

24.251 – Intro to the Philosophy of Language

Problem Set 6: Davidson – The Logical Form of Action Sentences

1. Which of the following criticisms does Davidson deploy against rival accounts of action sentences?
 - (a) That they fail to identify a logical form for action sentences that could be used as the basis of a theory of meaning.
 - (b) That they fail to account for logical inferences amongst action sentences.
 - (c) Both
 - (d) Neither.

2. What would Davidson take the logical form of ‘Jones buttered the toast in the bathroom, with a knife, at midnight’ to be?
 - (a) $\exists x(\text{Buttering}(\text{Jones, the Toast, } x)) \ \& \ \exists x(\text{In}(\text{bathroom, } x)) \ \& \ \exists x(\text{With}(\text{knife, } x)) \ \& \ \exists x(\text{At}(\text{midnight, } x))$
 - (b) $\exists x(\text{Buttering}(\text{Jones, the Toast, } x) \ \& \ \text{In}(\text{bathroom, } x) \ \& \ \text{With}(\text{knife, } x) \ \& \ \text{At}(\text{midnight, } x))$
 - (c) $\exists x(x \text{ consists of the fact that Jones butter the toast in the bathroom, with a knife, at midnight})$
 - (d) None of the above

3. What would Davidson take the logical form of ‘Jones buttered the toast deliberately’ to be?
 - (a) $\exists x(\text{Buttering}(\text{Jones, the Toast, } x) \ \& \ \text{Deliberate}(x))$
 - (b) $\exists x(\text{Buttering}(\text{Jones, the Toast, } x) \ \& \ \text{Deliberate}(\text{Jones, } x))$
 - (c) It was deliberate of Jones that $\exists x(\text{Buttering}(\text{Jones, the Toast, } x))$
 - (d) He explicitly declines to discuss such cases.

4. On Davidson’s analysis, which of the following is a logical consequence of ‘Jones buttered the toast in the bathroom, with a knife, at midnight’?
 - (a) $\exists x(\text{Buttering}(\text{Jones, the Toast, } x))$
 - (b) $\exists x(\text{In}(\text{bathroom, } x) \ \& \ \text{With}(\text{knife, } x) \ \& \ \text{At}(\text{midnight, } x))$
 - (c) Both
 - (d) Neither