



MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY

University Examinations for 2022/2023 Academic Year

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

THIRD YEAR SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR

BACHELOR OF ARTS

APH 308: PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

DATE: 20/3/2023

TIME: 2:00 – 4:00 PM

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer QUESTION ONE and any other TWO QUESTIONS.

QUESTION ONE (30 MARKS)

- a) Compare and contrast the Lexical and Stipulative definitions. Using relevant examples, explain occasions in which each of them is relevant. (14 marks)
- b) Demonstrate, by way of practical examples, how if the connection between words and things is entirely arbitrary or conventional, it becomes difficult to understand how language enables human beings to gain knowledge or understanding of the world. (16 marks)

QUESTION TWO (20 MARKS)

Words in metaphysical language serve more as devices more for veiling truth than for revealing it. With reference to Logical positivists, explain why metaphysical language is entirely meaningless.

QUESTION THREE (20 MARKS)

- a) Religious language is defective and at best, it can only give a vague and ambiguous description of deities. Discuss. (10 marks)
- b) Discuss how the theories of Negative concepts and analogy offer a solution to the problem of religious language. (10 marks)

QUESTION FOUR (20 MARKS)

According to Kant, Language represents the concepts that are born out of the categories of our minds. As such, we can never know things as they are, but as we perceive them. Discuss.

QUESTION FIVE (20 MARKS)

- a) With reference to Bertrand Russell, distinguish between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. (14 marks)
- b) Using practical examples, explain which of these two types of knowledge is more reliable in describing reality. (6 marks)