



SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES & PHILOSOPHY
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION

END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION

BDP 3202: PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

DATE: Friday, 13th March, 2020

TIME: 8:00 -10:00

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This examination consists of **FIVE** questions.
2. Answer **question ONE (COMPULSORY)** and any other **TWO** questions.

(Total Marks = 30)

QUESTION ONE

(a) From your own understanding of what Philosophy of Language entails, how is it beneficial to you? Briefly explain any **two** benefits. **(4 marks)**

(b) Examine the following cluster of linguistic aspects and attributes, then answer the questions which follow:

Language use, nature of meaning, arbitrariness, syntax, referential theory, symbolic, semantics, productive, phonetics, use theory, language and reality, ideational theory, morphemes, systematic, speech-act theory, language and cognition.

- (i) Making use of some elements in the cluster, define language in your own way. **(2 marks)**
 - (ii) Classify related aspects into **four** categories with clear headings. **(8 marks)**
 - (iii) Select any **two** categories from your answer in (ii) above and clearly **explain** any **two** of the four aspects under the **two** categories. Clarify with relevant examples where applicable. **(10 marks)**
- (c) Describe in general the relationship between language, mind and reality. **(6 marks)**

QUESTION TWO

In his article: “*Theories of meaning*” Jeff Speaks (2016) elaborates various facets of meaning. With specific reference to this article:

- (a) Briefly explain the problem of “meaning” (3 marks)
- (b) Distinguish between what Speaks terms as the “semantic theories of meaning” and “foundational theories of meaning”. Clarify each with an example other than the one Speaks uses. (6 marks)
- (c) Explain any **one** semantic theories of meaning and any **one** foundational theory of meaning that Speaks discusses. (6 marks)

QUESTION THREE

- (a) How does language use (or abuse) enhance communication? (3 marks)
- (b) Explain the role of the following in communication, giving a clear example in each case.
 - (i) Conversational implicatures (3 marks)
 - (ii) Social context (3 marks)
- (c) Using a clear example in each case, explain any **two** illocutionary speech acts, in the view of John Searle’s (1975) classification. (6 marks)

QUESTION FOUR

Language encompasses a people’s socio-cultural worldview. **Critique** this statement with specific reference to any **two** particular languages compared with each other against worldviews of their speakers. (15 marks)

QUESTION FIVE

Prevalent use of indigenous languages in Africa has been blamed for retarded development in most African countries. **Discuss** this statement with main focus on the extent to which development depends on language, citing examples from Kenya. (15 marks)