

國立清華大學命題紙

97學年度_____語言學研究所_____系(所)_____組碩士班入學考試

科目_____語言學概論_____科目代碼_____3901_____共_____1_____頁第_____1_____頁 *請在【答案卷卡】內作答

1. It is well-known that “verb+object” sequences may have idiomatic readings, e.g. “kick the bucket” (meaning “die”), while this observation does not hold for “subject+verb” sequences, e.g. “John kicks the door open” (no idiomatic meaning). Explain why this should be the case in terms of phrase structure. (Hint: some idiom chunks can undergo passivization, e.g. “Little heed was paid to the professor’s warnings.”) (15 points)
2. Why are distinctive features, but not phonemes, the primitives of phonological description? Justify your arguments with a concrete example(s). (15 points)
3. Consider the word *unhappier*, composed of three morphemes, namely, the negative prefix *un-*, the root *happy*, and the comparative suffix *-er*. The word *unhappier* should have two possible readings. What are they? (5 points) Next, it appears that one of the possible readings is not available. Explain why. (Note further that normally the *-er* affix cannot be added to a root that contains more than two syllables, e.g. *more beautiful*, but not **beautifuler*.) (15 points)
4. Comment on whether the following statements are problematic; make corrections if necessary (15 points; 5 points for each).
 - a. Language is *solely* used for communication.
 - b. [x] and [ŋ] are in complementary distribution in Mandarin. Hence they are in allophonic variation.
 - c. A linguistic sign *is* a combination of a sound and a meaning.
5. The Tone 3 sandhi in Mandarin (三聲變調) has been a classical example of the syntax-phonology interaction. I.e. the (non-)application of phonological rules (i.e. the Tone 3 sandhi here) has a strong bearing on syntactic structures, e.g. 小老虎 vs. 總統府. Explain why. (5 points) Consider now sequences like 五五五五五 (Note that the Tone 3 sandhi also occurs in this example). Discuss why your analysis could not work for the new data. Also, provide a potential solution for these seemingly conflicting facts. (10 points)
6. As far as writing systems are concerned, which part of a sound is *never* omitted? Discuss why this should be the case. (Hint: which part is (usually) not included in the Arabic/English/Japanese orthography?) (5 points)
7. What is “the logical problem of language acquisition” (a.k.a. Plato’s problem)? (5 points) Discuss why language acquisition does not seem reducible to the following statement: children memorize or imitate everything produced by their parents. (10 points)