

TEST 1 KEY:

Easy

Question 1.

Find and comment on at least three instances of verbal stem allomorphy in the first two paragraphs.

Richard Walker ha-s been trying to conquer ageing since he was a 26-year-old free-loving hippie. It was the 1960s, an era marked by youth: Vietnam War protests, psychedelic drugs, sexual revolutions. The young Walker relished the culture of exultation, of *joie de vivre*, and yet was also acutely aware of its passing. He was haunted by the knowledge that ageing would eventually steal away his vitality – that with each passing day his body was slightly less robust, slightly more decayed. One evening he went(-)t for a drive in his convertible and vowed that by his 40th birthday, he would find a cure for ageing.

Walker be-came a scientist to understand why he was mortal. “Certainly it wasn’t due to original sin and punishment by God, as I was taugh-t by nuns in catechism,” he say-s. “No, it was the result of a biological process, and therefore is controlled by a mechanism that we can understand.” Scientists have published several hundred theories of ageing, and have tied it to a wide variety of biological processes. But no one yet understands how to integrate all of this disparate information.

SEE UNDERLINED FORMS ABOVE. The examples feature stem allomorphy, i.e. different shapes of the stem of a lexeme, in the present (e.g. say-s/ha-s) or the past tense (taugh-t) (sub-)paradigm. There are also instances of suppletion, which can be viewed as an extreme case of allomorphy, where the two stems don’t have any similarity in form whatsoever, since they come from originally different lexemes (e.g. be-was, go-went – esp. common with frequent verbs such as ‘be’ and ‘go’). The past tense/preterite *became* is a special case of morphophonemic alternation where the change of the root vowel (ablaut) marks tense (a strong/irregular verb). In the other forms, the dedicated (past or present) stem allomorph is accompanied by a past suffix or a 3sg present suffix.

Question 2.

In the first two sentences of the first paragraph, find three words which contain different stressed back monophthongs and transcribe them phonemically.

Note that the three words must contain different stressed vowels. Both British (RP) and American (GA) pronunciation variants are acceptable (but not “mixed” variants).

Words containing stressed back monophthongs:

Walker RP /wɔ:kə/ GA /wɔ:kər/, /wɑ:kər/

war RP /wɔ:/, GA /wɑ:r/

conquer RP /kɒŋkə/, GA /kɑ:ŋkər/

marked RP /mɑ:kt/ GA /mɑ:rkt/

youth RP, GA /ju:θ/

revolutions RP, GA /revəlu:ʃənz/, /revəlju:ʃənz/ (or the respective variants with a syllabic ŋ)

Question 3.

Indicate all suppletive forms in the 4th paragraph and describe the phenomenon of suppletion. Give your own example of suppletion.

The suppletive forms in par. 4 are: *is*, *was*, *best*, *are* (in the text it is contracted, e.g. *we’re*) and *went*. Suppletion takes place when the syntax requires a form of a lexeme that is not

morphologically predictable. In other words, suppletion occurs when a form that is missing from an inflectional paradigm is replaced by a form with a different root. For instance, the form *went* exists alongside the forms *go*, *goes*, *going*, *gone*. Other suppletive forms, in addition to those in the text, are *worse* and *worst* that exist alongside *bad*.

Medium

Question 4.

Compare and discuss the following two phrases from the point of view of their semantics, morphology and syntax: *its passing* (paragraph 1) and *punishment by God* (paragraph 2).

The head nouns of both NPs are nominalisations of originally verbal lexemes derived with the derivational suffixes -ing and -ment respectively. The genitive determiner in the first NP is an example of a subject genitive which would correspond to the Subject in a clause “It passed/passes” (intransitive). In ‘punishment by God’, the same relationship is expressed by a post-posed PP complement, so the relationship is no longer expressed by morphology (genitive case ending) but by syntax (function word). This represents a major shift from synthetic to analytical in the history of English (=BONUS POINT). Semantically, ‘God’ is an agent in the paraphrase “God punished s.o.’ (transitive), but ‘it’ is not an agent in ‘it passed/passes’, as the verb denotes a process, not an action.

Question 5.

In paragraph 1, find at least one content (appositive) *that*-clause and in a couple of sentences explain how it differs in terms of semantics and syntax from relative *that*-clauses.

Richard Walker has been trying to conquer ageing since he was a 26-year-old free-loving hippie. It was the 1960s, an era marked by youth: Vietnam War protests, psychedelic drugs, sexual revolutions. The young Walker relished the culture of exultation, of *joie de vivre*, and yet was also acutely aware of its passing. He was haunted by the knowledge that ageing would eventually steal away his vitality – that with each passing day his body was slightly less robust, slightly more decayed. One evening he went for a drive in his convertible and vowed that by his 40th birthday, he would find a cure for ageing.

The underlined sequence represents two appositive (content) clauses, coordinated asyndetically. There are no obvious structural differences between the three types of clauses but appositive (content) clauses differ from both relative and nominal clauses in meaning and function. They are like relative clauses in that they attach to an antecedent (preceding) noun but unlike modifying relative clauses which determine the reference of the antecedent noun (defining/restrictive relative clauses) or add specifying, non-essential information to the referent of the noun phrase (non-defining/non-restrictive relative clauses), appositive clauses specify the sense of the antecedent noun. They reveal features of the semantic volume of the head noun. Unlike nominal clauses they cannot on their own perform nominal clause functions (subject or any kind of object or predicative complement) and are introduced into sentence structure by a semantically restricted set of head nouns (e.g. plan, idea, suggestion, knowledge, etc.). Unlike relative that clauses, content clauses function as complements to the head nouns which license them.

Question 6.

Discuss the genitive meanings expressed in the following noun phrases: *the girls’ DNA* (par.3), *a woman’s ovaries* (par.4) and *his life’s work* (par.4). Give appropriate sentential or phrasal analogues of each phrase.

The phrases *the girls' DNA* and *a woman's ovaries* can be appropriately discussed as examples of the **partitive genitive**, which expresses part of the whole. Thus, the underlying structures of the two phrases will be: 'the DNA which is part of the girls' (the girls have DNA) and 'the ovaries that are part of a woman' (a woman has ovaries). These two phrases are similar to phrases like *the baby's eyes* or *the girl's hair* that are good examples of the **partitive genitive**. All these examples differ from phrases like *Mary's bag* or *my father's car*, where the genitive meaning is clearly possession.

The phrase *a woman's ovaries* allows for another interpretation that is not entirely impossible, i.e. it could be discussed as an example of the **descriptive (qualitative) genitive**, where the underlying structure should be 'ovaries like the ovaries of a woman'. In this interpretation it is similar to phrases like *a child's play* or *a lion's heart*, which clearly exemplify the descriptive genitive. Still, it is the reading suggested above that appears to be more plausible with the phrase in question.

As to *his life's work*, it can be explained as 'the work to which he devoted his life', 'the work that occupied his life' or 'the work he did throughout his life'. Hence, it could be viewed as an example of the **genitive of temporal measure** or even **the descriptive genitive**.

Challenging

Question 7.

Discuss the syntactic and information structure of the sentence beginning with *When Walker began his scientific career,...* in paragraph 4, then relate those to textual function(s).

a. *When Walker began his scientific career* (SAdjunct: wh- temporal clause), *he* (Subj: Pron) *focused* (Pred: Finite) *on the female reproductive system* (Obj: prepPhrase) *as a model of "pure ageing"* (Adj: PrepPh): *a woman's ovaries, even in the absence of any disease, slowly but inevitably slide into the throes of menopause* (S: Np + Adj Cicr: PrepPh + Adj Circ: AdvPh + Pred: Fin + Adj Place: PrepPh).

b. *When Walker began his scientific career* (Textual Theme, Partially Marked; Time Circum), *he* (Topical Th) *focused on the female reproductive system as a model of "pure ageing"* (Rheme): *a woman's ovaries* (Topical Th), *even in the absence of any disease, slowly but inevitably slide into the throes of menopause* (Rh).

c. E.g.

The sentence begins with *When Walker began his scientific career, ...* as paragraph 2 is dedicated thematically to the beginning of Walker's career and interest in ageing, while paragraph 3 deals with the later stages of that career and that interest. To connect the new paragraph (i.e. par 4) back to par. 2 (or to both par. 2 and par. 3), the sentence's point of departure (due to the general goal of the discourse) is information which is already given/present in earlier parts of the text. Therefore, the Sent Adj appears first in the sentence in order for the text producer to connect the new sentence to 'old', 'previous', or 'given' information. The function of the Sent Adjunct, thus, is the one of a Textual Theme. It is a Partially Marked Theme (Adjunct Theme; Circumstances of Time) as the sentence does not begin with a Topic Theme expressed by the Subject, which would have been the default situation.

The use of the colon between the two independent clauses suggests the second clause is directly related to the first one but another possible, and more valid, interpretation is that the colon is used to lay emphasis, and thus focus, on the second clause, turning it into a sort of a Rhematic structure in itself. Within the second clause (after the colon), the thematic

arrangement suggests the key importance of the last Rhematic elements (i.e. *slide into the throes of menopause*), which appear after a double use of structures dedicated to circumstantial information (i.e. *slowly and inevitably*, and *even in the absence of any disease*). In this way, first, the most important informational bits are postponed as long as possible, which creates a clear sense of 'focus' and 'suspense' in the text. Second, the technique allows the text producer to fulfill the experiential function of the text and unfold its possibilities fully.

Question 8.

Analyse the following structures from paragraph 3: *Walker, now 74*, and *a rare disease that doesn't even have a real name, "Syndrome X"*. Contrast them in terms of internal constituency and function within the units that contain them. Comment on the differences between apposition and modification.

Both structures are noun phrases. *Walker, now 74*, functions as the Subject of the clause, while *a rare disease that doesn't even have a real name, "Syndrome X"* is a complement to a preposition in a prepositional phrase. The first one is a clause constituent, the second a phrase one, i.e. they function at different levels of the rank scale.

The internal constituency of the NP *Walker, now 74*, includes a proper noun followed by a non-restrictive reduced relative clause which results in a numeral phrase. Huddleston and Pullum (2005: 97) consider *now 74* a fused head construction. This however does not make the whole structure appositive.

The internal constituency of *a rare disease that doesn't even have a real name, "Syndrome X"* involves a determiner (the indefinite article *a*), a premodifier (the adjective *rare*), the head noun (the common, count noun *disease*), a defining/restrictive *that*-relative clause, where the relative pronoun performs the function of Subject in the subordinate clause and an appositive NP with the last noun in the relative clause (*name*) as antecedent.

The basic difference between modification and apposition is that the former exemplifies hypotactic relations, while the latter paratactic relations. In apposition, the second NP identifies the same referent in a different way. Modification is a relationship of subordination of one grammatical element to another. Within endocentric phrases modifiers encode different properties of the head. In apposition the relationship of equality can be clearly illustrated by the possibility to choose either of the NPs as the only one in a clause without disrupting the meaning of the whole, e.g. They invited me and my wife Susan to a party. = They invited me and my wife to a party. = They invited me and Susan to a party.

Question 9.

Discuss the syntactic behaviour and distribution of all the adjectives you can find in paragraph 1. Group the adjectives according to their function and use and comment on possible classifications and criteria for these.

The list of adjectives in the first paragraph comprises: a 26-year-old free-loving hippie; marked by youth; psychedelic drugs, sexual revolutions; the young Walker; acutely aware; haunted by; passing day; slightly less robust, slightly more decayed; convertible.

Three groups of adjectives can be formed on the basis of their syntactic function within the unit containing them: 1) attributive - 26-year-old, free-loving hippie; marked by youth, psychedelic drugs, sexual revolutions, young Walker; 2) predicative - yet was also acutely aware, his body was slightly less robust, slightly more decayed and 3) a substantivised adjective functioning as a noun head within an NP.

The first group function as premodifiers in an NP. They differ in terms of their morphological and syntactic makeup (some are simple heads - e.g. *psychedelic*, *sexual*, etc.; while others are heads of expanded Adj. phrases - e.g. *marked by youth*), but they are all parts of NPs and have a modifying function. The second group are adjectives used on their own as clause constituents. They function as Cs and are introduced by link verbs. These two uses are known as attributive and predicative use, respectively, which corresponds to two prototypical patterns of syntactic behaviour of adjectives that run parallel to two basic types of syntactic relations - modification and complementation, respectively. Adjectives can occur before a noun and function as premodifiers in an NP or they can appear independently as predicative complements relating to the subject (Cs) in copular/link sentences or after a direct object in complex transitive clauses (functioning as Co).

A third use of adjectives in English is related to the phenomenon of substantivisation as is the case with the third group in paragraph 1 - *convertible*.

Most adjectives in the English language can be used both attributively and predicatively, even though there are restrictions with semantic and syntactic consequences. However, some adjectives can only be used in the attributive position. Adjectives such as *live*, *mere*, *elder*, *little*, and *sheer* are some examples for this type of adjectives.

This shop doesn't sell live animals. (Animals that are still alive)

He lives in a little house. (A house that is small)

I met his elder sister. (Sister who is older)

Predicative adjectives are the adjectives that occur after a link verb (functioning as Cs),

Some adjectives only occur in the predicative position. Adjectives that tend to be used exclusively predicatively tend to have a participial origin. Some of them can be recognised by a no-longer synchronically recognisable prefix a-

The house was ablaze.; She was alone.; He felt that something was amiss.; She was utterly bereft.

The central differences between the two basic uses of adjectives run parallel to the differences between modification and complementation in language.

Besides the differences described above, in relation to their position regarding the head of a unit containing them, adjectives can be grouped into premodifying and postmodifying (qualifying) ones. In the set paragraph one adjective is postpositioned within the matrix NP - *marked*. Besides contributing different kinds of properties (prepositioned adjectives tend to assign more inherent or permanent characteristics of the referent of the head noun, while postpositioned ones usually add transient or less closely associated with the referent properties), prepositioned and postpositioned adjectives differ in terms of the kinds of modification they tolerate within their own phrases. Prepositioned ones do not favour postmodification (e.g. *marked by youth* vs. *psychedelic drugs*).