

UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO – SRI LANKA

FACULTY OF ARTS

SECOND YEAR EXAMINATION IN ARTS – SEMESTER II – 2017/2018

ESL 2217 – The Sound Patterns of the English Language

Time: Two (02) Hours

Answer any 04 questions.

- 1.
- How do minimal pairs help a phonologist to determine the phonemic status of a speech sound? Explain briefly with examples from English. (4 marks)
 - Allophonic variations of a phoneme are characterized by the complementary distribution of allophones. Briefly discuss the validity of the above claim using at least one example from English. (5 marks)
 - Following is an illustration of morphophonemic rule governing the formation of regular past tense verbs in English. (6 marks)

	<i>raid</i> + pst.	<i>plan</i> + pst.	<i>kiss</i> + pst.
Basic representation	/reɪd + d/	/plæn + d/	/kɪs + d/
Apply rule (1)	ə	NA	NA
Apply rule (2)	NA	NA	t
Phonetic representation	[reɪdəd]	[plænd]	[kɪst]

- What is the basis for identifying /d/ as the basic form of the rule?
 - What is the rationale behind the particular ordering of the two rules?
- 2.
- In phonology, what is meant by the term, *distinctive feature*? Explain briefly with examples from English. (4 marks)
 - Some features may be distinctive for one class of sounds but non-distinctive for another. Briefly discuss the validity of the above claim using at least one example from English. (5 marks)
 - Identify the *natural classes* to which the following sets of sounds belong. (6 marks)
 - [m, n, ŋ]
 - [l, r, j, w, h]
 - [m, n, l, r]
 - [s, z, ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ]
 - [i, ɪ, u, ʊ]
 - [u, ʊ, o, ɔ]

3.

- a. What motivates the dissimilation rules found among phonological rules? Explain briefly with examples from English. (4 marks)
- b. The phonemic representations of sounds are *minimally specified* whereas the phonetic representations contain all the linguistically relevant aspects of the sounds. Briefly discuss the validity of the above claim using at least one example from English. (5 marks)
- c. Using the following data set, provide a phonological rule for aspiration. (6 marks)

tip [tʰɪp]	respect [rɪs.pɛkt]	crib [kʰrɪb]	quip [kʰwɪp]
repeat [rɪ.pʰɪt]	compass [kʌm.pəs]	clip [kʰlɪp]	chip [tʃʰɪp]
oppose [ə.pʰəʊz]	tame [tʰeɪm]	cat [kʰæt]	lucky [lʌk.i]
potato [pə.tʰeɪtəʊ]	spot [spɒt]	prop [prɒp]	plop [plɒp]

4.

- a. What are open and closed syllables? Explain briefly with examples from English. (4 marks)
- b. In syllables found in the languages of the world, sequences of segments are syllabified in accordance with a sonority scale. Briefly discuss the validity of the above claim with examples from English. (5 marks)
- c. Draw the syllable structures of the following words incorporating the skeletal tier into the diagrams. (6 marks)
 - i. tip
 - ii. tree
 - iii. church

5.

- a. What are phonotactic constraints? Explain briefly with examples from English. (4 marks)
- b. In English, all syllabic consonants are the result of phonetic realizations i.e. they do not have corresponding phonemic representations. Briefly discuss the validity of the above claim with examples from English. (5 marks)
- c. Provide a suitable **English word** illustrative of the concepts/phenomena mentioned below. Show the syllable boundaries where necessary. (6 marks)

<i>Ex: a minimum syllable (v)</i>	<i>or [ɔ]</i>
1. Onset with two consonants	
2. Onset with three consonants	
3. Coda with two consonants	
4. Coda with three consonants	
5. Coda with four consonants	
6. Maximal onset principle	

6.

- a. Why is English considered a stress-timed language? Explain briefly with reference to the default metrical foot found in English. (4 marks).
- b. In assigning secondary stress to a syllable in a polysyllabic word, where the Derivational Principle and the Stress Clash Avoidance Principle come into conflict, it is the Stress Clash Avoidance Principle which predominates. Briefly discuss the validity of the above claim using an example from English. (5 marks)
- c. Explain how the stress patterns of the following words deviate from the default English stress pattern and the reasons behind the deviation. (6 marks)

- i. hotel [ˌhəʊtəl]
- ii. bouquet [ˌbuːkɪt]
- iii. bamboo [ˌbæmːbuː]
