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## Week 15: Semantics & Pragmatics

### Practice Problems

(1) For each of the following sentences, state the implicature that it gives rise to, and name one maxim that plays a role in giving rise to this implicature, describing its effect in 1-2 sentences.

(a) Mary did well on some of her assignments

(b) (A: Have you finished grading the exam?)

B: I've finished grading the homework

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(2) In B's contribution to the fragment of dialogue below, how is the "speaker meaning" different from the "sentence meaning", and (briefly) why?

A: What is your evaluation of X as a programmer?

B: They always come to work on time, and keep their desk neat and clean

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(3) Which of the following is true of Grice's maxims?

(a) They are based on the assumption that speakers are cooperative

(b) They are best understood as advice for good communication

(c) They are never flouted

(d) None of the above

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## (4) Ambiguity

(a) Provide an example of an ambiguous word and describe two of its meanings

(b) State whether this is a case of polysemy or homophony

(5) Provide a hyponym of the noun **fruit**

(6) For each of the following pairs of sentences, indicate which of the specified semantic relations hold (this could be none, one, or more in any given case):

(a) i. No linguistics student got an F       (i) entails (ii)    (ii) entails (i)    contradictory  
ii. Every student got an F

(b) i. Every professor likes books       (i) entails (ii)    (ii) entails (i)    contradictory  
ii. Every professor likes long books

(c) i. Most breads contain wheat       (i) entails (ii)    (ii) entails (i)    contradictory  
ii. Most baked goods contain wheat

(d) i. John didn't leave the room       (i) entails (ii)    (ii) entails (i)    contradictory  
ii. John stayed in the room

(7) For each meaning paraphrase below, write in the first blank word that has that meaning and in the second (and third if present) a differently spelled homophone that has a different meaning. The first line is filled in for illustration.

(a) 'A pair'                              two                      too                      to

(b) 'Naked'                              b \_\_\_\_\_      b \_\_\_\_\_

(c) 'Eight bits'                              b \_\_\_\_\_      b \_\_\_\_\_

(d) 'A horse's coiffure'                      m \_\_\_\_\_      m \_\_\_\_\_      M \_\_\_\_\_

(e) 'Purity of gold unit'                      k \_\_\_\_\_      c \_\_\_\_\_

(f) 'One of five senses'                      s \_\_\_\_\_      s \_\_\_\_\_      c \_\_\_\_\_