

7.X. Pragmatics and Logic: Problems

1. While planning the weekly luau, Rex worries that it might rain. Barbie shrugs and says: “If it rains, it rains.”

a) Does Barbie mean her sentence to be read **literally**? (That is: does Barbie believe that *if it rains, it rains*?)

b) If we translate “If it rains, it rains” into the formal language, what sort of formal sentence results? (What does the truth table for that sentence look like?)

c) Does Barbie intend some **further, unspoken message** as well? (If so, what?)

5. After Dr. Slim insists that he knows all about cultivating medicinal plants, Neko replies: “If you’re an expert on botany, then I’m Albert Einstein.”

a) While Neko believes the conditional she’s directly communicated, she is obviously communicating a second (indirect) message. What is Neko **indirectly** communicating (i.e., without saying it in so many words)?

b) Note that the sentence Neko indirectly communicated – the answer to (a) – doesn’t follow validly from the conditional she uttered. Find a **second (obvious but unstated) premise** in the Common Ground which, when added to the conditional, would **validly entail** the sentence she (indirectly) communicated.

That is: fill in the blank for Premise 2, to yield a **valid** argument.

1. If Dr. Slim is an expert on botany, then Neko is Albert Einstein.

2. **[Premise from the Common Ground]**

∴ [Sentence (from (a)) which Neko indirectly communicated]

4. Dr Slim: Do you like making money?

Jake: Who doesn't?

a) Jake intends his question rhetorically – that is, takes the answer to his question to be obvious. What is the **obvious answer** to Jake's question?

b) Based on that intended answer, what is Jake's answer to Dr. Slim's question?

c) Taking the answer to Jake's rhetorical question as a premise, and his answer to Dr. Slim's question as the conclusion, what is the **logical form** of this argument? (What **deductive rule** is this inference an example of?)

1. [Intended answer to Jake's rhetorical question]

∴ [Intended answer to Dr. Slim's question]