

UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO – SRI LANKA
FACULTY OF ARTS
SECOND YEAR EXAMINATION IN ARTS – SEMESTER I – 2019/2020
ESL 2112 – The Structure of English Grammar
Time: Three and a half (3 ½) Hours

Answer any four (04) questions.

1. Answer this question using your knowledge of **verbs, tense, aspect, and mood**.

i. The verb *begone* (as in ‘*Evil Demon, begone,*’ *she repeated the words aloud in a whisper.*’) is highly exceptional in its inflection. Construct example sentences containing the following kinds of clause with a form of ***begone*** as verb, marking the ones that turn out to be ungrammatical with *.

- (a) a clause with 3rd person singular subject and present tense verb;
- (b) a clause with plural subject and present tense verb;
- (c) an imperative clause;
- (d) a subjunctive clause;
- (e) an infinitival clause;
- (f) a gerund-participial clause;
- (g) a past-participial clause.

On the basis of your data give a paradigm for ***begone***, leaving blank any position where the inflectional form is missing for this verb (5 marks).

ii. You are an ESL teacher tasked with teaching your students how to distinguish between plain forms and plain present tense forms of verbs. Using a test sentence per verb, illustrate to your students how to determine whether the underlined verbs below are plain forms or plain present tense forms. (7.5 marks)

- (a) *The police made him run home.*
- (b) *It is crucial that he remain calm.*
- (c) *Let’s leave the class early today.*
- (d) *I wonder what makes them so happy.*
- (e) *She should know better.*

iii. Which of the following allow a perfective interpretation? Consider just the main clauses ignoring any subordinate ones embedded within them. Briefly explain the reason behind your decision. (5 marks)

- (a) *I hope he’ll behave.*
- (b) *I make my own decisions.*
- (c) *She was already awake.*

- (d) *He cleaned the room.*
(e) *They now have a new boss.*

- iv. Classify the following conditional constructions as **open** or **remote**. For the open ones, give their remote counterparts, and conversely for the remote ones give their open counterparts. Note that some open conditionals lack remote counterparts, and some remote conditionals lack open counterparts. If this is the case with any of the following, state so. (7.5 marks)

- (a) *She will find a solution if you give her more time.*
(b) *It would be wonderful if he won the match for us.*
(c) *If I were you, I wouldn't sleep so late.*
(d) *If you finish the work on time, you can leave.*
(e) *If they come early, please give me a call.*

2. Answer this question using your knowledge of **prepositions** and **preposition phrases**.

- i. Identify particles and prepositions in the following sentences and give syntactic evidence by giving an example in support of the distinction you make between them. The particles and prepositions have been underlined for you. For example: The word *over* is a **particle** in *He repeated the name several times over until I could remember it*, while it is a **preposition** in *The mother put a blanket over the sleeping child*. (5 marks)

- (a) *The company insists on checking out its new recruits before they are employed.*
(b) *In the conclusion, you must sum up the arguments presented in the essay.*
(c) *Prasath is studying for the IAS exam.*
(d) *A car skidded off the racetrack and caught fire.*
(e) *If you don't mind, please turn down the volume of the TV.*

- ii. How would you explain to an advanced learner of English that all the four words given below are not adverbs (traditionally considered so), and some of them belong to the class of prepositions? Give syntactic evidence to your claim using tests such as **modification of NPs** (dependency on nouns) and **complementation of the verb *be*** (predicative complements), **modification of adjectives/adverbs**. You need to give convincing syntactic proof/tests to show that a word is a preposition, and the same word is not an adverb, and vice versa. You are required to show your test sentences too. (12 marks)

- (a) *abroad* (c) *indoors*
(b) *always* (d) *never*

- iii. The words given below belong to the categories of **adjectives** and **prepositions**. Using tests like **predicand requirement**, **NP complement**, **inflection & gradability** and **complement of *become***, show the distinction between these two categories. You need to use at least **one** syntactic proof/test to show that a word is an adjective, and the same

word is not a preposition, and vice versa. You are required to show your test sentences too. (8 marks)

(a) *early*

(c) *above*

(b) *after*

(d) *fair*

3. Answer this question using your knowledge of **Clause type: asking, exclaiming, and directing.**

- i. Classify the following according to clause type, and say what kind of speech act they would most likely perform. (5 marks)

(a) *Would you mind moving to the next chair?*

(b) *How beautiful is her writing!*

(c) *Are you giving up already?*

(d) *I offered her some advice.*

(e) *I want you to stop now.*

- ii. Form open interrogatives from the following declaratives, replacing the underlined phrase with a corresponding interrogative phrase such as who, what, when, etc. (5 marks)

(a) *She was praised for some reason.*

(b) *He found something in the attic.*

(c) *At some point in time, she realized that they would never come back.*

(d) *You made someone cry.*

(e) *He thinks that the book was left somewhere.*

- iii. Interrogative tags can also be attached to imperative clauses, as in *Don't tell anyone, will you?* What tags could naturally be added to the following? (In instances where both reversed and constant polarity tags can be used, give them both) (5 marks)

(a) *Let's wait for her.*

(b) *Let's not delay the trip any longer.*

(c) *Stop pestering me.*

(d) *Don't leave the room.*

(e) *Hand me the salt.*

- iv. The following clauses are given without any final punctuation mark. For each one, say whether it is (a) an open interrogative; (b) an exclamative; or (c) ambiguous between open interrogative and exclamative. If your answer is (a) or (b), explain what grammatical factors make the clause unambiguous. If your answer is (c), comment on the difference in meaning. (10 marks)

(a) *What a horrendous experience it was*

(b) *Why don't you take a look*

(c) *How hard was the journey*

(d) *Who cares about what you do*

(e) *How often have I told you to stay calm*

4. Answer this question using your knowledge of **relative clauses**.

- i. The following sentences contain a finite subordinate clause. Underline those that are **relative**, and in each of them identify the **antecedent** and the **function** of the (overt or covert) **relativized element** (R element). If a clause is not relative, say which type the clause belongs to. (5 marks)

(a) *Soldiers do whatever they are told.*

(b) *Houses which overlook lakes, rivers, and the sea cost more.*

(c) *The students didn't understand why the exams were postponed.*

(d) *I have known the man you met at the party for more than ten years.*

- ii. In the following sentences, identify the finite subordinate clauses by underlining and labelling them as (a) **relative clauses** (b) **declarative content clauses** and (c) **ambiguous**. Give reasons for your choice. (10 marks)

(a) *The results the government has obtained may cause some positive social change.*

(b) *They rejected the idea that we have advanced.*

(c) *Would you lend me the book that you recommended last week?*

(d) *The belief that democracy is fair makes us all support the current political system.*

- iii. The following are sentences containing relative clauses written by a learner of English, who has no idea about the regular punctuation. Show her the difference in interpretation between **integrated** and **supplementary relative** clauses and the ambiguity they can cause when they appear without the regular punctuation. Briefly explain these types of relative clauses and underline the relative clauses in the following sentences and show whether the sentences are ambiguous or not in their meaning. Assume that the learner has made mistakes only in the punctuation. (10 marks)

(a) *My house which is in Kandy will be demolished and rebuilt next year.*

(b) *At the party, I sat near Nissanka who is studying in Oxford.*

(c) *There are several points I'd like to make in response to your criticisms.*

(d) *Last night, I went to a party which irritated my best friend.*

5. Answer this question using your knowledge of **subordination** and **content clauses**.

- i. Embed the clause within brackets as a **subordinate clause** in the following clauses and say which type of content clause (EXCLAMATIVE, OPEN INTERROGATIVE, CLOSED INTERROGATIVE, DECLARATIVE) they belong to and the type of function they play in the sentence. (12 marks)

(a) is clear. (We are losing high-level scientists.)

(b) The only problem is (Are the stocks available?)

- (c) *Nobody is certain* (Why did he sell his house?)
(d) *I told them* (What a tall building it was!)
- ii. In each of the sentences given below, say if the subordinate clause is (a) an **open interrogative**; or (b) an **exclamative**; or (c) **ambiguous** between open interrogative and exclamative. If your answer is (a) or (b), explain what grammatical factors make the clause unambiguous. If your answer is (c), comment on the difference in meaning.
(8 marks)

- (a) *It's shocking how much he suffered during his exile.*
(b) *Do you still remember how big the house was?*
(c) *I can't say which project the government will implement first.*
(c) *Have you forgotten what treatment you received from your boss?*
- iii. The following are five sentences written by a learner of English. All of these sentences may not be well-formed. (a) Identify the sentences which are ill-formed. (b) Using the knowledge of subordination and declarative content clauses, and the idea of licensing/selection criterion, explain to the learner why her sentences are ill-formed.
(5 marks)

- (a) *She was fortunate in that she had friends to help her.*
(b) *He will not attend the meeting unless that he is formally invited by the executive committee.*
(c) *My friend submitted his thesis on time given that he was ill for nearly six months.*
(d) *The workers protested in the city centre despite the fact that the police had obtained a no-strike injunction from the court for one week.*
(e) *The gunmen fired at the crowd after that the celebrities had stepped off the stage.*