

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
END OF FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATION**

EBS 280: INTRODUCTION TO MEANING

MARKING SCHEME

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PART II – ESSAY [40 MARKS]

Candidates are expected to answer any TWO questions from this section. All questions carry equal marks. Each question carries 20 marks.

1. Distribution of scores

Content = 10

Expression & style = 4

Organisation = 4

Mechanical Accuracy = 2

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Average	Below Average	Weak Pass	Pass	Fail
Content	8-10	7.5	7	6.5	6	5.5	5	0-4
Grade	A	B+	B	C+	C	D+	D	E

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Pass	Fail
Expression	3.5 - 4	3	2.5	2	0-1.5
Organisation	3.5 - 4	3	2.5	2	0-1.5
Grade	A	B	C	D	E

Note: Please use the distribution of scores in the table as a general guide in scoring the essays. Please also do read *Appendix I* carefully for further details before grading.

2. Explanation of areas of assessment

Content: The candidate should demonstrate a good understanding of the topic and the ability to synthesise ideas. The content should be organised into a coherent argument in order to address the question. Candidates are expected to discuss four points for each question in the body of the essay for **10 marks**. Distribute the marks as follows: ½ a mark for a good point; 2 marks for a good explanation and illustration of a point.

Organisation: The candidate is expected to present a well organised essay, with an introduction properly contextualising the thesis of the essay and a concise thesis statement clearly stating the objective of the essay. Reward candidates who provide an advance organiser, stating the points the essay examines and the order in which they are discussed. The candidate

is also expected to develop the thesis of the essay coherently in **at least four** well-structured body paragraphs. Each body paragraph should clearly state the main point in a topic sentence, which is then developed by supporting sentences. Pay attention to the candidate's ability to incorporate illustrations into their essay without destroying the flow of the discussion. The conclusion should restate the thesis of the essay, summarise the main points and indicate a reflection on the argument.

Expression and style: The candidate is expected to write in a clear and lucid style. They should use appropriate general academic vocabulary to position and frame their argument. Reward candidates for the appropriate use of reporting verbs. They are also expected to use specific vocabulary and phraseology related to the topic. Sentence constructions should be idiomatic. **Underline all expression and stylistic errors.**

Mechanical accuracy: Deduct ½ a mark for every grammatical or punctuation error up to a maximum of **2 marks**. Ring/circle any grammatical or punctuation error.

3. Marking guide per question

Question 1: Discuss the meaning of 'Meaning'.

Recommended answer:

Introduction: Candidates are expected to discuss the various attempts made in the literature to define meaning. The introduction should include a background showing that the definition of meaning is a problem in the discipline of linguistics and that various attempts have been made in the literature to define meaning (e.g. the survey of definitions by Ogden and Richards, Leech's seven types of meaning, etc.). ***There are several ways the candidate can approach this question.*** There should be a thesis statement clearly focusing the topic and an advanced organiser indicating the issues that will be discussed.

Body: Students are expected to discuss some the various ways in which meaning has been categorised and defined in the literature. The following aspects of meaning are expected to be discussed (students will be expected to acknowledge the many definitions in the literature and discuss at least four for a full mark):

- i. Denotative/referential/conceptual meaning
- ii. Connotative meaning
- iii. the seven types of meaning identified by Leech: ***conceptual, reflected, collocative, affective, stylistic, thematic, and social meaning.***
- iv. word meaning, sentence meaning, utterance meaning

Alternatively, a candidate may also decide to discuss the different theoretical approaches to meaning: *traditional semantics, behavioural semantics, generative semantics, contextualism, mentalism, etc.*

All points raised in the body should be illustrated and illustrations clearly explained for a full mark.

Conclusion: The conclusion should restate the thesis of the essay. Candidates are expected to summarise the points discussed and reiterate that it is difficult to identify a single definition of meaning and that various attempts have been made in the literature to define meaning only some of which could be discussed in the essay.

Question 2: With examples, discuss four ways by which context is useful in determining meaning.

Recommended answer:

Introduction: Candidates are expected to define context and identify the different types of context (i.e. co-text and situational context). They may also (or may not) highlight some characteristics of context such as *relevance, indeterminacy, continuity, context as shared knowledge*, etc. There should be a thesis statement clearly indicating that the purpose of the essay is to discuss four ways in which context is useful in determining meaning and an advanced organiser identifying the points to be discussed.

Body: Students are expected to discuss any four of the following. Please accept other relevant points from other sources:

- i. to disambiguate structures
- ii. to supply the meaning of elliptical constructions
- iii. to supply referents/antecedents of deictic elements
- iv. to determine the definiteness of referring expressions
- v. to determine class and function of language items
- vi. to determine the locution of an utterance

All points raised must be clearly illustrated and the illustrations explained to show how context is needed to determine/clarify meaning.

Conclusion: The conclusion is expected to restate the thesis of the essay and summarise the four points discussed. The candidate is expected to reflect on the importance of context in determining meaning.

Question 3: Using relevant examples, examine four causes of ambiguity.

Recommended answer:

Introduction: Candidates are expected to define ambiguity as a semantic problem: “the semantic situation in which one form ... has two or more meanings” (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2002: 129). A good candidate may acknowledge that ambiguity is a natural property of language. Candidates are also expected to identify the different types of ambiguity: *lexical, referential and structural* or *intentional* versus *unintentional*. There should be a thesis statement clearly indicating that the purpose of the essay is to discuss four causes of ambiguity. Candidates are free to select points from any of the three types of ambiguity or choose all the four points from one general type of ambiguity (e.g. structural ambiguity). Candidates are also expected to identify the four points to be discussed in an advanced organiser.

Body: Candidates are expected to discuss any four of the following as causes of ambiguity:

- i. Lexical ambiguity
 - homonymy
 - multiple connotative meaning

- confusion of juncture, etc.
- ii. Structural ambiguity
 - Modification
 - Confusion of head
 - Dangling modifiers
 - Confusion of grammatical form/function, etc
- iii. Pronoun reference

All points raised must be clearly illustrated and the illustrations explained to identify the two meanings involved in the ambiguity. A good candidate will suggest how the ambiguity can be resolved (where necessary, e.g. in the case of dangling modification).

Conclusion: The conclusion is expected to restate the thesis and summarise the four causes of ambiguity discussed. Candidates are expected to reiterate that ambiguity is a natural property of language.

Question 4: With good illustrations, discuss four kinds of semantic change.

Introduction: Candidates are expected to define semantic change – the process by which there is a shift in meaning in the language. A good candidate will identify that semantic change is a natural property of language. An illustration may be given to clarify the definition. There should be a thesis statement clearly indicating that the essay will discuss four kinds of semantic change. An advanced organiser identifying these kinds of change is expected.

Body: Candidates are expected to discuss any four of the following (please accept other relevant points outside this list):

- i. Narrowing
- ii. Broadening
- iii. Amelioration
- iv. Pejoration
- v. Metaphorical change
- vi. Weakening
- vii. Derivation
- viii. Borrowing

All points raised must be clearly illustrated and the illustrations must be explained to show the process of change involved.

Conclusion: The conclusion is expected to restate the thesis and summarise the four kinds of semantic change discussed. Candidates are expected to reiterate that semantic change is a natural property of language.

Appendix I: Description of Areas of Assessment and Grades

Areas	Description/Grades				
	A	B	C	D	E
Content	The candidate demonstrates an excellent	The candidate demonstrates a very good	The candidate demonstrates a relatively	The candidate shows some understanding of the topic. The points discussed are	The candidate deviates from the topic or shows

	understanding of the topic and an excellent ability to synthesise ideas, weaving these together into a very sound and persuasive argument.	understanding of the topic and is able to synthesise ideas, weaving them together into a sound and persuasive argument.	good understanding of the topic and is able to synthesise ideas, even if there are some irrelevant materials included.	not fully developed and there are several statements that need elaboration. Some of the content may be irrelevant to the thesis or topic sentences.	misunderstanding in many instances. The candidate is not able to synthesise ideas into a persuasive argument. The content is either not relevant or is hardly persuasive.
Organisation	The candidate presents a highly coherent and cohesive essay. Paragraphs are well-structured. The candidate skilfully incorporates illustrations into the essay without destroying the flow of the discussion. The introduction includes a clearly stated thesis, which is exhaustively developed in the body of the essay. The conclusion includes a restatement	The candidate presents a well-organised essay. Paragraphs are well-structured. The candidate incorporates illustrations into the essay without necessarily destroying the flow of the discussion. The introduction includes a thesis, exhaustively developed in the body of the essay. The conclusion includes a restatement of the thesis and a summary of the main points.	The candidate presents a relatively well-organised essay. Paragraphs are well-structured although there are a few instances of incoherence. The candidate incorporates illustrations into the essay without necessarily destroying the flow of the discussion. The introduction includes a thesis statement which is developed by the body of the essay although the argument is not	The candidate follows the structure of the academic essay although some parts do not fit in appropriately. Paragraphs are not so well-structured; many instances of incoherence are recorded. There are challenges of incorporating illustrations into the essay. The introduction includes a thesis, but it is not fully developed in the body. The conclusion is a one-sentence statement or does not logically flow from the body of the essay.	The candidate does not follow the structure of the academic essay or only provides a skeletal sketch of a discussion. Paragraphs are not well-structured, and the essay is generally incoherent. The candidate is not able to incorporate illustrations into the essay. The introduction does not include a thesis or includes one which is not properly

	of the thesis, a summary of the main points and a personal reflection.		exhaustive enough. The conclusion includes a restatement of the thesis and a summary of the main points.		stated. The thesis is not fully developed in the body and the paragraphs are too short. The conclusion is a one-sentence statement or does not logically flow from the body of the essay.
Expression	The candidate writes in a very clear and lucid style. There is highly an appropriate use of general academic vocabulary and reporting verbs to position and frame the argument. There is an excellent use of specific vocabulary and phraseology related to the topic. Sentence construction is highly idiomatic.	The candidate writes in a clear and lucid style although there are very few instances of expression errors. There is a very good use of general academic vocabulary and reporting verbs to position and frame the argument. There is also a very good use of specific vocabulary and phraseology related to the topic.	The candidate writes well but there are several instances of expression errors. There is some use of general academic vocabulary and reporting verbs to position and frame the argument. There is also a good use of specific vocabulary and phraseology related to the topic. Sentence construction is mostly idiomatic.	There are many instances of expression errors. The candidate makes use of general academic vocabulary and reporting verbs but there is some monotony in the use of some constructions/expressions. The use of specific vocabulary and phraseology related to the topic are generally lacking or they are used ineffectively in many instances. Sentence construction is mostly not idiomatic.	There are too many instances of expression errors. The candidate does not make effective use of general academic vocabulary and reporting verbs. Specific vocabulary and phraseology related to the topic are lacking or they are used ineffectively. Sentence constructions are not idiomatic.

		Sentence construction is generally idiomatic.			
Mechanical Accuracy	The candidate pays very close attention to conventions of writing (punctuation & spelling) and the lexicogrammar of English (e.g. concord). The language is impeccable and error-free. Very negligible or minor errors may be recorded in not more than four instances.	The candidate pays close attention to conventions of writing (punctuation & spelling) and the lexicogrammar of English (e.g. concord). Only few errors are recorded, and these do not impede effective communication.	The candidate generally pays attention to conventions of writing (punctuation & spelling) and the lexicogrammar of English (e.g. concord). However, several mechanical and grammatical errors are recorded across the essay and, in a few instances, these impede effective communication.	The candidate pays little attention to conventions of writing (punctuation & spelling) and the lexicogrammar of English (e.g. concord). There are many mechanical and grammatical errors throughout the essay, and, in most instances, these impede effective communication.	The candidate pays very little or no attention to conventions of writing (punctuation & spelling) and the lexicogrammar of English (e.g. concord). There are too many mechanical and grammatical errors throughout the essay, which makes it difficult to understand the argument presented.
	A – excellent	B - Good	C - Average	D - Pass	E -Fail