

UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO – SRI LANKA

FACULTY OF ARTS

FIRST YEAR EXAMINATION IN ARTS – SEMESTER I – 2019/2020

ESL 1101 – Introduction to the English Language

Time: Two (02) Hours

This paper contains 03 parts (A, B & C). Follow the instructions given in each part.

Part A: Sounds in English (40 minutes)

Answer **any two (02)** questions from Part A. Use the notation scheme used in the prescribed text to transcribe IPA characters.

1. Answer the following questions using your knowledge of general principles of phonetics.
 - I. What evidence is there to suggest that our linguistic knowledge is key to speech perception? Explain briefly. (9 marks)
 - II. What motivated the development of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)? Explain briefly with examples from English. (6 marks)
2. Use your knowledge of consonant classifications to answer the following questions.
 - I. What is aspiration? Explain briefly with examples from English. (5 marks)
 - II. Write the phonetic symbol for the **first** sound in each of the following words and name their place of articulation. (5 marks)

e.g. Linguistics [l] alveolar sound

i. Zoom []

ii. mnemonic []

iii. champion []

iv. goatherd []

v. valour []

- III. Write the phonetic symbol for the **last** sound in each of the following words and name their manner of articulation. (5 marks)

e.g. Stop [p] stop sound

vi. balm []

vii. droll []

viii. espouse []

ix. lack []

x. king []

3. Use your knowledge of various criteria for the classification of vowels to answer the following questions.

I. In terms of articulation, how are tense vowels different from lax vowels? Briefly explain with examples from English. (5 marks)

II. Write the phonetic symbol for the **first** vowel in each of the following words and indicate the tongue height of the vowel. (5 marks)

e.g. freezing [i] high vowel

i. terrain []

ii. truth []

iii. glottis []

iv. glamour []

v. gutter []

III. Write the phonetic symbol for the last vowel in each of the following words and indicate the tongue position of the vowel. (5 marks)

e.g. freezing [i] front vowel

i. platter []

ii. lunatic []

iii. alarm []

iv. caribou []

v. millionaire []

Part B: Words in English (20 minutes)

Answer **any two (02)** questions from Part B.

4. Answer the following questions using your knowledge of general principles of morphology.

I. Unlike derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes never change the grammatical category of the stems to which they are attached. Explain the validity of this statement with at least four examples from English inflectional morphemes. (5 marks)

II. What is meant by rule productivity in word formation? Explain with examples from derivational and inflectional morphology of English. (5 marks)

5. Use the data set given below to answer the following questions:

mishap

antagonistic

insubordination

melancholia

I. Analyse the words in the above data set by identifying their roots and stems. (4 marks)

Ex: word: unhappiness root: happy stem: un+happy+ness

II. Identify the prefixes and suffixes in the above data set. (4 marks)

III. Draw tree diagrams for **any two** of the above words to illustrate their hierarchical organization. (2 marks)

6. Use the data set given below to answer the following questions:

swindle	oxen
lice	edit

- I. Identify the suppletive forms in the data set and briefly explain what suppletion is. (5 marks)
- II. Identify the words which are the results of backformation in the data set and explain what backformation is. (5 marks).

Part C: English Sentence Patterns (60 minutes)

Answer **any four (04)** questions from Part C.

7. In every group of sentences there is **one** sentence that does not conform to the syntactic rules of the English language. Identify these sentences and give a linguistic explanation for the ungrammaticality of these sentences in terms of *structure dependency*, *selection restrictions*, *subjacency* and so on. You do not have to draw phrase structures for this purpose. (16 marks)

- I.
 - i. Is the dog that chasing the squirrels is a Siberian Husky?
 - ii. Will the workers who are on strike return to work by next week?
 - iii. Does the man whose wife is a doctor run a pharmacy in the town?
 - iv. Should the members who are unable to attend a meeting inform us before one day?
- II.
 - i. The government is wondering if it will get any support from the opposition.
 - ii. I wonder the magician didn't hurt himself when performing that dangerous act.
 - iii. The people wondered the magic the woman performed in the show.
 - iv. Everybody was wondering where you were at the beginning of the party.
- III.
 - i. What did my friend import that is not usually found in Sri Lanka?
 - ii. Who did he make the claim that he has met?
 - iii. Who did my neighbour ask if my daughter was going to marry a foreigner?
 - iii. On which day and in which year were you born?
- IV.
 - i. On which day and in which country did this incident happen?
 - ii. Which steak with red wine did they order?
 - iii. Which wine did they order with grilled fish?
 - iv. Which dessert did they order and ice-cream?

8.

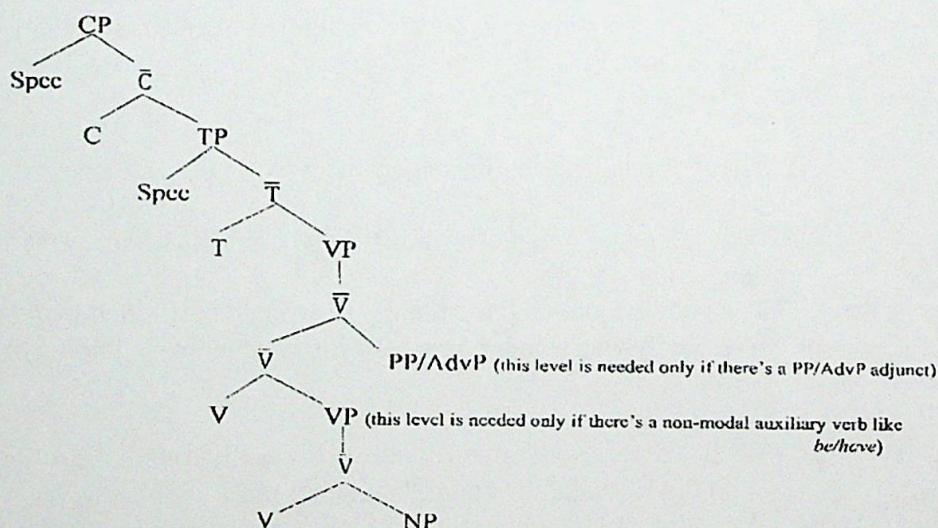
(16 marks)

- I. Draw the three-tiered phrase structure for a typical XP in the English language (The XP should contain a specifier, head, complement & adjunct). (5 marks)
- II. Draw the three-tiered structure for a typical XP in the Sinhala/Tamil language. (The XP should contain a specifier, head, complement & adjunct). (5 marks)
- III. Imagine you are an L2 English teacher, and you hear your students utter sentences like **Yesterday, I bread bought*. Explain the linguistic competence of your students in relation to an important parameter they lack. (6 marks)

9. Using complementizer phrases (CPs), show the transformations involved in the following questions assuming that questions are formed from declarative sentences. You are required to show transformations/movements using arrows in the phrase structures. The structure of a standard CP has been given below for this purpose. (16 marks)

Note: All phrases need not be brought down to the category level.

- I. *Who has he informed about the decision?* (6 marks)
- II. *How did the burglar break the window?* (6 marks)



- III. If an L2 English learner keeps producing questions like *You bought what in the supermarket?* instead of regular English questions, explain what syntactic operations/movements/parameters are lacking in the learner's language or yet to be acquired by the learner. (4 marks)

10. Recursion is a linguistic feature that occurs in human languages when the same linguistic category is repeated in the structure. This linguistic phenomenon can be shown by repeating an *X-bar level* category in phrase structures. (16 marks)

- I. Draw a recursive phrase structure with labels for an English adjective phrase (AP) with three adverbs used as modifiers/adjuncts (your phrase structure will contain recursive A-bars). (5 marks)
- II. Draw a recursive phrase structure for an English verb phrase (VP) with three prepositional phrases (your phrase structure will contain recursive V-bars). (5 marks)
- III. Using the above phrase structure model draw the phrase structure for the adjective phrase (AP) truly, absolutely, incredibly amazing. (3 marks)
- IV. Using the above phrase structure model draw the phrase structure for the VP climbed up the stairs, through the window, into the room. (3 marks)

11. (16 marks)

- I. Consider the NP *the book on the shelf in the room*. Now, name the syntactic relationship that exists between the following items (say whether it is an **adjunct**, **complement** or **specifier** relationship):

the and *book*:

book and *on the shelf*:

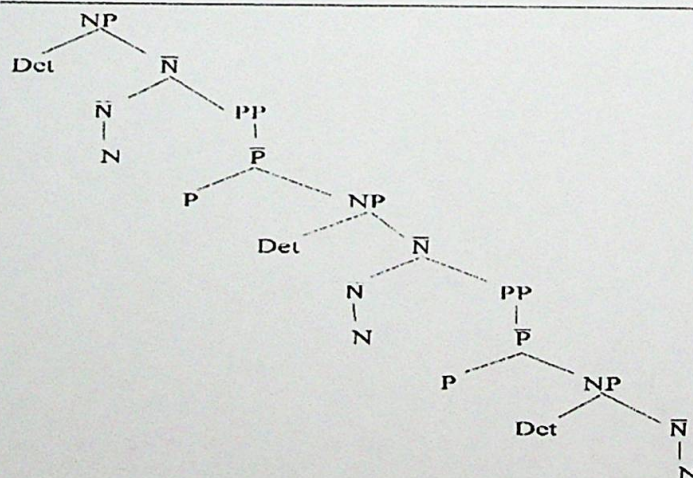
on and *the shelf*:

shelf and *in the room*:

in and *the room*:

(5 marks)

- II. Using the given structure given below, draw the phrase structure for the above NP *the book on the shelf in the room*. (3 marks)



- III. Now, consider the sentence *Visiting relatives can be boring*. Using the knowledge of complement and adjunct, paraphrase (in your own words) the two different interpretations the sentence can offer. (4 marks)

- IV. Using the bare phrase structures given below, represent the two interpretations in two different phrase structures. You are expected to state which phrase structure matches which interpretation. (4 marks)

