

**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
FACULTY OF ARTS**



JUNE 2010 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

**LIN3006 Synoptic Study-Unit 2
for**

Masters Preparatory Programme

Tuesday 8th June 2010

09.15 ~ 12:15

Answer any 3 (three) questions.

1. Show how, to a greater or lesser extent, language contact within Maltese society comes about from factors which have remained more or less constant throughout our history.
2. It is possible for an individual to possess more than one language or language variety. Discuss all the possible individual linguistic profiles involving Maltese and English that can occur within contemporary society in Malta, bringing out where possible the relevant sociolinguistic variables.
3. “The notions of balance and representativeness in corpus design are no longer relevant, now that the World Wide Web provides a practically infinite linguistic resource.” Do you agree with this view?
4. Since corpora are samples of spoken or written Natural Language, they have a limited size and moreover, focus on linguistic performance, not competence. In your view, does this limit the linguist’s ability to make interesting generalisations about language on the basis of corpus data?
5. What makes Natural Language Processing difficult is the fact that ambiguity is pervasive in language at all levels of analysis. Do you agree? Support your argument with concrete examples of problems of ambiguity in different NLP tasks.
6. Many NLP tasks are based on a view of language as a sequential or “Markov” process. Using examples from specific NLP tasks, discuss the pros and cons of such models.

7. To what extent is the distinction between free indirect discourse and other forms of discourse a matter of linguistic features?
8. Recasting narrative into or out of free indirect discourse is principally a matter of shifting narrator perspective. Discuss.
9. Give an account of the relation between conversation analysis and discursive psychology.
10. Critically evaluate of the debate involving Schegloff, Billig and Wetherell on the relative merits of the methodologies of conversation analysis and discourse analysis.
11. Briefly characterize different approaches to the analysis of media discourse.
12. The vertical 'scaling' of pitch varies conspicuously from speaker to speaker, bringing about differences of both a non-linguistic (e.g. male vs female speech) and paralinguistic nature (e.g. bored vs angry speech), as well as linguistic differences of various kinds. Discuss this statement, showing what different terms have been used to describe this phenomenon and in particular what studies of the vertical scaling of pitch can contribute to our understanding of the way in which pitch serves to convey meanings of different kinds.
13. Psycholinguistic models based on experimental data can contribute to the formulation of more precise and realistic linguistic theories. Discuss, with reference to studies of morphology and morphological productivity.
14. Explain what the child learning language in a bilingual environment needs to accomplish in order to develop two languages. Consider the variety of situations that may be involved and the different ways in which children process language in such environments.
15. The terms "acquisition" and "development" of language are often used distinctively of first language(s) and foreign language(s) respectively. What are the implications? Is it helpful to distinguish between the two terms. Consider the case of children learning more than one first language and discuss.
16. Language mixing may be part of the process of language learning in an environment where more than one language is used in a family, not necessarily by each member of the family. Discuss the implications for the young child.
17. Discuss the role of meaningful input in the child's development of language and ways in which the child can be considered a protagonist in the processing of such input.