

Phil 432: Beginnings of Analytic Philosophy

Prompts for Final Paper

2000 words max

Questions (choose *one* of these topics):

1. What, according to JL Austin, is a speech act? What limits are there, if any, on what kind of speech acts there can be?
2. Explain Friedrich Waismann's theory of analyticity. If his theory is right, can analyticity still be used to account for necessity and a priority?
3. What is ordinary language philosophy? Illustrate your answer with the help of one philosopher whose work we've read (e.g. Austin or Malcolm, though you could also use Strawson or Ryle if you read those papers.) Evaluate the success of the ordinary language methodology in solving philosophical problems.
4. Explain and illustrate the different kinds of implicature categorised by Grice: conventional, generalised conversational, and particularised conversational. How are they each related to his Conversational Maxims? Are those conversational maxims complete, or can you think of any more that might be used (perhaps just in some contexts?) Show how your new Maxim could be used to generate implicatures.
5. Explain the two different interpretations of Moore, one according to which he is a philosopher who privileges a certain kind of common sense, and one according to which he is an ordinary language philosopher. Which is the better approach? Are either of these interpretations the right way to understand Moore?
6. What is Quine's argument for the indeterminacy of translation? What would be some of the consequences of the argument's success? Does the argument succeed?

Instructions

- If you choose to answer one of the questions above, make sure you answer all parts of the question.
- If you would like to write on a different topic you may, but you should clear it with me *before you start writing the paper*.
- Whichever you choose to do, you should i) organise your paper around **arguing** for a thesis of your own and ii) demonstrate knowledge of the literature that we have studied (not *all* the literature we have studied, just some relevant part.) If you don't have much experience writing philosophy papers, you are strongly encouraged to read Jim Pryor's "How to write a philosophy paper" (easily found via google) before you start.
- **Please do not put your name on your paper.** Do put your PID number on your paper (I will be able to match this up with your name once I have finished grading.) This helps me to avoid inadvertent bias in my grading.
- Turn your paper in by emailing a .pdf file to the address below before midnight on the due date.

Gillian Russell
gillian.russell@unc.edu