

Corso di laurea specialistica in Discipline semiotiche

Teoria linguistica e struttura delle lingue

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Time allowed: 2 hours & 30 minutes.**Complete both sections (A & B).****Write in Italian, English, French or German, using terminology in English or the language you have chosen to write in.****Section A****In this section you are required to complete all questions (read the instructions for each one carefully).**

(1) *The following sentences are all ungrammatical (or less than fully acceptable): **choose 2 of them** and write a short paragraph explaining (a) why they are ungrammatical, and (b) why they have been considered significant in the particular theoretical areas where they have been discussed.*

1. *The boys prefer both to spend the holidays at home .
2. *It has been ordered a new copy of the book.
3. *If had Tom contacted us earlier, [we would not have given the ticket to George]
4. *The boys seem that dislike ice cream.
5. *This is the best Tom's book so far.
6. *[A Gianni hanno dato] la grande rossa gonfiabile palla.
7. *Richard should can have access to this computer tomorrow.
8. [A.Che cosa è successo poi?] B. !?Una bruttissima lettera è arriVAta.
9. ??The surface of this table polishes.
10. *Needed Tom to buy two bottles of wine? [Wasn't one enough?]

(2) *Give a structural analysis of 3 the following sentences: put brackets around the constituents and label each one so as to indicate (i) the formal category that it belongs to (NP, VP, AP, AdjP, PP etc), and (ii) its grammatical function (subject, object, (predicative) complement, adverbial). Your analysis should identify the immediate*

constituents of S and VP (do not analyse the internal structure of other phrasal constituents). Indicate your brackets and labels as clearly as possible.

1. Moltissime ditte attraversano un momento di crisi.
 2. Alla fine il concerto è andato meglio del previsto.
 3. Il concerto sarà un fallimento totale.
 4. Richard and his friends shouted to the tourists from the balcony.
 5. Richard and his friends greeted the tourists from Spain.
 6. Tom contributed nothing significant to the discussion.
- (3) *Study the groups of structures that follow: **choose 2 groups** and explain the difference(s) between the various examples. Write a short paragraph.*
- 1a. *Tom thought *a new theory*.
 - 1b. Tom thought **about** *a new theory*.
 - 1c. Tom thought **up** *a new theory*.
 - 1c'. Tom thought *a new theory* **up**.
- 2a. **Rientrato l'allarme**, i ragazzi sono tornati in aula.
 - 2b. ***Lavorato la squadra di pompieri**, i ragazzi sono tornati in aula.
 - 2c. **Domato l'incendio**, i ragazzi sono tornati in aula .
- 3a. Tom **talked** *to Jane*.
 - 3b. *Tom **talked** *Jane*.
 - 3c. Tom **talked** *Jane out of the idea of selling the house*.
 - 3d. Tom **talked** *to Jane* for ten minutes/*in ten minutes
 - 3e. Tom **talked** *Jane out of the idea of selling the house* in ten minutes/*for ten minutes
- 4a. [I put my wallet down for a moment and when I went to get it], it **was gone**.
 - 4b. [Tom is not there]. *He **is gone** to London.
 - 4c. [Tom is not there]. He **has gone** to London.
- 5a. Nevertheless, so much research has been expended on Mozart since 1919, so much more is known, and so many dates and facts have been corrected and revised that the book **could not simply be translated. It had to be brought up to date.** NYRB
 - 5b. Nevertheless, so much research has been expended on Mozart since 1919, so much more is known, and so many dates and facts have been corrected and revised that the book **should not simply have been translated. It should have been brought up to date.**
- 6a. Di studenti, **ne** sono partiti **tanti** negli ultimi giorni
 - 6b. ??Di studenti, **ne** hanno parlato **tanti** negli ultimi giorni

- 7a. *acest frumos baiat*
 this - nice - boy
- 7b. *baiatul* *acesta frumos*
 boy+the - this+agr - nice
- 8a. Gianni **deve** €10 al suo compagno di camera
- 8b. Jean **doit** €10 à son camarade de chambre
- 8c. *Tom **should** €10 to his roommate.
- 8c'. Euerych bakere of the town...**shal** to the clerke of the town a penny
 ‘Every baker owes the clerk of the town a penny’ (1400)
9. Què en fareu, **del gavinet**?
 ‘What will you do with the knife?’
- 9a. #[_F **Ficarem el gavinet** al CALAIX]
- 9b. [_F **El ficarem** al CALAIX]
- # = syntactically possible but not appropriate in context

Section B

In this section choose ONE question only and write a short essay.

- 1) Discuss the traditional lexical categories of Italian (or English or French or German) and attempt to show the problems inherent in this type of analysis. Propose alternative analyses where necessary.
- 2) It is sometimes said that English has a ‘non-morphological’ verbal system, meaning that the verbs of this language makes less use of morphological suffixes than do certain other languages (French, Spanish, Italian, Greek, German etc). Discuss how a language with a ‘non-morphological verbal system’ functions.
- 3) When it comes to the syntactic realisation of informational functions such as ‘Ground’ (more specifically: ‘Link’ & ‘Tail’) and ‘Focus’, English and Catalan represent two extremes. Discuss the realisations of these functions in these two languages, and mention any other languages that are relevant to your discussion.
- 4) The importance of the ‘X bar’ theory of phrasal structure is that it distinguishes between relations of dominance and precedence, thus making it possible to compare different languages more effectively. Discuss this aspect of ‘X bar’ theory.
- 5) ‘Grammaticalisation’ can be defined as the ‘creation of new functional material’ from lexical items that previously were not specifically functional in character. Illustrate this process in relation to the English modal verbs.
- 6) Examine the morphosyntax of verbal inflection in English ‘subjunctive’ clauses,

concentrating on what such clauses show us about the possible realisations of the heads of functional projections. Make use of the following data (and any other that you consider relevant):

1. We insist that Tom be on time for the concert.
 - 1a. We insisted that Tom be on time for the concert.
 2. We insisted that Tom not be late for the concert.
 3. *We insisted that Tom be not late for the concert.
 4. We insisted that Tom should be on time for the concert.
 5. We insisted that Tom should not be late for the concert.
 6. *We insisted that Tom not should be late for the concert.
- 7) Examine ‘argument alternation’ verbs of the *load* type. Much discussion of argument realisation/linking appeals to concepts such as ‘patient’ or ‘affected entity’. Illustrate how verbs of the *load* class lead us to replace these concepts with a more sophisticated actionality- based approach.
- 8) The idea of ‘transformation’ has been essential to syntax for several decades. It is intended to capture an aspect of native speaker syntactic knowledge relating (for example) to the fact that the NPs *Tom* and *which film* in the sentence *Which film is Tom believed to have seen last week* are respectively understood as subject and object of the verb *see* despite the fact that neither of them is adjacent to this verb or even in the same clause (while the verb in question is actually followed by another NP, *last week*, which, despite its position adjacent to the verb, is *not* interpreted as object). The idea of transformation has undoubted value at a descriptive level; the crucial question is whether transformational rules should figure as primes of syntactic knowledge. Discuss.
- 9) Discuss the concepts ‘descriptive adequacy’ and ‘explanatory adequacy’ (both important criteria for assessing a syntactic analysis). Illustrate your answer by examining how the analysis of a given set of phenomena may might satisfy the first criterion without satisfying the second.
- 10) Discuss the traditional concept of ‘transitivity’ (seen as applying to diadic verbs) and the division of the verbal lexicon into ‘transitive’ and ‘intransitive’. In your answer, consider some of the following cases:
1. Tom broke the vase/The vase broke
 2. Tom danced Mary onto the balcony
 3. These shirts iron well
 4. The cat kept scratching at the door
 5. The boys laughed themselves sick
 6. Tom locked up his wife