

Ling 201 – Final

Your name:

- The exam is **due in my mailbox in Room 222 Oxley Hall by 5:00pm on Wednesday, June 7**. Put the exam into a sealed envelope.
 - The final version of your paper is due at the same time as the exam. You can either put it to my mailbox or e-mail it to me with subject “201 Paper”.
 - The door to Room 222 in Oxley is usually only unlocked when the secretaries are in their offices. You will therefore want to stop by Oxley sometime between 9am and 4pm to turn in your exam. (You might have an hour leeway on either side of the 9am-4pm interval, but I don’t recommend relying on that.)
 - Answer all the questions in a clear and understandable way. If possible, describe a general case first and then support your claim with an example or examples.
 - Read the questions carefully, some of them have more than just one part.
 - You can use any literature available, but you are not allowed to discuss the problems with anybody.
 - If you need more space than provided, use either the other side of the paper or a separate sheet.
 - If you want me give you comments on your final send me an e-mail.
 - How many points (0-100) do you expect for active participation (remember this is more than just attendance):
1. [25 points] Explain what the major levels of language description are (phonetics, . . . , pragmatics, one by one). For each level, provide a general explanation (1-2 sentences long) accompanied by one or two examples with a short comment. Draw your examples from the following two sentences (one or the other or both).

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You came because you wanted to come.

2. [10 points] Explain what it means that language is generally arbitrary. Use examples in your explanation. One of the examples (with a short explanation) should be from syntax. Keep in mind that this question is about human language – not about any communication system.

3. [15 points] Give the conventional spelling for the sounds captured in phonetic transcription:

[θrou]	[aʊtɪdʒ]
[pɒmtləs]	[hɒl]
[wʊd]	[sɪŋər]
[sm]	[sɪnər]
[sɪn]	[sɪfər]
[sɪzn]	[rɪdʒ]
[ʃʌtɹd]	[waɪd]

4. [15 points] Give the transcription (in the system we used in class) of pronunciation of the following words.

Notes:

- Do not forget that [ŋ] is not the same sound as [n].
- Do not let the spelling misguide you, e.g. *g* is sometimes pronounced [g], sometimes [dʒ], sometimes not at all. Always pronounce the word aloud, then write down what you hear.
- You can ignore the distinction between:
 - aspirated and unaspirated stops
 - syllabic and nonsyllabic consonants
 - oral and nasal vowels (e.g. [a] vs. [ã])
 - [ʌ] and [ə] (They are very similar; [ʌ] is stressed, while [ə] is not)
 - [w] and [ɰ] (Most people use only [w])

kid	foreign
hide	slaughter
thousand	sink
sigh	fool
wheeze	legal
juice	cool
despise	central
accord	you
sewn	sown
wing	attain

5. [40 points] Consider the following data describing the pronunciation of certain words in Ganda (a Bantu language having circa 3M speakers in Uganda, central Africa).

[ẽnato]	‘a canoe’	[akaato]	‘little canoe’
[ẽnapo]	‘a house’	[akaapo]	‘little house’
[ẽnugẽni]	‘a stranger’	[akaugẽni]	‘little stranger’
[ẽntabi]	‘a branch’	[akatabi]	‘little branch’
[ẽmpipi]	‘a kidney’	[akapipi]	‘little kidney’
[ẽjkoosa]	‘a feather’	[akakoosa]	‘little feather’
[ẽmmãmo]	‘a peg’	[akabãmo]	‘little peg’
[ẽjjoõme]	‘a horn’	[akagõme]	‘little horn’
[ẽmmwa]	‘a dog’	[akabwa]	‘little dog’
[ẽnnĩmiro]	‘a garden’	[akadĩmiro]	‘little garden’
[ẽjjuulu]	‘a leg’	[akagulu]	‘little leg’

Notes:

- The data were somewhat modified to make the problem easier.
- Remember, this is not spelling, but a phonetic transcription of pronunciation.
- If there are two consonants in a row (e.g. [mm] in [ẽmmwa]), they are really pronounced as two consonants, not just one.
- When answering the following questions, assume that all Ganda words follow the regularities shown above.
- This task is very similar to the Joomush exercise we did in class.
- When describing phonetic regularities, refer to natural classes not just particular sounds. (e.g. If I asked you about English aspiration, I would like to hear ‘word initial voiceless stops aspirate’, rather than ‘word initial [p, t, k] aspirate’.

- (a) Is the distinction in vowel nasality phonemic? In other words, are an oral vowel and the corresponding nasal vowel (e.g., [a] and [ã]) realizations (variants, allophones) of the same phoneme or two distinct phonemes?

the same phoneme – two distinct phonemes (circle the correct answer)

- (b) If the same phoneme: what is the context in which a vowel is nasal.
If two phonemes: Why?

- (c) Are English vowels in this respect behaving the same way?

Yes – No (circle the correct answer)

- (d) What are the three allomorphs of the indefinite article and when are they used?

Allomorph	When used

How would you describe the process (circle the correct answer and fill in the details):

- i. assimilation in/to _____ (e.g. assimilation in voicing)
- ii. dissimilation in _____
- iii. deletion of _____
- iv. insertion of _____
- v. metathesis
- vi. other: _____
- vii. all of the above

- (e) Sometimes (look at the last 5 examples), the indefinite article affects the pronunciation of the following consonant (i.e. the first consonant of the stem).

When and how?

How would you describe the process (circle the correct answer and fill in details):

- i. assimilation in _____
- ii. dissimilation in _____
- iii. deletion of _____
- iv. insertion of _____
- v. metathesis
- vi. other: _____
- vii. all of the above

(f) Fill in the blanks.

_____ ‘an animal’ [akaobi] ‘little animal’
_____ ‘a bone’ [akagumba] ‘little bone’

6. [25 points] Using the following rules (and only those), draw the syntactic trees for the following sentences. If some of the sentences are syntactically ambiguous (according to this grammar), draw all the possible trees.

- (1) $S \rightarrow NP V (NP) (PP)$ (4) $PP \rightarrow P NP$
(2) $NP \rightarrow (Det) (Adj) N (PP)$ (5) $S \rightarrow S Conj S$
(3) $NP \rightarrow Pron$ (6) $NP \rightarrow NP Conj NP$

Plus the necessary lexical rules like (use the word classes classification consistent with File 6.4 and my handout):

$N \rightarrow \{\text{friend, Paris, ...}\}$ $Pron \rightarrow \{\text{I, her, ...}\}$ $Det \rightarrow \{\text{a, my, ...}\}$ etc.

- (a) *My friend loves her.*
(b) *I liked Paris and that old castle.*
(c) *I saw a new policeman with a telescope.*

(Use a separate sheet)

7. [3 points] All languages change as time passes, whether speakers desire change or not.

This statement is: True – False (circle one)

8. [6 points] English belongs to one of the following groups of languages. Circle it:

A. Romance B. Germanic C. Slavic D. Celtic

Write two other languages belonging to the same group:

9. [3 points] What combination of I.–IV. best describes how the English language has changed in the last 1200 years, based on the examples we saw in class?

- I. the pronunciation of many words has changed
II. some words changed their meanings
III. some older words have been lost and replaced with new words
IV. the sentence structure has changed

- A. only I.
B. both I. and II.
C. all of I., II., and III.
D. all of I., II., III., and IV.

10. [25 points] Imagine you are writing a fantasy novel and you need to create a fictitious language. Moreover, in this novel, people travel 1000 years back in history and thus you also need to have an idea about how the language looked 1000 years ago. Provide examples of how it changed on each of the following language levels. For each example show the state 1000 years ago and now, and add a short one sentence explanation.

(a) Phonetics/phonology:

Before:

Now:

Explanation:

(b) Syntax:

Before:

Now:

Explanation:

(c) Semantics/lexicon:

Before:

Now:

Explanation:

11. [3 points] When a language has two different ways of expressing the same thing, and the first one of them is considered standard while the second one nonstandard, it is generally because (circle one)

- A. the first one is the older form and the second one is a corruption of it.
- B. the speakers who use the first have more social prestige.
- C. the second one is illogical.
- D. the first one is more correct.

12. [10 points] In acquiring English plurals, children typically go through three stages, using forms similar to the following:

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
car – cars	car – cars	car – cars
truck – trucks	truck – trucks	truck – trucks
foot – feet	foot – foots	foot – feet
man – men	man – mans	man – men

(a) Which of the following theories of first language acquisition best explains this data:

- A. Imitation Theory
- B. Reinforcement Theory
- C. Active Construction of a Grammar Theory

(b) Explain what is going on according to the theory you selected above (max 3 sentences).

13. [20 points] List 5 examples of devices automatically processing human language (as a whole or some aspect of it) that would be useful in hospitals. Keep in mind that hospitals have employees other than just doctors

For each device or computer program, explain in one sentence how it would be used. It is not important whether the device exists today or not, it should just be possible to create it sometime in the future. The devices should be reasonably different one from the other, not just the same thing used in different situations. Remember, the question is about devices processing human language, not just any device used in hospitals.

If you do not like hospitals, do the same for a bank.

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