

**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA  
FACULTY OF ARTS**



**JUNE 2010 SESSION EXAMINATIONS**

**LIN3005 Synoptic Study-Unit 1  
for**

Masters Preparatory Programme

**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010**

**09.15 ~ 12:15**

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**Answer any 3 (three) questions.**

1. According to some theorists, it is unproductive to assume a division between a level of “linguistic semantic knowledge” on the one hand, and “encyclopaedic” or “world” knowledge on the other. Discuss the pros and cons of this view, giving linguistic examples to support your argument.
2. The term “prototype” is itself a prototypical notion. Discuss, with reference to the main tenets of Prototype Theory.
3. Would a characterisation of the lexicon as a mere list of words be a realistic stance to adopt, or is it more realistic to view the lexicon as a network of relationships among lexical items?
4. Why do linguists opt for the formal, rather than the notional, criterion when they come to establish the parts of speech in a given language? Is there any use for the notional criterion in linguistic analysis in this area?
5. In a language of your choice, justify the status of the verb, the noun and the adjective as parts of speech and discuss the grammatical categories associated with them.
6. Discuss the linguistic mechanisms used by languages lacking adverbs, to express meanings which are carried by adverbs in those languages which have them.
7. Can inflection and derivation be distinguished? Discuss with examples.
8. The syntactico-semantic distinction active/passive seems crucial in Maltese, in spite of the morphological diversity of the different forms of the verb. Discuss

this position with reference to the forms of the verb and in particular to those verbal roots which traditionally are said to have four forms.

9. The meaning of the inflectional distinction Perfect/Imperfect in the verb in Maltese has to do crucially with the inter-relationship between tense and aspect. Discuss.
10. (a) List and explain the principles of general phonetics and (b) Discuss Laver (1994)'s consideration of **aspect of articulation** and how it enriches general phonetic theory.
11. Argue in favour of the use of the segment in general phonetic theory and discuss its limitations. How does general phonetic theory compensate for the limitations of the use of the segment?
12. Explain the concept of the phoneme and consider its contribution to the study of phonology. Consider its limitations and show how distinctive feature theory goes beyond the phoneme and enables us to have a more efficient way of understanding what happens in connected speech. Give examples of how data from one or more languages is dealt with in the phoneme theory and in distinctive feature theory.
13. "Intonation refers to the use of *suprasegmental* phonetic features to convey *sentence-level* pragmatic meanings in a *linguistically structured* way." Show how an Autosegmental-Metrical analysis of the intonational phonology of a language accounts for the above-mentioned elements.
14. What elements are involved in an Autosegmental-Metrical description of the intonational phonology of a language? How does this particular theoretical framework improve on **at least one** other theory of your choice with respect to the representation of both the phonetics and the phonology of the intonation of a language. Illustrate by means of examples.
15. "Interlanguage constitutes an unstable system and as such is permeable to invasion by new linguistic forms. Its dynamic quality is reflected in tremendous variability in language-learner language and also in overlapping stages of development as one set of variable rules is revised in favour of another" (Ellis 1985). Discuss, illustrating by means of appropriate examples.
16. Discuss the role in the formation of different interlanguage phonologies of non-linguistic factors such as individual differences between speakers, affective factors such as motivation, cognitive factors and age. Illustrate by means of examples wherever possible.