

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES**  
**MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER, MAY 2007**

- TITLE OF PAPER** : **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE**
- COURSE CODE** : **AL100/IDE-AL100**
- TIME ALLOWED** : **THREE (3) HOURS**
- INSTRUCTIONS** :
1. **ANSWER SEVEN (7) QUESTIONS IN ALL.**
  2. **ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS FROM SECTION A.**
  3. **ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B.**
  4. **ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION C.**
  5. **ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION D.**
  6. **ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION E.**
  7. **MARKS WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR UNTIDY WORK, WRONG SPELLINGS AND UNGRAMMATICAL EXPRESSIONS.**

**THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.**

**SECTION A**

**PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY**

Answer any two questions from this Section

**QUESTION 1**

Give the phonetic symbol for each of the following sounds with an illustration of the use of the sound in a word.

- (a) voiced velar nasal
- (b) voiceless labio-dental fricative
- (c) voiceless bilabial stop
- (d) voiceless labio-dental fricative
- (e) bilabial nasal stop

[10 marks]

**QUESTION 2**

What are the three traditional features used to specify a vowel sound. Give two examples for each feature.

(10 marks)

**QUESTION 3**

Give two features that the following pairs of speech sounds share:

- (a) [s] and [z]
- (b) [θ] and [ð]
- (c) [tʃ] and [dʒ]
- (d) [f] and [v]
- (e) [k] and [g]

[10 marks]

**QUESTION 4**

Study carefully the data provided below taken from colloquial Spanish, and then do the tasks which follow (Data taken from Finegan and Besmier 1980:91).

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| (a) izla 'island     | (i) espaldo 'black'    |
| (b) fuersa 'force'   | (j) ciste 'joke'       |
| (c) peskodo 'fish'   | (k) eski 'ski'         |
| (d) muskulo 'muscle' | (m) riezgo 'risk'      |
| (e) sin 'without'    | (n) Liskol 'fiscal'    |
| (f) rasko 'scotch'   | (o) rezvalor 'to slip' |
| (g) resto 'remember' | (o) razgo 'feature'    |
| (h) mizmo 'some'     | (p) beizbol 'baseball' |

- (i) Are [s] and [z] separate phonemes of Spanish or they are allophones of a single phoneme?
- (ii) If they are different phonemes support your answer. If they are allophones of the same phonemes state the rule that specifies their distributions.

[10 marks]

### **SECTION B**

#### **MORPHOLOGY**

Answer any two questions from this Section.

#### **QUESTION 5**

With examples explain the following:

- (a) blending
- (b) acronym
- (c) backformation
- (d) conversion
- (e) clipping

[10 marks]

#### **QUESTION 6**

Study the class 15 siSwati nouns given below:

- (a) kudla 'eating'
- (b) kosa 'roasting'
- (c) kwakha 'building'
- (d) kubona 'seeing'
- (e) kwenta 'doing'

Do the tasks which follow:

- (i) Write down the allomorphs of the class 15 prefix found in the data above.  
 (ii) State the distribution of the allomorphs you identified in (i) above. [10 marks]

### **QUESTION 7**

Study the words listed below:

- |             |               |              |                   |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. you      | 6. kicked     | 11. before   | 16. brighten      |
| 2. intruder | 7. is         | 12. unhappy  | 17. unfortunately |
| 3. they     | 8. controvert | 13. teacher  | 18. mismanagement |
| 4. enlarge  | 9. across     | 14. illegal  | 19. bigger        |
| 5. Pets     | 10. on        | 15. protrude | 20. annoyingly    |

- (a) Divide the words listed above into their morphemes.  
 (b) From the morphemes you identified in (a) above give the following:  
 (i) Five derivational morphemes  
 (ii) Three examples of forms which constitute a syllable, a morpheme and a word at the same time.  
 (iii) two bound root morphemes. [10 marks]

### **SECTION C**

#### **SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS**

Answer only one Question from this Section

### **QUESTION 8**

- (a) With the aid of examples, define Semantics. [5 marks]  
 (b) With the aid of examples from English, discuss any Two theories of meaning pointing out the strength and weaknesses of each.  
 (c) With references to English, discuss the difference between presupposition and entailment.

### **QUESTION 9**

- (a) With reference to English, define the term diexies. [3 marks]  
 (b) Discuss three types of diexes that you have studied and explain the differences between them. [9 marks]  
 (c) Discuss any two semantic relations involving words. [8 marks]

**SECTION D****SYNTAX**

Answer only one Question from this Section

**QUESTION 10**

Read the following Sentences and then do the tasks that follow.

- i) The old men and women came late.
  - ii) The police shot the criminal with a gun
  - iii) John read the book in the kitchen
- (a) All these sentences are ambiguous. What do we mean when we say they are ambiguous? [2 marks]
  - (b) Disambiguate each of them by giving two different sentences whose meanings are derived from each one of them. [6 marks]
  - (c) Write the tree structure of each of the sentences you have written in (b) above in a way that shows the syntactic difference between each pair. [12 marks]

**QUESTION 11**

Draw a tree structure diagram for each of the following:

- (a) John killed a snake [4 marks]
- (b) the most beautiful dog [4 marks]
- (c) put the cat in the cage [4 marks]
- (d) Jesus wept [3 marks]
- (e) Jasmin sat on a big round table. [5 marks]

**QUESTION 12**

Consider the following sentence and then answer the question that follow:

***Why was the boy not given his book***

- a) Name all transformational rules that have been used in deriving this sentence. (4 marks)

- b) Draw the deep structure for this sentence. [6 marks]
- c) Using each of the rules you have identified in (a) above show how the sentence has been derived from its deep structure. [6 marks]
- d) Draw the surface structure of the sentence. [6 marks]

**SECTION E**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Answer only one question from this Section.

**QUESTION 13**

- (a) What is the difference between human language and animal communication?
- (b) Briefly explain why none of the theories on the origin of human language is reliable.

**QUESTION 14**

- (a) Give and explain five causes of language change.
- (b) What is the difference between pidgin and creole?

**QUESTION 15**

- (a) What do we mean by the term Critical Age Hypothesis. [5 marks]
- (b) With the aid of examples from different studies conducted, provide evidence and counter evidence of the Critical Age Hypothesis. [10 marks]
- (c) With the aid of examples from studies conducted, explain two forms of evidence which prove that the left hemisphere is specialized for language. [5 marks]

**QUESTION 16**

- (a) What is meant by the term computational linguistics? [2 marks]
- (b) Explain the goals of computational linguistics. [3 marks]
- (c) Explain fully why the construction of a translation machine has been a great failure. [15 marks]