Syntax

Syntax is the branch of grammar which studies the rules governing the way words are combined to form sentences in a language. Sentences are made up of phrases. Phrases are built around a ‘skeleton’ consisting of two levels, as depicted below:

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NP \[|\] VP \[|\] PP (phrase level)
   \[|\] N \[|\] V \[|\] P (word level)
   (he likes) books (all animals) eat (he went) in (head)
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There are different ways of indicating word relationships. In English, word order is used to indicate such relationships: *Martin saw Mary in Paris / Mary saw Martin in Paris* (≠ meaning). Other languages may use other systems to indicate word relationships, for example inflections (used in Latin) or the combination of grammatical particles. A combination of grammatical particles is used in agglutinating languages, such as Finnish and Turkish, where words have a complex morphological structure, but each morpheme has a single clearly identifiable function, see the example below with affixes in Turkish (from O’Grady, Dobrovolsky & Aronoff, 1991: 314):

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ev           evler           evlerde           evlerden
house       houses        in the houses      from the houses
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In sentence analysis, you analyze linguistic units as components of larger constructions such as phrases, clauses, and sentences. It divides sentences into the immediate constituents that make them up. You are familiar with this from the grammar course in English A.

Tree diagrams

1. Draw tree diagrams and provide rewrite rules for the following:
   a. The boy devoured the sandwich.
   b. The girl placed the keys on the table.
   c. McNulty abandoned the investigation.
   d. John looked up the road.
e. John looked up the word.
f. The killer left the car outside the house.
g. Baby, come!
2. In what ways are these expressions structurally ambiguous? Draw diagrams!
   a. A Swedish history professor
   b. Old men and women
   c. Nicole saw the people with binoculars.

Semantics

3. What is semantics?
When we communicate, we put together words and phrases to communicate some sort of message. The hearer constructs/interprets the intended message based on his or her linguistic knowledge, his or her knowledge of the world, and context.

4. Do a semantic feature analysis (+/-) on the words below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Human</th>
<th></th>
<th>Equine</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stallion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>Colt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Filly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Explain the difference between conceptual and associative meaning!
6. “Colorless green ideas sleep furiously” – why is this sentence strange?
7. Semantic roles (or thematic roles): Explain what is meant by an agent and a theme.
8. The little girl cut her hair. Give the semantic roles for the little girl and for her hair.
9. Create a sentence in order to illustrate the semantic role of instrument.
10. Create a sentence in order to illustrate the semantic role of experiencer.
11. Create a sentence in order to illustrate the semantic role of location.
12. Create a sentence in order to illustrate the semantic role of source.
13. Create a sentence in order to illustrate the semantic role of goal.
14. Explain the following lexical relationships:
   a. Synonymy
   b. Antonymy
   c. Hyponymy
      i. Superordinate terms
      ii. Co-hyponyms
   d. Prototypes
   e. Homophony
   f. Homonymy
   g. Polysemy
h. Metonymy
i. Collocation

15. With the help of what you know of semantics, explain why the sentence *The cat was more dead than the dog* is odd. Also, try to explain why someone might choose to say such a sentence, and in what type of context it might actually work, not causing a breakdown in communication.

16. Using terminology from semantics, explain why “fast food” sounds better in English than “quick food” or “speedy food”.

**Pragmatics**

17. Define pragmatics!

18. Yule (2010: 129) writes about *linguistic context (co-text)* and *physical context*. Explain the concepts!

19. We use our *index* finger when we point to things... In linguistics, there is the concept of *deixis* [from Greek, ‘pointing’]. What is important to know about deixis? Explain and give examples of these deictic expressions: *person deixis, temporal deixis, and spatial deixis*. (A golden ✷ to everybody who can say *deixis* fluently – without any hesitation whatsoever 😊.)

20. Here is a fake dialogue, intended to illustrate a certain linguistic process. Which one?

   Person A: - Can I look at your Chaucer?
   Person B: -Here you go! [handing over a copy of *The Canterbury Tales*]

21. Give some examples of *anaphora*!

22. In pragmatics, we speak of *presuppositions*. Explain and exemplify!

23. Generally, we recognize the type of ‘action’ that is performed when a speaker says something. The term *speech act* is used to describe various actions. Please, provide a definition of *speech act* and illustrate the following speech acts by coming up with your own examples!
   a. Requesting
   b. Commanding
   c. Questioning
   d. Informing

24. Explain the difference between a *direct speech act* and an *indirect speech act*.

25. In the study of linguistic politeness, there is the concept of *face*. What is *face*? What is *positive* and *negative face*? What is a *face-threatening act*?