**Guidelines for the ‘Semantic Analysis of Adopted “Paragraph”’ Assignment**

(ENG302: Semantics and Pragmatics, Fall 2012)

**General Instructions:**

* After reading both texts and considering the content of this course, choose *one* of the two text options to work with. (Either choice should work for this assignment.)
* Include a cover page with your name and your choice of text.
* Your written work should be typed, but figures and other details that would be difficult to type may be done by hand. (Just make sure to keep a copy…)
* You can use dictionaries/thesauruses as references but you should also rely on your own understanding of word meanings and not limit your answers based on choices of simplified references. Be sure to include citations of your sources.
* Your work is due at my office, Keezell 209, by no later than 3:30pm, Thursday, 12/13. Look for a folder outside my office if you want to drop it off when I’m not there. *Make sure you retain a copy of all your work.*
* **Grading:** For all parts, I will be looking for thoroughness and accuracy, awareness of the complexity of theoretical issues, carefulness in data analysis and argument, choice of sources, language, etc.

**Content Instructions** (For this final analysis, you will be doing a combination of lexical semantic analysis, sentential semantic/syntactic analysis, and pragmatic/discourse analysis.)**:**

* **Part 1—Lexical Semantics (worth a maximum of 24 points):**

Choose *two* of the first *four* analyses (i – iv) : (6 points each)

1. Replace *five* words in your chosen text with what might be called synonyms of those words, (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.). Carefully discuss the way in which, and the extent to which your replacements work as synonyms for these words in this context and/versus in other contexts. Then outline the general theoretical issues in (word level) synonymy, including these examples where appropriate.
2. Replace any *three* words in your chosen text with antonyms, making sure each represents a different type of (word level) antonymy. Carefully discuss the way in which, and extent to which your replacements work as antonyms for these words in this context and/versus in other contexts. Then outline the general theoretical issues in antonymy, including these examples where appropriate.
3. Select any *three* words in your chosen text, including examples from at least two different word classes, and describe two hyponyms of each. For just *one* of your three words, also provide a hyperonym for that word and lay out a taxonymy that of at least four levels that includes the original word from the text, the two co-hyponyms, and another level. State which level in your taxonymy, if any, might best be described as the “basic categories/words” in that taxonymy, and why you think so.
4. Select *one* word from the text that can provide a relevant illustration of the following types of lexical meaning variation: vagueness, polysemy, and homonymy. Characterize these semantic phenomena with your word and then carefully lay out the evidence that allows you to make these distinctions, including a brief consideration of the origin of the homonymy. Finally, characterize the level of distinctness between vagueness, polysemy, and homonymy in your example, and the extent to which a continuum explanation might be better. Is metaphor a factor in this example?

**(Part 1 Continued)**

Also do the following analysis, noting which option for (D) you choose: (12 points)

1. Select a different word from your text than those used

above, Then (A) provide a referential definition for this word with the meaning it has in your text, (B) discuss any limitations of this referential definition, (C) give the specifics of how and to what extent semantic features can be used in a sense definition of this meaning *and* the extent to which prototypical uses and fuzzy boundaries are an issue here, and then (D) do just *one* of the following: provide a Generative Lexicon qualia structure for your word, as richly detailed as possible, with an explanation *or* provide a Natural Semantic Metalanguage explication for your word, as richly detailed as possible, with an explanation.

* **Part 2 – Sentential Semantics and Pragmatics/Discourse (worth a maximum of 76 points)**

*\*\*Begin by separating your entire chosen text into a list of numbered sentences. If two full, independent clauses are simply connected with a conjunction, separate them as distinct sentences. You will need to turn this in with your analysis.\*\**

1. For any *one* sentence in your chosen text (you can refer to it by its number in your list), create a syntactic variant that has the same truth conditional meaning. Describe the truth conditional meaning of these synonymous sentences.

(4 points)

1. For any *three* sentences in your chosen text, give one entailment of each.

(6 points)

1. Find *a* performative utterance in your chosen text. State which clause it is, and explain how you know it is functioning as a performative utterance.

(4 points)

1. Find *a* sentence that has a conversational implicature based on one of the maxims of conversation (relevance may be the most straightforward one to look for). State the implicature and carefully explain how it is inferred. Is it a direct application of the maxim or was the maxim flouted in this case?

(6 points)

**(Part 2 continued)**

1. For *each* full independent clause (not infinitives) in your chosen text, state whether it is a canonical declarative sentence (canonical), one of the three types of sentence commonly associated with functions other than assertions (interrogative, imperative, exclamatory), or a non-canonical variant of a canonical declarative sentence (one of the six discussed in the Birner article). Specifically label what type or syntactic variant each is.

(12 points)

1. For one example each of *two* different non-declarative types, state what the commonly associated function of the type is and whether or not your example has that function. If not, what function does it have and how do you know?

(6 points)

1. For *three* examples of different syntactic variants of the types discussed in the Birner article, state for each what information structure constraint(s) are argued to limit the use of that type of variant and give a clearly detailed analysis of how the example sentence does or does not meet those constraints. (12 points)
2. Apply Prince’s *Assumed Familiarity Taxonomy* to all the referring expressions in the your chosen text, explaining for any that seem challenging to classify, what the challenge is and why you chose a particular level of familiarity. (10 points)
3. Provide an analysis of the coherence relation(s) that one might recognize between at least *eight* pairs of discourse segments in your chosen text, stating what coherence relation(s) apply, and giving an explanation for your analysis. (16 points)