

**Level: First year**

**Date: January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

## ***Correction of First Term Exam in Linguistics and Phonetics***

***Task 1: Choose the best option to complete the statements below \_\_\_\_\_ (5 pts)***

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the scientific study of language and its structure, including the study of grammar, syntax, and phonetics plus other fields like sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, computational linguistics ... etc.  
*a) Linguistics                      b) Macrolinguistics                      c) Microlinguistics                      d) Descriptive linguistics*
2. ~~Who defines language as an arbitrary system of signs?~~ ..... deals with language in use in contexts.  
*a) Syntax                      b) Morphology                      c) Semantics                      d) Pragmatics*
3. Modern linguistics refers to the study of language as it exists at the present (current) time is called:  
*a) Diachrony                      b) Synchrony                      c) Langue                      d) Parole*
4. The study of the forms of words and their combination, in particular inflected forms and derivations.  
*a) Syntax                      b) Morphology                      c) Semantics                      d) Pragmatics*
5. Linguistic rules describe how sounds are pronounced in various positions. This is the ..... of language analysis.  
*a) Phonological level                      b) Syntactic level                      c) Semantic level                      d) Pragmatic level*

**Task 2: Define the terms given below briefly in the space provided \_\_\_\_\_ (2 pts)**

1. **Microlinguistics** is a branch of linguistics that studies the language systems including the study of grammar, syntax, and phonetics, semantics and pragmatics.
2. **Syntax** is a branch of microlinguistics that studies the forms of the sentence and its components, and how words and morphemes combine to form larger units such as phrases and sentences.
3. **Macrolinguistics** is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and other domains like sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, computational linguistics ... etc.
4. **Exhaustiveness** is one of the principles of linguistic description and analysis of language components in-depth and completely.

**Task 3: Answers ONE of the following questions briefly \_\_\_\_\_ (3 pts)**

1. What are the major objectives of linguistics?
2. From what have you studied, elaborate a comprehensive definition of language using your words.
3. Spot out the main differences between synchronic and diachronic linguistic studies.

**Option: 1**

Linguists describe any language scientifically, but their primary goal is to understand the nature of language in general by asking questions such as: What distinguishes **human language from other animal communication systems**? What features are common to all human languages?

The sound and linguistic, semantic systems of each language, **language change and families**...etc

**Option: 2**

For many linguists, a language is a **human form of communication as a system of conventional spoken sounds and written symbols**, which includes a limited number of sounds (phonetics), the sound system (phonology), the words (morphology), the sentences (syntax), the meaning (semantics), and the discourse context (language use in different situations) in **a particular point of time in a given speech community, which changes over time**.

**Option: 3**

Synchronic linguistic studies **aim at describing a language at a specific point of time as in modern linguistics**, often the present. In contrast, **a diachronic approach, as in historical linguistics**, considers the development and evolution of a language through history.



**Task 4: State whether the following statements are True or False (correct the false ones) (6pts)**

1. Phonology is the study of speech production. It includes the anatomy of speech organs. It also includes the articulation, classification and perception of speech sounds.  
**False, phonetics** is the study of speech production. It includes the anatomy of speech organs. It also includes the articulation, classification and perception of speech sounds. **OR**  
**phonology** is the study of speech sounds of a given language and their function within the sound system of that language as the rules governing a particular language. **(01 pt)**
2. Phonetics is the study of speech sounds of a given language and their function within the sound system of that language as the rules governing a particular language.  
**False, phonology** is the study of speech sounds of a given language and their function within the sound system of that language as the rules governing a particular language. **OR**  
**Phonetics** is the study of speech production, analysis and transcription. **(01 pt)**
3. In the human speech organs, the upper vocal tract comprises the lungs, the trachea and the mouth.  
**False,** the upper vocal tract comprises the **larynx, pharynx**, the **oral cavity** and the **nasal cavity**.  
**Or** the **lower** vocal tract comprises the **diaphragm, lungs**, and the **trachea**. **(01 pt)**
4. In speech production, the **labiodental** sounds are formed by using the lower **teeth** with lower **lip** /s, z/,  
**False**, in speech production, the **labiodental** sounds are formed by using the **upper teeth** with lower **lip** /f, v/. **or**. **(01 pt)**  
the **alveolar** sounds are formed by using **the tip of the tongue** with **alveolar ridge** /t, d, s, z, n, l, r/.
5. The **International Phonetic Alphabet** is used to represent the spoken sounds of all the languages accurately (i.e. English, French or Arabic... etc). **(1 pts)**  
**True**
6. There are 24 vowel sounds OR phonemes in the English language.  
**False**, there are **20 vowel sounds** OR phonemes in the English language. **(01 pt)**  
**Or** there are **24 consonantal sounds** OR phonemes in the English language.

**Task 5: a- Describe how consonant phonemes are articulated and provide one example (4pts)**

**Or b- Describe how vowel phonemes are articulated and provide one example (4pts)**

**Option: a**

Linguists classify vowels according to four features (criteria): **tongue height** (high, mid, low), **tongue backness or position** (front, central, back), **lip rounding** (rounded, unrounded), and **tenseness** (tense, lax). **(3 pts)**

/e/ mid, front, unrounded, lax vowel. **(1 pts)**

**Option: b**

Consonants are usually classified according to **place of articulation** (the stricture made in the vocal tract, such as bilabial, dental, or velar... etc), the **manner of articulation** (the way in which the obstruction of the airflow occurs, as in stops, fricatives, approximants, and laterals) in addition to **voicing** (the vibration of the vocal cords that is voiced or voiceless) **(3 pts)**

/p/ voiceless, bilabial, stop or plosive consonant. **(1 pts)**

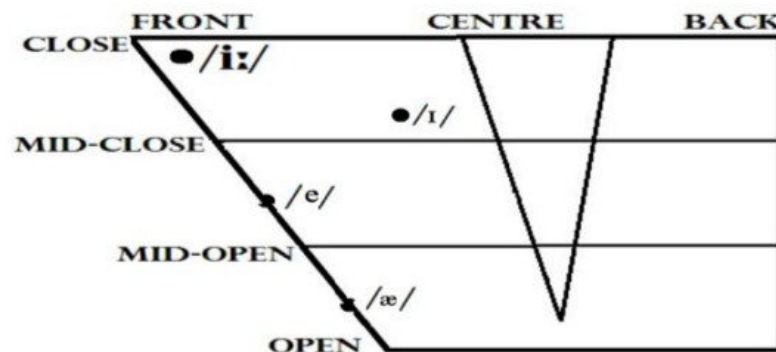
## Correction of First Term Exam in English Phonetics

**Task 1: Choosing 4 terms and defining them briefly.** (2 for each similar definition) (4 pts)

**Speech mechanism; vocal cords; phonology; vowel; phonetics; central vowels; back vowels**

1. Human language sounds are produced by **speech mechanism**, as a system of communication. Hence, the source of energy is provided by the lungs into larynx then the vocal tract to shape the sounds.
2. Two muscular folds running from a single point inside the front of the thyroid cartilage (Adam's apple) backwards to the front ends of arytenoid cartilages; **vocal cords** make voicing to produce certain sounds.
3. **Phonology** is a branch of linguistics concerned with the systematic organization of sounds in languages. The language sounds are organized into a system of contrasts, which are analysed in terms of phonemes.
4. A **vowel** is a sound in spoken language. In phonetic terms, it is a sound pronounced with an open vocal tract, so that the tongue does not touch the lips, teeth, or roof of the mouth, such as "ah" /ɑ:/ or "I" /a/.
5. **Phonetics** is the study of articulatory and acoustic properties of language sounds. It studies the characteristics of human sound making, description, classification, and transcription of language speech.
6. A **central vowel**, in English, is characterised by positioning the tongue halfway between a front vowel and a back vowel and mid in height with unrounded lips. There are 3 central vowels /ə, ɜ:, ʌ/.
7. A **back vowel** is characterised by moving the tongue as far back as possible without a constriction. The height of the tongue ranges from high to low with 4 rounded lips in /ʊ, u:, ɔ:, ɒ/ & one unrounded /ɑ:/.

**Task 2: Completing the vowel chart then representing the front vowels on it** (4 pts)



(0.5 for each vowel)

Figure 1. The vowel chart of the front vowels in RP (0.5 for each label)

**Task 3: Underlining the most appropriate option for each statement** (4 pts)

1. Voiceless sounds involve ..... (0.5 for each correct answer)
 

a. no vibration of the vocal folds
b. rounding of the lips
c. vibration of the vocal folds
2. .... deals with the perception and identification of sounds via the ear.
 

a. articulatory phonetics
b. acoustic phonetics
c. auditory phonetics



3. The organ that contains hard palate, soft palate, and alveolar ridge is called:

- a. larynx                      b. pharynx                      c. palate

4. In speech production, the articulatory stage is performed when .....

- the information of the concept will take place in the brain.
- the nervous system transmits this message to the organs of speech.

c. the movement of the organs of speech will create disturbance in the air which enables us to hear particular sounds.

5. To articulate vowels you need, in addition to vocal cords, to move the following organs .....

- a. Tongue, lips and teeth                      b. Tongue, soft palate and teeth                      c. **Tongue, lips and soft palate**

6. Oral sounds are produced by ..... the velum (soft palate).

- a. raising                      b. lowering                      c. shutting off

7. The degree to which the lips are open determines:

- a. the type of vowel articulated      b. the vibrations of the vocal cords      c. the glottal stop

8. Which branch of phonetics is used when teaching a foreign language:

- a. articulatory phonetics                      b. acoustic phonetics                      c. auditory phonetics

**Task 4: Finding the phonetic symbol for the underlined vowels in the following words (4pts)**

1. Thames / e /                      5. Common / ɒ / (1pt for each correct symbol)
2. Talk / ɔː /                        6. Psalm / ɑː /
3. Geoffrey / e /                     7. Two / uː /
4. Bread / e /                        8. What / ɒ /

**Task 5: Discussing each of the following questions (answer only one question) (4 pts)**

1. What is the difference between phonetics and phonology ? (finding two differences is enough)

The first major difference between phonetics and phonology is that former is descriptive while the latter is theoretical. Phonetics is a subfield of descriptive linguistics while phonology is an area of theoretical linguistics. Moreover, phonetics analyzes the production of all human speech sounds, regardless of any language it is dealing with. While, phonology analyses the sound patterns of a particular language. In phonetic transcription, square brackets are used to represent speech sounds. In phonemic transcription, slashes are used.

2. Why do students at university level study phonetics? (finding four reasons is enough)

Phonetics is very important in foreign language learning. Hence, students should study phonetics to

- Recognize, understand and practice stress placement and intonation patterns.
- Facilitate the ability to understand, hear and reproduce different vowel and consonant qualities.
- Learn the symbols used to represent and to read the spoken form of English by native speakers.
- Improve their overall accent and pronunciation.

## Quiz № 01 (allotted time: 20 minutes)

1. Put the right term next to the corresponding definition in the box below: *arbitrariness*, *behaviourism*, *onomatopoeia*, *displacement*, *cultural transmission*, and *duality*.

Term	definition
<i>displacement</i> (01 point)	The ability to refer to things far removed in time and place. You can talk about what you did last summer or where you'll live next year, but your cat can only communicate that it wants to be fed <i>right now</i> .
<i>arbitrariness</i> (01 point)	There is no logical connection between the word and the meaning that it stands for.
<i>cultural transmission</i> (01 point)	Language is passed on from one generation to another. We all learn the language of our parents and of the people around us, regardless of our genetic origin.
<i>duality</i> (01 point)	In language, a limited repertoire of sounds (vowels and consonants) makes an infinite number of words.
<i>onomatopoeia</i> (01 point)	words that imitate the sound that they have as a meaning
<i>behaviourism</i> (01 point)	School in psychology and linguistics that is based on stimulus-response theory

2. Define briefly the terms below:

- a. **Pragmatics:** The branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of meaning in context. (01.50 point)
- b. **Morphology:** The branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of words and that there internal structure. (01 point)

## Quiz № 02 (allotted time: 20 minutes)

1. Put each of the following words/phrases in the right column in the table below: *primary medium*, *less automatic*, *secondary*, *the solely medium in some communities*, *spontaneous*, *artificial*, *phonological level*, *often used*

Speech	Writing
<i>primary medium</i> (00.75 point)	<i>less automatic</i> (00.75 point)
<i>the solely medium in some communities</i> (00.75 point)	<i>Secondary</i> (00.75 point)
<i>spontaneous</i> (00.75 point)	<i>Artificial</i> (00.75 point)
<i>phonological level</i> (00.75 point)	
<i>often used</i> (00.75 point)	

2. Write **true** or **false** next to each of the following statements. Correct the wrong statements.

a. Bees, like humans, have the ability of displacement. **false** (00.50 point)

Bees, like humans, have the ability of displacement, **but it very limited because it lacks variety.** (01.50 point)

b. Animals acquire their systems of communication from their cultural environment whereas languages are genetically passed on from one generation to the next. **false** (00.50 point)

**Humans acquire their language from their cultural environment whereas Animals' communication system is genetically passed on from one generation to the next.** (01.50 point)



### Quiz № 03 (allotted time: 40 minutes)

**Question:** In his *essay on language*, R. A. Hall tells us that language is "the institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols". Write a composition in which you single out and explain the main strong points and flaws in Hall's definition of language.

**Answer:**

The above definition of language contains a number of strong points as well as flaws. Among the points to notice here are, first of all, the fact that both communication and interaction are introduced into the definition ('interaction' being broader than and, in this respect, better than 'co-operation') (02 points). Second, that the term 'oral-auditory' can be taken to be roughly equivalent to 'vocal', differing from it only in that 'oral-auditory' makes reference to the hearer as well as to the speaker (i.e. to the receiver as well the sender of the vocal signals that we identify as language-utterances) (02 points). Hall, like Sapir, treats language as a purely human institution; and the term 'institution' makes explicit the view that the language that is used by a particular society is part of that society's culture (02 points).. What is most noteworthy in Hall's definition, however, is his employment of the term 'habitually used'; and there are historical reasons for this. Linguistics and psychology were strongly influenced, for about thirty years ago or so, especially in America, by the stimulus-response theories of the behaviourists. One of the most important facts about language is that there is, in general, no connection between words and situations in which they are used such that occurrence of particular words is predictable, as habitual behaviour is predictable, from situations themselves. For example, we do not habitually produce an utterance containing the word 'bird' whenever we happen to find ourselves in a situation in which we see a bird. Language is stimulus-free (04 points).



### Quiz № 04 (allotted time: 20 minutes)

**Question:** Single out and explain the main defects in Chomsky's definition of language: “From now on I will consider a language to be a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements.”

**Answer: (10 points)**

Chomsky's definition of 'language' says nothing about the communicative function of language; it says nothing about the symbolic nature of the elements or sequences of them (03 points). Its purpose is to focus attention upon the purely structural properties of languages and to suggest that these properties can be investigated from a mathematically precise point of view (03 points). It is Chomsky's major contribution to linguistics to have given particular emphasis to what he calls the structure-dependence of the process by which sentences are constructed in natural languages and to have formulated a general theory of grammar which is based upon a particular definition of this property (04 points).

## Quiz № 05 (allotted time: 15 minutes)

1. Put the right word or phrase next to the corresponding definition in the table below: *arbitrary, genetically transmitted, culturally transmitted, discrete, displacement, duality, rule governed, species-specific*.

Definition	Word/phrase
From a finite set of units, we can form infinite combinations of larger units.	<i>duality</i> (00.75 point)
The ability to talk about things that are not in the proximity (near in space or time), do not exist, that happened in the past, or will happen in the future.	<i>displacement</i> (00.75 point)
Animal communication systems are biologically inherited; animals are born with the language of their parents.	<i>genetically transmitted</i> (00.75 point)
no logical relationship between the word and what it means	<i>Arbitrary</i> (00.75 point)
Language is uniquely human.	<i>species-specific</i> (00.75 point)
Every language has rules. Language consists of units: sounds, words, phrases, and sentences. Units can be combined into larger units following a set of rules involving word order and agreement.	<i>rule governed</i> (00.75 point)
Continuous stream of speech sounds are perceived as consisting of distinct units.	<i>Discrete</i> (00.75 point)
Human infants are not born with language, but acquire language interactions with language speakers.	<i>culturally transmitted</i> (00.75 point)

2. Define briefly the terms below:

**a. Medium:** The concrete realization of the abstract system of language through speech and writing. (02 points)

**b. Exhaustiveness:** The linguistic study of language should be complete and thorough. (02 points)



## Quiz № 06 (allotted time: 25 minutes)

Answer briefly the following questions:

**I.** Give the definition of linguistics.

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. (02 points)

**II.** What is the difference between dialect and accent?

Dialect is the variety of language in terms of grammar and spelling whereas accent is the variety of language in terms pronunciation. (02 points)

**III.** What is the historical event that led to the beginning of Middle English?

Middle English began as result of the Norman invasion of England in 1066. (02 points)

**IV.** Give one example (a language) for each of the word orders below:

1. Verb Object Subject: Aneityan / Baure (01 point)

2. Subject Object Verb: Hindi / Japanese / Kurdish / Latin / Persian / Turkish (01 point)

**V.** Give two examples of onomatopoeic words:

1. first example (01 point)

2. second example (01 point)

## Quiz № 07 (allotted time: 10 minutes)

Circle the option that best answers/completes each of the questions/statements below.

<p>1. Which one is not an onomatopoeic word</p> <p>a. hiss</p> <p>b. meow</p> <p><b>c. write (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. knock</p>	<p>6. For de Saussure, grammar includes</p> <p><b>a. phonology, morphology, and syntax (01 point)</b></p> <p>b. semantics, phonology, and morphology</p> <p>c. phonology, morphology, and pragmatics</p> <p>d. morphology, syntax, and semantics</p>
<p>2. What would happen if there is a logical relationship between the form of the word and its meaning?</p> <p>a. words would be easy to pronounce.</p> <p>b. words would be easy to write.</p> <p><b>c. Only one language would exist in the world. (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. Translation from one language to another would become very easy.</p>	<p>7. Chomsky viewed language from</p> <p>a. a social angle</p> <p><b>b. a mathematical angle (01 point)</b></p> <p>c. a cultural angle</p> <p>d. a religious angle</p>
<p>3. The language of Shakespeare corresponds to</p> <p>a. Modern English</p> <p>b. Middle English</p> <p><b>c. Early Modern English (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. Old English</p>	<p>8. Speech is primary to writing because</p> <p>a. All of us speak a great deal more than we write.</p> <p>b. Thousands of speech communities rely solely on speech.</p> <p>c. Speech is easier to learn than writing</p> <p><b>d. Children acquire speech before they learn writing (01 point)</b></p>
<p>4. Which language follows the word order <b>Subject Object Verb</b>?</p> <p>a. Mandarin</p> <p>b. Hebrew</p> <p><b>c. Latin (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. Baure</p>	<p>9. The vocal tract of humans is more elaborated than the one of animals</p> <p>a. so as to allow animals to produce more sounds than humans do</p> <p><b>b. so as to allow humans to produce more distinct sounds than animals do (01 point)</b></p> <p>c. so as to allow humans to be fluent</p> <p>d. because animals do not speak different languages</p>
<p>5. Which term does not correspond to language use?</p> <p>a. Slang</p> <p><b>b. Structuralism (01 point)</b></p> <p>c. Jargon</p> <p>d. Standard language</p>	<p>10. The fact that the cock produces some sounds that the hen could not do is in contrast to the language design feature of</p> <p><b>a. interchangeability (01 point)</b></p> <p>b. cultural transmission</p> <p>c. arbitrariness</p> <p>d. duality</p>



## Quiz № 08 (allotted time: 25 minutes)

Answer briefly the following questions:

**I.** What are the major objectives of linguistics?

The major objectives of linguistics are language structure, language use, and language change. (02 points)

**II.** What is the difference between language and standard language?

Standard language is sum of all varieties of a language whereas standard language is the variety that is used in formal and educational contexts. (02 points)

**III.** Which one is more difficult to understand by a modern English speaker Old English or Middle English? Why?

A modern speaker finds it more difficult to understand Old English because it is very different from the English that we use nowadays. (02 points)

**IV.** Give one example for each of the terms below:

3. **Jargon:** example (01 point)

4. **slang:** example (01 point)

**V.** Give two examples of two events that could cause language change:

3. **Political event:** example (01 point)

4. **Social event:** example (01 point)

## Quiz № 09 (allotted time: 10 minutes)

Circle the option that best answers/completes each of the questions/statements below.

<p>1. Sound Loss is a process in which</p> <p>a. final [h] of Old English words was lost</p> <p>b. initial [h] of Middle English words was lost</p> <p><b>c. initial [h] of Old English words was lost (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. final [h] of Middle English words was lost</p>	<p>6. Which of the historical events below caused the emergence of Middle English? <b>(01 point)</b></p> <p><b>a. The invasion of England by French Normans</b></p> <p>b. The death of Queen Elizabeth I</p> <p>c. The birth of Shakespeare</p> <p>d. the discovery of America</p>
<p>2. The word order of Persian sentences corresponds to</p> <p><b>a. Subject Object Verb (01 point)</b></p> <p>b. Subject Verb Object</p> <p>c. Object Verb Subject</p> <p>d. Verb Object Subject</p>	<p>7. Which of the following languages constitute one family?</p> <p>a. Spanish, English, Portuguese, and Italian</p> <p>b. English, German, French, and Irish</p> <p><b>c. French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. English, German, Portuguese, and Italian</p>
<p>3. The language of Chaucer corresponds to</p> <p>a. Early Modern English</p> <p><b>b. Middle English (01 point)</b></p> <p>c. Modern English</p> <p>d. Old English</p>	<p>8. Sound change is hard to document because <b>(01 point)</b></p> <p><b>a. recording devices did not exist in the far past</b></p> <p>b. of the big number of accents</p> <p>c. Speech is more difficult than writing</p> <p>d. there are more sounds than letters</p>
<p>4. A Slangs are words which are used by</p> <p>a. Middle-class speakers</p> <p>b. Very educated speakers</p> <p><b>c. lower-status speakers (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. doctors</p>	<p>9. Language use is a matter of</p> <p>a. rules</p> <p>b. grammar</p> <p><b>c. variation (01 point)</b></p> <p>d. semantic change</p>
<p>5. Register is a conventional way of using language in terms of</p> <p>a. situation, sex, and occupation</p> <p>b. age, topic, and occupation</p> <p>c. topic, race, and situation</p> <p><b>d. situation, topic, and occupation (01 point)</b></p>	<p>10. Standard language is</p> <p><b>a. a variety of language used in formal and educational contexts (01 point)</b></p> <p>b. a variety of language in terms of grammar</p> <p>c. a variety of language in terms of spelling and syntax</p> <p>d. a variety of language in terms of pronunciation</p>