

SECOND EXAM STUDY GUIDE

Ted Sider
Phil Language

1. Introduction to pragmatics; difference between pragmatics and semantics.
2. Austin's distinction between performatives and statements.
3. Austin's idea of an infelicitous performative. Different kinds of infelicity.
4. Austin's taxonomy of verbs that can be used in performative utterances.
5. Austin's discussion of ways in which statements can be infelicitous (and thus are like performatives).
6. Informalist's attack on the formalist's (logician's) account of logical words ('and', 'or', 'if...then').
7. Grice's distinction between saying and implicating. (Conventionality, dependence on context, "strictly speaking", cancelability, etc.)
8. Grice's maxims. Know what they are, and how they work. Be able to produce examples illustrating them (e.g., "a violation of the maxim of quantity would be responding to the question 'where is the bathroom?' by specifying the exact location of the bathroom, down to the last millimeter".)
9. Grice's general idea of how implicature results from the presumption that speakers are following the maxims. The idea of flouting maxims.
10. Be able to show how conversational implicatures derive from Grice's maxims.
11. How Grice's account can be used to defend the formalist (logician's) account of logical words.
12. Stalnaker's key concepts: possible world, proposition (function from possible worlds to truth-values), context set, two-dimensional matrix.
13. Stalnaker's conception of the nature of conversations: shrinking the context set.

14. Stalnaker's principles: what they are, and how they're intuitively justified.
15. Stalnaker's main thesis: sometimes an utterance would violate his principles if one were asserting the proposition that is conventionally/semantically expressed by the utterance; so instead one asserts the diagonal proposition of the original matrix. Understand this account, and be able to discuss examples (e.g. 'That is either Zsa Zsa Gabor or Elizabeth Anscombe', 'Hesperus = Phosphorus'.)
16. The basic idea of Lewis's analogy between baseball and conversations.
17. The idea of accommodation. Be able to illustrate with examples.
18. The different elements of conversational score: presupposition, salience, point of reference, standards of precision, relevant possibilities, facts about naming and marriage. Know how to illustrate in each case how accommodation can change the score.
19. Application of Lewis's account to issues elsewhere in philosophy: Unger on absolute terms ('flat', 'certain'); skepticism.
20. Goals of Tarski's theory of truth. His criteria for an adequate theory of truth.
21. Know the liar paradox, the challenge it presents for a theory of truth, and how Tarski proposes to meet that challenge.
22. Idea of recursive definition.
23. Know the details of the grammar of the simple language I discussed in class, and its Tarskian definition of truth.
24. Davidson's objections to "propositional" semantics. Know these objections, and know our discussion of their strengths and weaknesses.
25. Davidson's view about what a semantic theory should be like.
26. The Foster objection to Davidson.
27. The basic challenge of Kripke's semantic skeptic.
28. Know how Kripke responds to various replies, such as appealing to speakers' dispositions.