughter Sara was about six years old, we stayed for a couple of days at some friends' house. These people were lovers of books, and their whole living room was filled with them: there were bookshelves all around and all the way up to the ceiling.

While Sara was playing, somehow her little bouncing ball managed to get itself lost behind a row of books on one of the lower shelves; but since she hadn't seen it disappear, she didn't know where to look for it. Meanwhile, the owner of the books, who was reading his newspaper in an armchair nearby, had observed the ball's wayward course. So, when Sara asked him if he had seen her ball, he replied:

Why don't you look behind Volume 6 of Dostoyevski's Collected Works?

- i. In the Gricean sense, is the above response co-operative or not (10 marks)?
- ii. With close attention to the passage, discuss the cooperative principles and how the Gricean maxims can be observed or flouted as the case may be (7.5 marks).

Total: 17.5 Marks