

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Larbi Ben M'hidi University
Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of English
Level: Second Year
Academic Year: 2024/2025

Model Answer linguistics and phonetics exam 2nd Semester

I. Linguistics

- Multiple Choice (3 pts)

1. C. Emphasis on meaning over form
2. A. Language shifts depending on context, purpose, and audience
3. C. An innate cognitive ability

- Define the critical period hypothesis (2 pts)

The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) suggests that there is a biologically determined window during which language acquisition occurs most easily and effectively. After this period, typically ending around puberty, learning a language—especially a first language—becomes significantly more difficult and may never reach native-like proficiency.

- Prague School and Phonology (5 pts)

The Prague Linguistic Circle greatly influenced phonology by introducing the concept of distinctive features and the functional approach to sounds. They emphasized the contrastive role of phonemes in distinguishing meaning and developed the idea of binary oppositions. Notably, they viewed language as a structured system where each sound has a function in communication.

II. Phonetics

1. Multiple Choice (2 pts)

1. B. A long /ɑ:/ vowel
2. C. Completion or certainty

2. Three Functions of Tone in Language (3 pts)

Grammatical function

Lexical function

Pragmatic/ discourse function

3. Sentence Stress Rules and Exceptions (5 pts)

In English, sentence stress generally falls on content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs), while function words (prepositions, articles, conjunctions) are usually unstressed. For example: She bought a new car.

1. Normal neutral stress
2. Contrastive stress
3. Emphatic stress
4. New information stress