



**SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

*The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala*

University Building, Kureepuzha, Kollam, Kerala-691601 | [www.sgou.ac.in](http://www.sgou.ac.in)

## **M.A. English Language and Literature**

### **Assignment Questions**

#### **Semester IV**

#### **Discipline Core Course**

#### **M21EG11DC**

### **Linguistics and Structure of the English Language**

#### **Instructions for Writing Assignments**

##### **Descriptive:**

- *Clearly outline the key elements or aspects that need to be described, such as features, characteristics, or events.*
- *Employ descriptive language that can engage the senses and ensure vivid pictures, enhancing the richness of descriptions.*
- *Organise the assignment in a coherent sequence to guarantee clarity and facilitate the smooth conveyance of ideas.*

##### **Analytical:**

- *Clearly articulate your main argument in a concise manner at the beginning of your answer. This sets the tone for your analysis and helps the reader understand the central point you are trying to convey.*
- *Support your analysis with specific examples and quotes from the literature. Use direct textual evidence to illustrate and reinforce your points.*
- *Move beyond mere summary and engage in critical analysis. Interpret the significance of the literary elements, such as themes, characters, and symbols.*

##### **Descriptive:**

1. Explain the key properties of human language that distinguish it from animal communication systems. Provide examples to illustrate each property.
2. Describe the main types of language variations, including regional dialects, social dialects, and registers. Give examples of each type.
3. Outline the major components of phonology, including phonemes, allophones, and suprasegmental features. Explain how each contributes to the sound system of a language.

4. Explain the concepts of deep structure and surface structure in Transformational-Generative Grammar. Illustrate with examples how transformations relate these two levels.
5. Describe the process of Immediate Constituent (IC) analysis. Explain its purpose and provide an example of how to perform IC analysis on a sentence.

**Analytical:**

1. Compare and contrast the prescriptive and descriptive approaches to grammar. Critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of each approach, using examples from English grammar rules to support your analysis.
2. Analyze the relationship between language and culture. To what extent does language shape our worldview and cultural practices? Consider the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and provide examples from different languages to support your argument.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of Chomsky's Universal Grammar theory in explaining language acquisition. What evidence supports this theory and what are its main criticisms? Consider research in child language acquisition and cross-linguistic studies in your response.
4. Critically examine the role of semantics and pragmatics in communication. How do these two areas of linguistics interact to create meaning in language use? Provide examples of how contextual factors can influence the interpretation of utterances.
5. Assess the impact of modern syntactic theories like Phrase Structure Grammar and Transformational-Generative Grammar on our understanding of language structure. How have these theories advanced linguistic analysis compared to traditional grammar approaches? Discuss their strengths and limitations.



**SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

*The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala*  
University Building, Kureepuzha, Kollam, Kerala-691601 | [www.sgou.ac.in](http://www.sgou.ac.in)

## **M.A. English Language and Literature**

### **Semester IV**

### **Assignment Questions**

### **Discipline Core Course**

### **M21EG12DC**

### **Postcolonial Studies**

## **Instructions for Writing Assignments**

### **Descriptive:**

- *Clearly outline the key elements or aspects that need to be described, such as features, characteristics, or events.*
- *Employ descriptive language that can engage the senses and ensure vivid pictures, enhancing the richness of descriptions.*
- *Organise the assignment in a coherent sequence to guarantee clarity and facilitate the smooth conveyance of ideas.*

### **Analytical:**

- *Clearly articulate your main argument in a concise manner at the beginning of your answer. This sets the tone for your analysis and helps the reader understand the central point you are trying to convey.*
- *Support your analysis with specific examples and quotes from the literature. Use direct textual evidence to illustrate and reinforce your points.*
- *Move beyond mere summary and engage in critical analysis. Interpret the significance of the literary elements, such as themes, characters, and symbols.*

### **Topics:**

### **Descriptive:**

1. Describe the concept of diaspora, including its historical origins and evolution over time. How has the meaning of diaspora expanded beyond its initial association with Jewish communities?
2. Explain the role of assimilation in colonial and postcolonial contexts. How did colonial powers use education as a tool for assimilation?
3. Summarise the key themes and imagery in Derek Walcott's poem "The Sea is History". How does Walcott use biblical allusions to explore Caribbean history?
4. Describe the portrayal of God as a lover in John Shaw Neilson's poem "Surely God was a Lover". How does Neilson use natural imagery to convey this concept?
5. Explain Edward Said's definition of Orientalism. What are the key aspects of Orientalism that Said critiques?

### **Analytical:**

1. Analyse how postcolonial writers like Salman Rushdie and Caryl Phillips have used the English language and cultural practices as a form of resistance and critique. How does this exemplify the concept of postcolonial appropriation?
2. Critically examine the themes of identity, mortality and human experience in Gabriel Okara's poem "Were I to Choose". How does Okara use biblical imagery to explore these themes within a postcolonial context?
3. Evaluate Yasmine Gooneratne's critique of American cultural hegemony in her poem "On An Asian Poet Fallen among American Translators". How does this poem reflect broader postcolonial concerns about cultural imperialism?
4. Analyse Wole Soyinka's use of Yoruba mythology and colonial history in his play *Death and the King's Horseman*. How does Soyinka challenge Eurocentric perspectives through this work?
5. Compare and contrast the approaches to decolonisation in literature taken by Derek Walcott, Aimé Césaire and Marguerite Duras based on the discussions. How do their works reflect different aspects of the postcolonial experience?

# **M.A. English Language and Literature**

**2022-2024 Batch**

**Semester III**

**Assignment Questions**

**Discipline Specific Elective Course**

**M21EG05DE: Cultural Studies**

## **Instructions for Writing Assignments**

### **Descriptive:**

- *Clearly outline the key elements or aspects that need to be described, such as features, characteristics, or events.*
- *Employ descriptive language that can engage the senses and ensure vivid pictures, enhancing the richness of descriptions.*
- *Organise the assignment in a coherent sequence to guarantee clarity and facilitate the smooth conveyance of ideas.*
- *Minimum Pages: 7*

### **Analytical:**

- *Clearly articulate your main argument in a concise manner at the beginning of your answer. This sets the tone for your analysis and helps the reader understand the central point you are trying to convey.*
- *Support your analysis with specific examples and quotes from the literature. Use direct textual evidence to illustrate and reinforce your points.*
- *Move beyond mere summary and engage in critical analysis. Interpret the significance of the literary elements, such as themes, characters, and symbols.*
- *Minimum Pages: 7*

### **Topics**

#### **Descriptive:**

1. Compare and contrast John Berger's "Ways of Seeing" with Laura Mulvey's "Male Gaze", examining their impact on feminist visual culture studies.
2. Critically examine Judith Butler's concepts of "Heteronormativity" and its implications on understanding gender, sexuality and power.

3. How does Raymond Williams's famous phrase "culture is ordinary" challenge the traditional notion of culture as elite, refined and exceptional?
4. Analyse how modern societies exercise control and regulate over individuals and populations, using Micheal Foucault's concepts of the "Panopticon" and "Biopower".
5. Critically analyse the concept of nationalism with multiple interpretations provided by various scholars.

**Analytical:**

1. Critically examine how Giorgio Agamben's idea of "Bare Life" and "Homo Sacer" shed light on the relationship between power, sovereignty and the human body in contemporary society.
2. Investigate how John Berger, Laura Mulvey, Giuliana Bruno, Lisa Cartwright and Nicholas Mirzoeff address issues like gender, race, class and disability in visual representations.
3. How do contemporary cultural phenomena such as T. V. reality shows, social media and streaming platforms reflect or challenge the notion of the culture industry as a mechanism for ideological control and commodification of culture?
4. Analyse a media text (film, TV shows, advertisements, news articles etc.) using the following media theory concepts:
  - Representation
  - Narrative
  - Media codes
  - Agenda setting
  - Polysemy
5. Analyse Marshall McLuhan's idea that "the medium is the message" in the context of a specific medium (TV, print, social media, streaming platforms etc.).

**M.A. English Language and Literature**

**2022-July Admission**

**Semester IV**

**Assignment Questions**

**Discipline Core Course**

**M21EGo6DE**

**Women's Writing**

**Instructions for Writing Assignments**

**Descriptive:**

- *Clearly outline the key elements or aspects that need to be described, such as features, characteristics, or events.*
- *Employ descriptive language that can engage the senses and ensure vivid pictures, enhancing the richness of descriptions.*
- *Organise the assignment in a coherent sequence to guarantee clarity and facilitate the smooth conveyance of ideas.*

**Analytical:**

- *Clearly articulate your main argument in a concise manner at the beginning of your answer. This sets the tone for your analysis and helps the reader understand the central point you are trying to convey.*
- *Support your analysis with specific examples and quotes from the literature. Use direct textual evidence to illustrate and reinforce your points.*
- *Move beyond mere summary and engage in critical analysis. Interpret the significance of the literary elements, such as themes, characters, and symbols.*

**Topics:**

**Descriptive:**

1. Summarize the key features and historical development of women's writing. What were some of the challenges faced by early women writers?
2. Explain the concept of *écriture féminine* as proposed by Hélène Cixous. How does this relate to women's writing?
3. Describe the four waves of feminism. What were the main goals and characteristics of each wave?
4. Provide an overview of the plot and main characters of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*. What are the key themes explored in this novel?

5. Summarize the story and major themes of Hisaye Yamamoto's short story "Seventeen Syllables". How does it depict the Japanese-American immigrant experience?

**Analytical:**

6. Analyze how Caryl Churchill's play *Top Girls* critiques liberal feminism and explores the tensions between career success and feminist solidarity for women. Consider the significance of the dinner party scene and the relationships between characters.
7. Compare and contrast the depictions of motherhood in *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin and *Agnisakshi* by Lalithambika Antharjanam. How do these works explore the conflicts between motherhood and women's individual desires or ambitions?
8. Critically examine how Lalithambika Antharjanam's novel *Agnisakshi* portrays women's struggles against patriarchal oppression in early 20th-century Kerala society. Analyze the character development of Devaki/Sumitrananda.
9. Evaluate how Vinodini's play *Thirst* addresses the intersections of caste and gender oppression through its portrayal of Dalit women characters. Consider the symbolic significance of water access in the play.
10. Analyze the treatment of social class and women's roles in Katherine Mansfield's short story "The Doll's House". How does Mansfield use symbolism and characterization to critique class hierarchies?



**M.A. English Language and Literature**

**2022-July Admission**

**Semester IV**

**Assignment Questions**

**Discipline Core Course**

**M21EG01SE**

**Media Studies**

**Instructions for Writing Assignments**

**Descriptive:**

- *Clearly outline the key elements or aspects that need to be described, such as features, characteristics, or events.*
- *Employ descriptive language that can engage the senses and ensure vivid pictures, enhancing the richness of descriptions.*
- *Organise the assignment in a coherent sequence to guarantee clarity and facilitate the smooth conveyance of ideas.*

**Analytical:**

- *Clearly articulate your main argument in a concise manner at the beginning of your answer. This sets the tone for your analysis and helps the reader understand the central point you are trying to convey.*
- *Support your analysis with specific examples and quotes from the literature. Use direct textual evidence to illustrate and reinforce your points.*
- *Move beyond mere summary and engage in critical analysis. Interpret the significance of the literary elements, such as themes, characters, and symbols.*

**Topics:**

**Descriptive:**

1. Explain the five key elements of the communication process. Provide examples to illustrate how each element functions in real-world communication scenarios.
2. Describe the main types of news values and explain how they influence the selection and presentation of news stories. Use specific examples from current events to support your answer.

3. Outline the structure of a typical news article following the inverted pyramid model. Explain the purpose and content of each section.
4. Explain the concept of hypertextuality in media. Discuss how it has changed the way information is presented and consumed in the digital age.
5. Describe the role and functions of news agencies in the global media ecosystem. Provide examples of major international and national news agencies and explain their significance.

**Analytical:**

6. Analyze the impact of social networking sites on traditional forms of journalism. How have these platforms changed the way news is produced, distributed, and consumed? What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of this shift?
7. Compare and contrast hard news and soft news. Critically examine how the balance between these two types of news has evolved in recent years and what this shift means for public discourse and media literacy.
8. Evaluate the challenges and opportunities presented by participatory journalism. How does citizen reporting impact the quality and credibility of news? Provide examples to support your analysis.
9. Critically analyze the concept of media convergence. How has it affected the production and consumption of news content? What are its implications for media organizations and professionals?
10. Examine the ethical considerations involved in the use of anonymous sources in journalism. When is it justified to use unnamed sources, and what are the potential risks? Provide examples from notable news stories to support your arguments.