

**24.900: Final Exam Study Guide**  
**Spring, 2005**

- The final will be a comprehensive exam on the points stressed and practiced in this class.
- Expect problems and questions of the same general type as those you tackled on your problem sets and on the two quizzes (although not as time consuming and hopefully much clearer). Thus, if there is any type of problem from one of the problem sets that you do not feel comfortable with, be sure to ask us for help as you study.
- Also expect some short answer questions and identification questions, and possibly some short paragraphs on concepts or issues discussed in class.
- You are also not responsible for terms, topics or issues discussed in the textbook that were not also covered in class.
- You are, however, responsible for *all* topics stressed in class lectures, if they were not stressed in the readings. (This is in accordance with the general guidelines mentioned in the syllabus.) So if you missed classes, be sure and get notes from classmates or the website. We are willing to help fill in some missing pieces if you've forgotten some concept or missed a class or two and need help interpreting the class notes.
- Special office hours will be scheduled before the exam, which you will learn about by e-mail.
- Feel free to e-mail us with questions or ask for an appointment at any time before the exam.
- In recitation sections this week, your TA will answer any questions that you might have about any aspect of the class. Be sure to review your notes so that you can use the time well on Friday.

**A. Morphology**

1. *Morpheme: bound vs. free, root vs., affix, base*
2. Types of affixes (by where they attach): *prefix, suffix, infix*
3. What are allomorphs? How do you determine them? How do you derive them?

**B. Syntax**

1. The topics thus include:
  - Phrases and phrase structure: basic tree drawing, the notion *head*, the *head-first/head-last* parameter.
  - Subcategorization*,

□ *Movement* motivated by apparent counterexamples to *subcategorization*.

Know and be able to diagram the effects of *wh*-movement

2. Know the difference between an adjunct and a complement.
3. Know how these two structures differ in terms of their representation in a tree diagram.

### C. Semantics

1. Make sure you understand *c-command* and *Binding Theory Principles A, B, C*.

You may be asked to draw a tree for a sentence like *Mary likes herself* or

*\*Mary's brother likes herself*. and comment on the sentence in light of Binding Theory.

2. Know the differences among the thematic roles we discussed in class. Be able to identify them in an utterance.
3. What are subcategorization restrictions?
4. Know what entailment and presupposition are. Be able to identify each.

### D. Phonetics

1. Be able to label the parts of the vocal tract you labeled on the phonetics quiz.

Know the phonetic difference between a vowel, a consonant and a glide.

2. Consonants: know the same facts about *place of articulation*, *manner of articulation* and *voicing* that you learned for the phonetics quiz. Know the same IPA symbols you learned for the quiz.

3. Vowels: Know the English vowels as you learned them for the phonetics quiz, including their classification by height and front/back. Revive your memory of the relevant IPA symbols, e.g. know the symbol for the vowel in *put* and the vowel in *but*, and don't get them mixed up!

4. Hint: As should be obvious, good advice is to restudy your phonetics quiz and the materials you studied before taking it.

### E. Phonology

1. Be able to do any phonology problem of the type presented in class. In particular:

□ Given a set of forms, be able to determine if a group of sounds are in *complementary distribution*. Be able to conclude from your investigation whether the sounds in question are separate *phonemes* or *allophones* of a single phoneme.

□ Given a set of forms from a language, be able to discover the existence of phonological rules active in that language. Sometimes such rules will relate allophones to a common phoneme. At other times, the rules will relate two sounds that might also function as separate phonemes elsewhere in the language.

2. *Examples*: Turkish and Russian final devoicing. In such cases, you may be asked to discover the forms of the morphemes listed in the lexicon -- called the *underlying* or *phonemic representation*. [Warning: This concept and activity is tricky and sometimes difficult for students to master. Pay some attention to it as you study for the exam, and ask questions if you don't get it.]

3. Know the X --> Y / \_\_\_\_ A notation for phonological rules. You are not required to learn anything in particular about *features* except the concept. Use of articulatory labels like *alveolar* is fine in rules, for the purposes of this final exam.
4. Be able to look at a pair of rules that are crucially *ordered* and both (1) determine the correct ordering and (2) justify the ordering by showing how your ordering yields the right forms and the opposite ordering yields the wrong forms.
5. As in the quiz, distinctive feature charts will be attached to the exam, if there is a problem demanding their use.

### **F. Historical linguistics**

1. Know how *linguistic change* arises (in part) as a by-product of the *poverty of the stimulus* (the fact that the information available to the child lacks word boundaries, trees, etc.). Another name for the "poverty of the stimulus" is *Plato's Problem*.
2. Know how *variation* arises as a consequence of historical change (plus geographic or social isolation). [Class notes plus common sense.]
3. The notion *dialect* (vs. language) and the difficulties posed by this notion.
4. Discovery of *language families*, especially Indo-European.
  - The notion *cognate*.
  - Grimm's law*: know what proto-Indo-European *p*, *t*, and *k* became in Germanic and be able to give English cognates for obvious examples from Latin or Greek, e.g. Latin *pater*/English *father*..
5. *History of English*:
  - Know conventional dates for *Old English* [450-1100 AD], *Middle English* [1100-1500], and *Modern English* [from 1500]. [CL p. 290]
  - Great Vowel Shift*: Know what it is and learn the facts on page 304 of *CL*. You might have another "ale" story, though there's no guarantee the solution will be the same.

### **G. Dialects**

1. Examples of mutually unintelligible languages called "dialects of the same language" for political/sociological reasons (e.g. the Chinese "dialects" or the Arabic "dialects"). Examples of mutually intelligible languages called separate languages for similar reasons (Norwegian, Swedish and Danish; Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian).

### **H. Language Acquisition/Brain**

1. Know the standard names for early stages of language production and approximate ages in which children normally go through these stages.
  - Babbling: 6-12 months (roughly)
  - 1-word: 1 yr - 1.5 years
  - 2-word 1.5 years - 2 years
  - telegraphic: 2 years - 2.5
2. Know that perception/comprehension is usually ahead of production, and be

able to interpret results that show this from child phonology (e.g. the Japanese example given in class) and syntax (e.g. evidence that German children know verb-second while still in the telegraphic stage).

3. Know that in most people, language appears to be predominantly processed/stored in the *left hemisphere*.

### **I. Guest lectures**

1. Know the names of the two guest lecturers in 24.900 this semester.