Engl 227

Spring 2003

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Final Exam

Read the questions <u>carefully</u>! Answer all of them.

Part I   Long Answer Question *(30 pts)*

Language is our preferred form of communication and our language use makes us uniquely human. The forms of language that we use reflect our social identity (e.g. age, gender, country of origin, ethnicity) and characteristics of the situation in which we are communicating (e.g. formality, etc.). This is all part of what we call CONTEXT in language use. Write an essay showing the importance of context in (understanding) meaningful interactions.
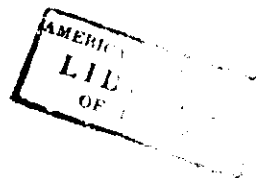
You can use the following questions to guide your discussion:

a.   What is context dependent meaning?
b.   What aspects of the context of a discourse are important in conveying a message (i.e. previous linguistic discourse, setting in which the interaction is taking place, the social identity of the interlocutors...)?
c.   What types of linguistic phenomena illustrate the importance of context in successful communication (metaphors or idioms, interactions that flout various Gricean Maxims, dialects, registers...)?

Part II   Short Answer Questions   *(39 pts)*

1. Some aphasic patients, when asked to read a list of words, substitute other words for those printed. In many cases there are similarities between the printed words and the substituted words. The data given below are from actual aphasic patients.

	Printed Word	Word Spoken by Aphasic
a.	liberty	freedom
	canary	parrot
	abroad	overseas
	large	long
	short	small
	tall	long
b.	decide	decision
	conceal	concealment
	portray	portrait
	bathe	bath
	speak	discussion
	remember	memory

What do the words in groups a and b (above) reveal about how words are likely to be stored in the brain?

2. Researchers interested in studying language and/in the brain have observed that the contra-lateral function of the brain interacts with language processing. Provide a brief description of a study that illustrates this observation.

3. Define the following terms (providing illustrations where appropriate): Accent, slang, mutual intelligibility

Part III Exercises *(31 pts)*

1. Give the semantic role (θ-role) of each of the underlined noun phrases in the following sentences:

   a. The magician changed the ball into a rabbit.
   b. The FBI has hidden the Lennen file.
   c. J.H., who defended the family from a gang, dies at eighty.
   d. John filled the drawer with papers.

2. For each of the following conversational excerpts, name a maxim that has been violated and explain how.

   a. A: When am I going to get back the money I lent you?
      B: Boy, it's hot in here!
   b. How to get to 42nd Street? Easy. Go past the movie theater –they're showing a film that I highly recommend, *Ma Vie en Rose*- it's in French with English subtitles. Then turn right and take Sixth Avenue all the way up.
   c. I'll take appropriate action on your complaint and consider it carefully.

3. We have observed three logical relations among sentences: P(araphrase), E(ntailment), and C(ontradiction). Which of these relations is exemplified in each of the following pairs of sentences? *(P.S. You don't need to provide an explanation for your choice. Use N for none)*

   a. X: Fifi is a poodle
      Y: Fifi is a dog

   b. X: Not everyone is going to come to the party
      Y: Someone is going to come to the party

   c. X: Tony is Sam's sister
      Y: Tony is a man

   d. X: My cat likes the taste of chocolate
      Y: My cat finds chocolate tasty