MASENO UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS 2016/2017

THIRD YEAR FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION ARTS WITH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

MAIN CAMPUS

AEN 311: SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS

Date: 12th December, 2016   Time: 12.00 - 3.00pm

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Answer Question ONE and any other TWO.

Q1.(a) Explain the meaning of the following speech act verbs using atleast TWO examples

    (i) Commissives

    (ii) Declaratives

    (iii) Assertives

    (iv) Directives

(b) From the above examples provided, use any TWO different speech acts to describe the outlined aspects:

    (i). Locutionary act

    (ii). Illocutionary act

    (iii). Perlocutionary act

    (iv). Felicity conditions

    (v). Misfire

                                (18 marks)

(c) With the aid of TWO illustrations, explain the following concepts in Pragmatics and show how they can be violated in discourse.

    (i) Maxim of Quality

    (ii) Maxim of Relevance

    (iii) Maxim of Manner

                                (12 marks)

Q2. "Everything in language conspires to show meaning" (Wierzbricka, 1989). Discuss this statement with reference to sound symbolism in semantics (20 marks)

Q3. Examine the following words and describe the semantic notions they convey
   (i) Colours: Black, white, pink, yellow, scarlet.

   (ii) Tie, untie

   (iii) Bow [bəʊ]- A weapon used for shooting arrows

      Bow [baʊ]-To move ones head downwards

   (iv) Beautiful, average, plain, ugly

   (v) Dead, alive

   (vi) Dear [diə(r)]

      Deer [diə(r)]

   (v) Bank: A river bank, a financial Institution

   (vi) Chair: An object used for sitting, the head of a department, to chair a meeting.

   (20 marks)

Q4. Explain the tenets and weaknesses of the following semantic theories

   (i) Mentalist theory of meaning

   (ii) Behaviorist theory of meaning

   (iii) Referential theory of meaning

   (iv) Componential theory of meaning

   (v) Ostensive Theory of meaning (20 marks)

Q5. Distinguish the following types of meaning using TWO examples.

   (i) Connotative meaning and Denotative meaning

   (ii) Reflective meaning and Thematic meaning

   (iii) Social meaning and Emotive meaning. (20 marks)