

MEANING OBSCURITIES IN LECTURER-STUDENT COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

Effective teaching and learning depend on meaningful communication between the lecturer and the students. Unfortunately, while lecturing some meaning obscurities occur in the utterances. This fact is really a serious problem which necessitates a deep study so as to make the communication between lecturers and students more effective. This problem leads to this research question: "why are there meaning obscurities in Lecturer-Student Communication?". To answer this research question, it is necessary to examine the utterances that occur in the Lecturer-Student Communication. Therefore, the aim of this article is to examine utterances occurring in the Lecturer-Student Communication so as to point out the meaning obscurities and their causes in Lecturer-Student Communication. To achieve this aim, 200 utterances were collected during the classroom observations in order to examine them on the basis of the lexical, compositional, utterance, and content analyses. This is to say, each of 200 utterances was analyzed at the level of lexical, compositional, and utterance so as to discover the meaning obscurities and their causes. After the analyses, the content analysis was used to classify the utterances with respect to Searle's classification. The results revealed that the meaning obscurities occurring in the utterances are caused by misleading, vague, ambiguous, and obscure expressions. The discussion explains all these expressions so as to answer the research question related to the problem before the suggestions of effective strategies are given to avoid meaning obscurities in Lecturer-Student Communication.

Keywords: *meaning obscurities, lecturer-Student Communication, utterances, misleading, vague, ambiguous, and obscure*

1. Introduction

The Lecturer-Student Communication is very important since it contributes to the transfer and reception of knowledge. As a university lecturer, I have noticed that some students do not understand the material taught simply because they caught something different from what I delivered. It is not because they are less clever, but because of the way they perceived the expressions uttered. This is to say, the utterance meanings were not clear for the students. In other words, the utterance meanings were obscure. This is the problem that this article discusses. This problem leads to the question "*why are there meaning obscurities in Lecturer-Student Communication?*" From this research question, the hypothesis is that "*there are meaning obscurities in utterances during the Lecturer-Student Communication because of vague and ambiguous expressions*". The research question is detailed into two sub-questions: "are lecturer and students' utterance meanings clear or obscure?" and "in case lecturer and students' utterance meanings are obscure, what makes them obscure?" The research question implies that first of all, we have to make sure that there are really meaning obscurities, and then we have to point out the causes of these obscurities. Therefore, this article aims at examining utterances occurring in the Lecturer-Student Communication so as to point out the meaning obscurities and their causes. To reach this aim, some data needed to be collected and analyzed deeply.

As far as the collection and analysis of data are concerned, the observation and lexical, compositional, utterance, and content analysis were used. The observation was used to collect data during the lectures in the Department of English Letters and Civilization at the National Pedagogical University in Kinshasa in Democratic Republic of Congo. In Democratic Republic of Congo, English is taught as a foreign language. Generally, students have poor proficiency level in English. Therefore, much attention should be paid to how meaning is conveyed and received during the teaching/learning process. As the utterances presented the same features, the number of data was limited to 200 utterances. Each of these utterances was analyzed three

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times i.e. at the level of lexical, compositional, and utterance analyses. The content analysis was used to group the utterances according to Searle's classification.

2. Background

Many works on lecturer-student communication are mainly based on teaching objectives, teaching methods, characteristics of classroom interactions, the teacher's communication skills, the impact of communication between teacher and students, the students' perception of the teacher-student communication, etc. For example, Ayua (2017:1) asserts that "*teaching is a complex process; its' basic elements include: objectives, content, methodology, assessment (marking & reporting), the personality of the teacher and the quality of the learner*". Here, one can notice that Ayua does not pay attention to how meaning is conveyed and received in the teaching process. Rido and Sari (2018:40) claim that the characteristics of classroom interaction are language accuracy and classroom discourse. On their side, Khan and the others (2017: 18) focused their studies on the teacher's communication skills. Asrar (2018:32) focused on ascertaining the impact of communication between teachers and students. Han and Tosten (2017:190) insisted on how students perceive teacher-student communication in order to determine the effect of teacher- student communication according to some variables such as gender, grade level, class size and school type. It is clear that no focus is on how meaning is transferred and received in the Lecturer-Student Communication. Even in the field of semantics and pragmatics where meaning is the core of the study; no work is written about meaning transfer and meaning reception in Lecturer-Student Communication.

Students' education depends on an effective communication as Asrar (2018: 33) argues that "*effective communication plays an important role in building up the character and standard of student's education. Teacher's skills and ways of communication motivate the students to increase their ability in the field of education*". In the same vein, Suzić et al. (2013: 65) say that "*considering that communication is an extremely important element in modern university education, it is of utmost importance to know how successful student-teacher communication can be achieved*". Abedini (2013: 94) supports that "*effective communication between teachers and students is a key factor to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning process*". Rawat (2015:3058) states that "*the success of the teaching-learning process depends on the teacher's knowledge and the teacher's ability to transfer the same to the students. Communication plays a vital role in the transfer of knowledge to take place. Furthermore, the process is facilitated by the verbal communication that not only helps in the sharing of the knowledge but also creates an amicable environment to facilitate the sharing of ideas/opinions/feelings between the teacher and the students*". All these citations prove that effective communication is very important in teaching/learning process. But, it must be known that effective communication should mean meaningful communication. This is to say that without successful conveyance and reception of meaning in lecturer-student communication, no one can pretend to have an effective communication.

The communication between the lecturer and students is mainly an oral one. An oral communication constitutes an exchange of utterances between the lecturer and the students. For the communication to be effective the utterances should be meaningful so as to facilitate a mutual understanding between the lecturer and the students. Andewil and Waziana (2019:29) write that "*communication between teacher and students in teaching and learning process is regarded as an important element to perform an effective learning. Teachers will produce some utterance in order to convey the materials through their speech, when they communicate with their students*".

The utterances should also be uttered with a voice which can be heard by all the students. To paraphrase Talib and the others (2017: 23) the right practice and delivery of the voice elements increase the understanding.

The utterances in Lecturer-Student Communication are speech acts that both lecturer and students perform. Katz, M. (2015) confirms it by saying that "*Speech acts are utterances that perform actions. Their focus is usually less on their truth value than on their illocutionary effect, the effect that a speaker wishes to have on his or her environment*". Green (2016:1) supports this viewpoint by affirming that "*speech acts are acts that can, but need not be, carried out by saying and meaning that one is doing so*". These utterances can be assertive (representatives), directive, commissive, expressive or declarative speech acts according to Searle's classification. Searle (1976:1) classifies the speech acts into five groups namely *assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations*. As he says that "*the five basic kinds of illocutionary acts are: representatives (or assertives), directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations*". To paraphrase him, representatives or assertives are utterances that commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something's being the

case, to the truth of the expressed proposition. In other words, assertive utterances commit the speaker to something being a conviction or affirmation. They express affirmation, suggestions, conclusions, etc. Regarding directives, Searle (1976:11) notes that directives consist in the fact that they are attempts (of varying degrees, and hence, more precisely, they are determinates of the determinable which includes attempting) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. As far as Commissives are concerned, Searle (1976:11) states that *“Commissives then are those illocutionary acts whose point is to commit the speaker (again in varying degrees) to some future course of action speech acts express the idea of doing something in the future”*. Serale (1976:12) defines Expressives as *“the illocutionary point of this class is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content”*. For Searle (1976: 14) *“declarations bring about some alternation in the status or condition of the referred-to object or objects solely in virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed”*. Only Searle’s assertives, directives, commissives, and expressives are applied to this research because the lecturer and students’ utterances expressed mainly lecturer and students’ affirmation, and questions. Commissives and expressives were not numerous. The assertive speech acts are most of the time statements. Both lecturer and students’ statements should be clear so as to facilitate comprehension. In the Lecturer-Student Communication, the lecturer seems to be the one who performs lots of statements. When the lecturer speaks for a long time, his/her statements reduce their clarity. The lecturer’s statements need to be relevant in order to attract the students’ attention which contributes in meaning reception. New Directions for Teaching and Learning (2011:15) write that *“Zollman’s success in delivering a memorable lecture can possibly be explained by the fact that he presented relevant content for a motivated audience in an appropriate setting. This is to say that a relevant lecture attracts the students’ attention”*.

The directive speech acts are (most of the time) questions and orders. The lecturer’s questions should be as clear as possible because they are very important as Farahiana and Rezaeeb (2012:161) argue that *“types of teachers’ questions play an important role in teaching since they affect students’ participation in the process of negotiation of meaning”*. Orders or commands should also be given with a good attitude. (Cao, 2011) quoted by Siddig and AlKhoudayr (2018:87) argues that *“the behavior has a greater replica of attitude and compassion to better or worsen the situation. When students perceive that their teacher is trustworthy and supportive in creating connections, they trust the teacher attitude towards presenting teaching materials easily”*. Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) quoted by Ahmad and Sahak (2009:59) assert that *“there are three components of attitudes: affective, cognitive and behavioural. The affective component is a feeling or an emotion one has about an object or situation. The cognitive component is the beliefs or ideas one has about an object or situation, whereas the behavioural component of attitude reflects how one intends to act or behave towards someone or something”*. To paraphrase Sivakumar (2018:283) attitude is a tendency to react favorably or unfavorably.

The students’ background plays an important role in the transfer and reception of meaning. The students, who have strong prior knowledge on what the lecturer delivers, comprehend easily as Hattan (2019:1) states that *“students’ ability to comprehend what they read is greatly influenced by what they already know and have experienced”*.

A lecturer can fail to reach his/her teaching objectives (although he/she uses good teaching methods and techniques) because the meaning within utterances was obscure. Before we understand how meaning can be obscure, let us recall what meaning is. Mupemba (2019:8) defines meaning as *“a whole set of intentions, ideas and concepts that a speaker or writer conveys to the audience in a specific context through utterances, words/sentences, symbols, body movement, eye contact, facial expressions or any other means”*. The intentions, ideas, and concepts conveyed by the speaker should be clear enough so that the listener grasp them in the same way as the speaker. But it is noticed that the speaker may fail to express his/her intentions or ideas clearly. In this context, the listener cannot grasp what the speaker means. As consequence, the communication becomes impossible because of meaning obscurities.

This article focuses on the meaning obscurities that occur in the Lecturer-Student Communication. The Department of English Letters and Civilization at the National Pedagogical University was used as the case study.

3. Methodology

To reach the aim and answer to the research question, 200 utterances were collected through classroom observations. These utterances were collected during these classes: pragmatics (second year of graduate level), grammar (first year of graduate level), phonology (first year of graduate level), morphology (third year of undergraduate level), literature (second year of graduate level), Linguistics (first year of undergraduate level), and Curriculum (second year of graduate level). Let us point out here that lecturers and students are not English native speakers. They use Lingala and French as their local languages. But, they use English during lectures i.e. they teach and learn in English. So, 200 English utterances were collected to be examined or analyzed. Each utterance was analyzed on the basis of lexical, compositional, and utterance analyses. Lexical analysis focused on each word in the utterance as Brotherfish (2018) says that “*lexical semantic deals with individual word meaning*”. Stringer (2019:180) affirms that “*lexical semantics is concerned with inherent aspects of word meaning and the semantic relations between words, as well as the ways in which word meaning is related to syntactic structure*”. The lexical analysis aimed at pointing out the meaning of each word within the utterance. Once the lexical analysis is finished, the next analysis was the compositional analysis which consisted in combining all the lexical meanings into one compositional meaning without taking into account the context. Asudeh (2018:1) says that “compositional semantics studies how meanings of the larger grammatical units – phrases, sentences, discourses – are built out of the meanings of their parts” Kroeger (2018:5) explains that “the term sentence meaning refers to the semantic content of the sentence: the meaning which derives from the words themselves, regardless of context” Perini-Santos (2017) add as follows “Principle of Compositionality: the meaning of an expression is a function of the meanings of its parts and of the way they are combined”

The utterance analysis comes to enrich the compositional meaning with the influence of the context. After the utterance analysis, the utterances were grouped according to Searle’s classification of speech acts: assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive speech acts. In each classification, there were clear utterances (the utterances which convey meaning clearly), misleading utterances (the utterances which deviate the listener from the right knowledge), vague utterances (the utterances which lack precision and specification), ambiguous utterances (the utterances which offer a series of meanings to the listener), and obscure utterances (the utterances which do not match the speaker’s intention). Considering the number of the utterances, there is no way to include 200 utterances with their analyses in this article. Here below are some of the data representing (1) misleading utterances, (2) vague utterances, (3) ambiguous utterances, and (4) obscure utterances.

(1) “A subject can always be a noun”.

a) Lexical Analysis

This utterance has got 7 words: *a*, *subject*, *can*, *always*, *be*, *a*, and *noun*. The word ‘a’ is analyzed once because it is repeated twice in the same utterance.

- A: the indefinite article used to indicate that the word is used in an unspecified situation
- Subject: a grammatical function
- Can: a modal expressing the ability, permission, and possibility
- Always: an adverb of frequency used to indicate the constancy or regularity
- Be: a verb expressing a state
- Noun: one of the categories of word that indicate names of people, things, etc.

b) Compositional Analysis

This utterance is a statement meaning that a subject has a possibility to be constantly a noun.

c) Utterance Analysis

This utterance is the lecturer’s statement asserting that the subject position can always be occupied by a noun.

d) Partial Result

The lecturer’s statement is misleading because not only a noun can be a subject. For example a gerund, a phrase, sentence, and a clause can be a subject.

(2) “What did we say about affixes?”

a) Lexical Analysis

This utterance has got 6 words: *what*, *did*, *we*, *say*, *about*, and *affixes*.

- What: a question word used to ask a question seeking for an object, name, etc.
- Did: the simple past form of 'do' which is an auxiliary used to form questions where the verb 'do' is not used
- We: a personal pronoun subject used for the first person plural
- Say: a verb expressing the action of declaring
- About: a preposition used to indicate what is concerned with
- Affixes: the plural form of 'affix' which is a half word attached to or inserted in a word

b) *Compositional Analysis*

This utterance is a question seeking for what was said about affixes.

c) *Utterance Analysis*

This utterance is the lecturer's question to the students. The lecturer wanted the students to tell what was said in the preceding lecture.

d) *Partial Result*

The lecturer's question is vague because it does not determine exactly what the lecturer wanted to know since obviously lots of things were said about affixes.

(3) **"What is green?"**

a) *Lexical Analysis*

This utterance is made of 3 words: *what*, *is*, and *green*.

- What: a question word used to ask a question seeking for object, name, etc.
- Is: the simple present conjugated form of the verb 'be' used with the third person singular
- Green: an adjective used to indicate color that most of the plants and unripe fruits have

b) *Compositional Analysis*

This utterance is a question seeking for what *green* is.

c) *Utterance Analysis*

The utterance is the lecturer's question to the students. The lecturer wanted the students to tell what the word *green* is. But, the lecturer's intention was to ask the students to tell the grammatical category of the word '*green*'.

d) *Partial Result*

The lecturer's question is ambiguous because it offers more than one possible good answers. The answer to this question can be *it is a word*, *it is a color name* or *it is an adjective*.

(4) **Lecturer: "When can we talk about presupposition? Give an example"**

a) *Lexical Analysis*

These utterances are made of 9 words: *when*, *can*, *we*, *talk*, *about*, *presupposition*, *give*, *an*, and *example*.

- When: a question word used to ask for a moment, day, week, month, year, etc.
- Can: a modal expressing either the ability, the permission or possibility
- We: the personal pronoun subject indicating the first person plural
- Talk: a verb expressing an action of holding a conversation or an oral exchange between people.
- About: a preposition indicating a reference to something/people/idea, etc.
- Presupposition: the idea that a speaker believes that his/her interlocutor already knows.
- Give: a verb expressing the action of supplying or transferring
- An: indefinite article indicating that the word is used in the general context.
- Example: an illustration used to clarify the situation so as to make understanding effective.

b) *Compositional Analysis*

The utterance "when can we talk about presupposition? Give an example" has got two parts. The first part is a question seeking for the moment, day, etc. which is appropriate for the permission or possibility of the exchange of ideas about presupposition. The second part is an order or a command to illustrate the presupposition.

c) *Utterance Analysis*

The utterance “when can we talk about presupposition? Give an example” sounds as if the lecturer would like to know the time which is allowed or which is possible to talk about the presupposition. But, his actual need or intention is that his students explain the concept ‘presupposition’ by illustrating it.

d) *Partial Result*

The possible answers to this question can be

- Anytime
- By the moment we think of it
- By the time the lecturer wants to talk about it
- Etc.

In reality, these answers are not the ones expected by the lecturer because they do not match the lecturer’s intention which is the explanation of the concept ‘presupposition’.

With respect to the different possible answers to this question and no convergence of the lecturer’s intention and his question prove that the lecturer’s question is ambiguous and obscure. It is ambiguous because it offers several possible good or right answers. It is obscure because it does not match the lecturer’s intention. That is, the right answers that the students can give (according to the meaning expressed by the words within the utterance) could be considered as wrong although they were right. Because of the ambiguity and obscurity of this question, no student answered to the question.

It is in this way that all 200 utterances were analyzed in order to come to the results mentioned in the section below.

4. Results and Discussion

The research question of this thesis is “*why are there meaning obscurities in utterances during the Lecturer-Student Communication?*”. From this research question, the hypothesis is that “*there are meaning obscurities in utterances during the Lecturer-Student Communication because of ambiguity and vagueness in expressions*”. The research question was detailed into two sub-questions: “*are lecturer and students’ utterance meanings clear or obscure?*” and “*in case lecturer and students’ utterance meanings are obscure, what makes them obscure?*” The analyses of the utterances revealed that the utterances in the Lecturer-Student Communication are mainly *assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive speech acts*. Out of 200 utterances, the analysis showed that there were 148 assertive speech acts, 48 directive speech acts, 2 commissive speech acts, and 2 expressive speech acts. These speech acts are presented as follows:

Assertive Speech Acts

- a) Clear utterances: 53 (Student: 12; Lecturer: 41)
- b) Misleading utterances: 25 (Student: 0; Lecturer: 25)
- c) Vague utterances: 2 (Student: 1; Lecturer: 1)
- d) Ambiguous utterances: 0
- e) Obscure utterances: 68 (Student: 12; Lecturer: 56)

Directive Speech Acts

- a) Clear utterances: 24 (Student: 1; Lecturer: 23)
- b) Misleading utterance: 1 (Student: 0; Lecturer: 1)
- c) Vague utterances: 3 (Student: 0 ; Lecturer : 3)
- d) Ambiguous utterances: 4 (Student: 0; Lecturer: 4)
- e) Obscure utterances: 16 (Student: 0; Lecturer: 16)

Commissive Speech Acts

- a) Clear utterances: 2 (Student: 0; Lecturer: 2)
- b) Misleading utterance: 0
- c) Vague utterances: 0
- d) Ambiguous utterances: 0
- e) Obscure utterances: 0

Expressive Speech Acts

- a) Clear utterance: 1 (Student: 0; Lecturer: 1)
- b) Misleading utterance: 0
- c) Vague: 0
- d) Ambiguous: 0
- e) Obscure: 1 (Student: 0; Lecturer: 1)

The misleading, vague, ambiguous, and obscure expressions do not favor the effective meaning transfer and meaning reception. Therefore, they constitute meaning obscurities in the Lecturer-Student

Communication. The above results from the analyses of utterances reveal that clear utterances present 40% whereas misleading, vague, ambiguous, and obscure utterances which constitute the meaning obscurities present 60%. These results prove that there are meaning obscurities in utterances during the Lecturer-Student Communication. The cause of these meaning obscurities are the *lecturer's misleading, the use of vague expressions, the use of ambiguous expressions, and the use of obscure expressions*. The following lines discuss each of them.

Lecturer's misleading

The lecturer's misleading is the fact that the lecturer transmits false knowledge to students or the lecturer accepts the student's wrong answer as the right one because he (the lecturer) does not have the true knowledge. In these two situations, the students keep wrong knowledge in their mind. This wrong knowledge is considered by the students as the right one. As consequence, these students get wrong meaning of what they should actually know. This lecturer's misleading creates or causes meaning obscurity.

The use of vague expressions

Vague expressions are the expressions that lack precision of reference, specification, and determinacy. There is precision of reference when an expression offers precise sense (i.e. mental representation) and precise object (referent) to the listener.

An expression is specified when it distinguishes the concerned object (referent) from its similar objects. This is to say, some objects have different forms, but they have the same terminology.

An expression is determinant when it determines exactly what the listener has to understand. This is to say, the speaker leads the listener to the right understanding of message by focusing on the terms that isolate the concerned idea from other ideas that the listener may refer to.

The use of ambiguous expressions

An ambiguous expression is the expression that offers two or more possible meanings that the listener or reader has to select one. The results of the analyses showed that ambiguous expressions occurred mainly in the lecturer's directive speech acts. That is, the lecturers' questions are, most of the time, ambiguous. As consequence, the students do not get the clear meaning of the lecturer's utterances.

The use of obscure expressions

Obscure expressions are the expressions that do not match the speaker's intention or need. To put it clear, the speaker fails to express his/her thought, intention or need because he/she is talking about one thing, but having a different reference in his/her mind.

5. Strategies to avoid meaning obscurities

To avoid meaning obscurities, the following strategies can be applied during the Lecturer-Student Communication.

a) To avoid misleading expressions

Misleading originated from inexactitude of knowledge. So, the lecturer should verify the knowledge he/she has before the lecture. Any hesitation should not be neglected. In case the lecturer feels that he/she is not sure of the right knowledge, it is better to check the right knowledge on the exact web instead of misleading the students. In the same vein, the lecturer should be registered to the webs of his/her field in order to be informed about new findings in his/her field. A good list of selected books, articles, theses, M.A. dissertations and websites should be given to the students.

The students are recommended to read the books, articles, theses, and M.A. dissertations suggested by the lecturer. Furthermore, the students should also be registered to websites related to their field of study.

b) To avoid vague expressions

The lecturer should care about precision of reference, specification, and determinacy. As far as the precision of reference is concerned, the lecturer should do all his/her best to create represent (in the students' mind) the same reference he/she has in mind.

Concerning specification, the lecturer should insist on the distinction or difference between what he/she wants the students to keep in mind and what he/she can be confused with.

With regard to determinacy, the lecturer should avoid confusion of ideas. This is to say, he/she has to use words which isolate the idea he/she wants to communicate to the students from the other ideas that the students can get.

The students should ask clear questions about what they do not understand by using simple words in simple grammatical structures. They should avoid complex questions.

c) To avoid ambiguous expressions

The results showed that ambiguous expressions are uttered by the lecturers mainly in their questions. Therefore, the lecturer should ask questions in the way that the right answer should be only one. The best way to know it is to criticize their own questions they are put to students. In the same view, the students should ask for clarification before they answer to the lecturer's questions. In so-doing, the lecturer can realize the ambiguity of the question and try to put it in other way.

d) To avoid obscure expressions

The results revealed that there so many obscure expressions in the Lecturer-Student Communication. Therefore, both lecturers and students should make effort to join thought and utterances so as to convey one and only one idea. In case the right or appropriate words are not found, it is better to use appropriate illustrations, gestures and actions consciously in order to help the listener grasp the exact meaning.

Another strategy to avoid obscure expressions is to make of meaning of words one uses. Some obscure expressions are uttered because the utterer does not pay attention the meaning of words in use. Either the speaker confuses the words or he/she keeps wrong meaning.

For this reason, the dictionary should be used during the lecture so as to check word meaning when necessary. Since dictionaries sometimes lack some words, it is a good idea to use internet for a precise verification of meaning of words and expressions.

6. Conclusion

This article focused on the meaning obscurities in the Lecturer-Student Communication. It attempted to answer the research question; “*why are there meaning obscurities in the Lecturer-Student Communication?*”. The hypothesis was that there were meaning obscurities in the Lecturer-Student Communication because of vague and ambiguous expressions. To answer the research question exactly, an investigation was conducted in the Department of English and Civilization at the National Pedagogical University in Kinshasa City/Democratic Republic of Congo. 200 utterances were collected and analyzed on the basis of lexical, compositional, utterance, and content analysis. The results revealed that clear utterances present 40% whereas misleading, vague, ambiguous, and obscure utterances which constitute the meaning obscurities present 60%. These results proved that there are meaning obscurities in utterances during the Lecturer-Student Communication. The causes of these meaning obscurities are the lecturer's misleading, the use of vague expressions, the use of ambiguous expressions, and the use of obscure expressions. So, the hypothesis can be completed in the sense that not only vague and ambiguous expressions cause meaning obscurities, but the lecturer's misleading and mainly the use of obscure expresses are also causes of meaning obscurities.

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Appendix

Lecture N°1 Pragmatics

Lecturer: “What was the main topic?”

Student: “Presupposition”

Lecturer: “Why did we talk about presupposition?”

Lecturer: “When can we talk about presupposition? Give an example”

Student: “My phone is stolen”

Lecturer: “Can you find from this sentence „my phone is stolen“ a negative one?”

Lecturer: “When you say: „the sister“s phone was not stolen“. What is presupposition?”

Student: “The sister had a phone”.

Lecturer: “Why is presupposition important in pragmatics?”

Lecturer: “What’s the main difference between semantics and pragmatics?”

Lecturer: “We are in the classroom and I say: „I need a bottle“ what is your reaction?”

Lecturer: “Which bottle? It is ambiguous”

Lecturer: “Semantics is ambiguous”

Lecturer: “The word gets meaning from the context”

Lecturer: “Pragmatics disambiguates semantic sentences”

Lecturer: “You are at the market. There is a lady selling oil, and tomatoes. She says: “I need a bottle”. It makes sense because she sells oil. If she sells only fish and meat, she says: “I need a bottle”. It does not make sense because she does not sell anything related to the bottle”. Is it clear? When you take only semantics, you will be scandalized. It is good to use pragmatics. My hair is short. It can be ambiguous. What is this?”

Student: “Beard”

Lecturer: “In English when you say: „my hair“. Which hair? When you are in the shower, someone asks you a question: why are you taking long? You answer: “I am cutting my hair”. You see how the context makes the meaning clear. Semantics gives you the general meaning”.

Lecturer: “What is pragmatics in fact?”

Lecturer: “Pragmatics is the understanding things beyond what is said”.

Lecturer: “The role of pragmatics is to read beyond the words”

Lecturer: “Literal meaning is semantic”.

Lecturer: “Literary meaning is pragmatic”

Lecture N°2 Grammar

Lecturer: “What is the difference between a sentence and a clause?”

Lecturer: “What is the difference between a phrase and a sentence?”

Student: “A phrase is a unit”

Lecturer: “What do you mean by unit?”

Lecturer: “Peter lives in Matete” “How many words are there in this sentence?”

Student: “Four”

Lecturer: “What is a phrase?”

Student: “A phrase is a group of words that functions as a syntactic unit”

Lecturer: “Excellent”

Lecturer: “What does it mean „syntactic unit“?”

Lecturer: “Syntactic unit can be a phrase or a clause”

Lecturer: “Syntax is about combining words”.

Lecturer: “What are Syntactic requirements?”

Lecturer: “Conditions to behave as a syntactic unit”

Lecturer: “A group of words that can stand alone as syntactic unit within a clause is a phrase”

Lecturer: “A phrase is a part of a clause”

Lecturer: “A subject can always be a noun”.

Lecturer: "A unit, you can remove it". "You can change it".

Lecturer: "What is a phrase?"

Lecturer: "It is a syntactic unit within a clause".

Lecturer: "Peter lives in Matete, does he?" "What have I done?" "I replace Peter by „he“".

Lecturer: "Peter lives in Matete, you know that?" "That replaces „Peter lives in Matete“"

Lecturer: "This is the proof that „Peter lives in Matete is a syntactic unit“".

Lecturer: "Is „Peter lives in Matete“ a phrase?"

Student: "Yes"

Student: "No"

Lecturer: "A syntactic unit is hierarchally organized". "The highest of the hierarchy is the structure sentence" "The lowest is the word". "In between intermediate the phrases".

Lecture N°3 Phonology

Lecturer: "Read the text and the others will tell if there are phonological rules"

Lecturer: "Is there any phonological rule?"

Student: "The rule is „no aspiration“"

Lecturer: "What happens to initial stops?"

Lecturer: "Let's call it aspiration"

Lecturer: "In English initials occur with aspiration"

Lecturer: "Read the text again and identify the rules"

Lecturer: "Rules are written in prose". "You can present this in formula as in mathematics".

Lecturer: "Do you think there is a difference between the rules in prose and in formula?"

Student: "I think yes"

Lecturer: "What you need is to capture the information in prose and present that in formula"

Lecturer: "What the speaker of the language knows can be captured in prose or in formulaic rules"

Lecturer: "When we are doing phonology it is time to form the rules"

Lecturer: "Which format of rules can we use?"

Student: "Both"

Lecturer: "You are free to choose prose or formula". "But, the information is the same"

Lecturer: "The other thing I would like to show you is these three phonemes /p/, /t/, /k/" "But, if you inspect carefully, you will notice that they are in common" "Because there is something in common, instead of working with three rules you can have just one rule" "Voiceless stops are aspirated in initial position"

Lecturer: "Try to write that information" "Capture it in formulaic format"

Student: "Give me time"

Lecturer: "It is a good attempt".

Lecture N°4 Morphology

Lecturer: "How do we create words?"

Lecturer: "A new word can be created from an existing word"

Lecturer: "The chapter two focuses on morphological process"

Lecturer: "Words can be created through compounding"

Lecturer: "There is a combination of two already existing words" "When you put them together we create a new word" "For example green and board"

Lecturer: "What is green?"

Student: "It is an adjective"

Lecturer: "What is board?"

Student: "It is a noun"

Lecturer: "The second word dominates the first one"

Lecturer: "Suppose we have two words of the same category: adjective and adjective" "The result is adjective"

Lecturer: "We can create words through affixation"

Lecturer: "There are three affixations: prefix, infix, and suffix" "In English, infix does not exist".

Lecturer: "Kind – kindness" "Ness is an affix, a suffix"

Lecturer: "We can create words through reduplication"

Lecturer: "Words can be created through suppletion which is a situation when allomorphs or morphemes are unrelated"

Lecturer: "New words can be created through conversion"

Lecturer: "New words are created without affixation"

Lecturer: "This is conversion: butter as a noun and butter as a verb" "We have to focus on the stress shift"

Lecture N°5 Literature

Lecturer: "Read the first line of the poem"

Lecturer: "For Senghor, Africa is like a woman" "Africa is mother" "Africa is a country of joy, entertainment"

Lecturer: "What is identity?"
 Student: "stranger"
 Lecturer: "Yes"
 Lecturer: "Let us read comment to have light on that poem"
 Lecturer: "The poet fears Europe"
 Lecturer: "Can greeting be white" "What is that?"
 Student: "Figurative language"
 Lecturer: "What sort of figurative language?"
 Student: "Metaphor"
 Lecturer: "It is a metaphor"
 Lecturer: "Why this metaphor?"
 Student: "A kind of sincerity"
 Lecturer: "Why not black?"
 Student: "Black is something dirty"
 Lecturer: "What people are in there?"
 Student: "White people"
 Lecturer: "Ah! That is the greeting from white people"
 Lecturer: "Alienation"
 Student: "Isolation?"
 Lecturer: "Yes"

Lecture N°6 Linguistics

Lecturer: "What did we say about affixes?"
 Lecturer: "Affixes are divided into suffix, prefix, and infix"
 Lecturer: "Where do they appear?"
 Student: "At the beginning, in the middle, and at the end"
 Lecturer: "Open your handout" "we are going to speak about English derivational affixes"
 Lecturer: "We have suffix, part one" "The second part is prefix"
 Lecturer: "-able can be attached to a base"
 Lecturer: "Fix is a verb" "Fixable is an adjective"
 Lecturer: "Now, prefixes"
 Lecturer: "Un- can it be attached to a verb?"
 Student: "Yes"
 Lecturer: "In derivation, there are prefixes and suffixes" "Derivation creates new words by attaching an affix to the root and the syntactic category changes" "For example, teach teacher" "Inflectional morphemes do not create new words, they only modify the grammatical subclass to which they belong car cars"
 Lecturer: "Compounding is combination of two existing words"
 Lecturer: "Compounding is very productive in English"
 Student: "Why is compounding very productive in English?"
 Lecturer: "Compounding is found in the larger lexical categories nouns, verbs, etc."
 Lecturer: "The second category is the head" "The head dominates the first"

Lecture N°7 Curriculum

Lecturer: "Today we have the third section which is entitled ..."
 Lecturer: "Group and individual attitude"
 Lecturer: "It means to discuss the attitude of a consumer or user of the program" "What is their attitude?"
 "Positive or negative"
 Lecturer: "When we talk about the curriculum, we always think about the people and their attitude"
 Lecturer: "Society need help the designer to design the program"
 Lecturer: "The first aspect: group attitude" "What are the feelings that the group manifests toward the target language for which the program is going to be designed?" "What group attitude toward the culture of people who speak that language?" "The attitude can lead to the failure"
 Lecturer: "The second aspect: individual attitude" "It is more important than the group attitude because the individuals create a group"
 Lecturer: "The program implementer is the teacher" "The teacher must motivate the learners" "The teacher must know the needs or expectations of the learners"
 Lecturer: "Could you think of negative factors?"
 Student: "Many"
 Lecturer: "Mention some"
 Student: "Humiliating the pupils"
 Lecturer: "Humiliation" "A teacher should not humiliate the pupils"
 Student: "When a teacher insults a learner"

Lecturer: “Insulting creates negative attitude”