Sensorveiledning, ENG4151 Systemic-Functional Grammar

Generic guidelines
This take-home exam consists of two parts. Pass marks are required on both parts. The first part of the exam paper counts 25%; the second counts 75%. This should be reflected in the time and the number of pages dedicated to each question. The evaluation (and marking) of the candidate's performance on the exam follow the underlying principles regarding analytic skills, judgement and independent thinking, according to the general evaluation criteria specified by "Universitets- og høgskolerådet".

The exam questions reflect the aims and learning outcome of the course, namely that the students should be able to
- describe the lexical, grammatical and cohesive structures of texts
- account for the framework of systemic functional analysis
- explain how the resources of the English language are employed in different types of texts
- reflect on the relationship between the wording of a text and its communicative goals
- use the framework of systemic functional grammar to analyse and discuss a text with appropriate use of secondary sources.

The language of the examination is English; the candidate should apply the conventions of academic writing and referencing. No specific style of referencing is required, as long as it is clear and logical.
     Both the language and the content of the paper count towards the final mark.
Use of available secondary sources is recommended/required (course reading, course website, grammar books, dictionaries, etc.). This also applies to the short answers in Part I.

In **Part I** the students must choose TWO out of the four sets of terms. It is desirable that they not only define each of the terms within each set but also show their understanding by comparing them and hence showing how they are related to each other. Exemplification is essential.

The tasks in **Part II** require analysis of (at least) one of the texts provided. The candidate may also draw on other sources in the discussion to put the text analysis into perspective (but not to detract from it). It is important that candidates show that they have understood the theoretical concepts and the principles of SFG by applying the theory to the texts and selecting appropriate examples.   If the candidate draws on secondary sources outside the syllabus for these tasks, this should be rewarded, although it is not a strict requirement. The examiners will have to accept different interpretations, albeit within a scope relevant to the task. The paper should be written as a coherent text.

Specific guidelines (Autumn 2019)

Part I:

Define and discuss briefly TWO of the following sets of terms / concepts. Give references to relevant literature on the subject and illustrate with English examples.

a.   embedding vs. hypotaxis
b.   modalization vs. modulation
c.   reference vs. lexical repetition (as cohesive ties)
d.   experiential vs. modal metaphor

The questions that have been set should be answered with relevant definitions and illustrations.

a.   Both concepts could be related to clause complexing and the rank scale (rank shift). The main source is Thompson's ch. 7.
b.   Both concepts should be related to modality as a whole and to the different ways of expressing modal meanings. Main source: Thompson's ch. 4 (interpersonal metafunction) and 9 (grammatical metaphor).
c.   It would be natural that this question has a short paragraph on cohesion as a concept, distinguishing reference as grammatical and repetition as lexical. Interactions between the two might be pointed out, e.g. a chain of references to the same person, such as *Equiano, he, him, Equiano ...* in Text 1. Note that lexical repetition may include synonymy. Main sources: Thompson ch. 8, excerpt from Halliday & Matthiessen 2004.
d.   Experiential = nominalization, for the most part. Modal: expressing modal meanings by means of clauses (*I think, it is possible that...*). Experiential metaphors are typical of factual texts, modal ones of interactive texts (i.e. pragmatically vs interpersonally motivated). Main sources: Thompson ch. 9 and Halliday 1988, possibly also 1985, ch 2.

Part II:

Choose ONE of the following topics (**a**, **b** or **c**). Give references to relevant literature on the subject.

a.   Explore the process types in which Olaudah Equiano is involved in Text 1. What participant roles does he have most often in the text? How do these participant roles contribute to the characterization of him? Relate your discussion to the field of the discourse.
This task requires the student to identify all references to Olaudah Equiano, including the ones where pronouns are used to refer to him, and to analyse the process types of the clauses where such references are found – and also what participant roles he has. It is not required (nor very relevant) to analyse other parts of the text or the roles of other participants.
The field of discourse should be defined: a short biography of a former African-born slave who got his freedom and moved to Britain where he campaigned against slavery. One may note passive verbs in the passages which describe his life as a slave, and where Equiano is Goal, for example, rather than Actor. He is also Goal in active clauses with a different person as Actor, e.g. 'Pascal sold him' (line 23). In his life as a free man, he is more frequently Actor (and also has some other roles typical of acting participants).
Main sources: Thompson ch. 5 and 10, possibly Halliday 1971.

b.   Discuss how the resources of the interpersonal metafunction – mood, modality and appraisal – are used in Text 2 in order to convey the author's opinion.
Mood: the text has mainly declarative sentences, but also uses a number of rhetorical questions. There are exclamations among the quoted speech of others.
Modality: There are modal auxiliaries denoting ability (inclination) – *can* – and obligation –

must, should, need, have to. Only a couple of cases of modalizing auxiliaries: *may* (lines 52 and 55). Modalization by other means: adverbs, e.g. *clearly* (line 21), *always* (usuality, line 22). Modal metaphor, e.g.: *I'm sure* (line 31), *it's vital* (line 46).

The writer uses **appraisal** extensively – both inscribed and invoked. (Note that the terms need to be defined!). We mostly deal with negative appraisal, i.e. words with negative denotations (inscribed appraisal) and connotations (invoked).

The author voices her opinions e.g. through explicit recommendations (using modal verbs with modulation) and rhetorical questions. She also emphasizes her views by means of modal adjuncts. Cases of modalization involve high probability/usuality. The negative appraisal occurs in descriptions of the current state of affairs which needs to change. There is some positive appraisal, mainly invoked, in descriptions of the alternatives to the current situation (e.g. 'tree planting', line 44).

The main source for this task is Thompson ch. 4 and 9.

c. Give an account of circumstantial, modal and conjunctive adjuncts. Your account should include a discussion of the different functions that the three types of adjunct have in discourse. Use examples from Texts 1 and 2 for illustration. If necessary, supplement with examples of your own.

Answers to this task must include definitions of all three types of adjunct, along with remarks on the metafunction they are most closely associated with, the main meanings they convey, and relevant examples. For students who have taken ENG1100 at UiO, it might be natural to compare the SFG categories to adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts.

Functions of circumstantial adjuncts should be related to the experiential metafunction, the circumstances in which participants are involved in processes. It will be relevant to mention and exemplify some of the circumstantial meanings, particularly those that are most apparent in the texts.

Modal adjuncts should be linked to the interpersonal metafunction and need to be related to both mood and modality as well as the category of 'comment adjuncts', such as *thankfully* in Text 2, line 13.

Conjunctive adjuncts should be related to the textual metafunction and to the concept of grammatical cohesion. They may be distinguished from conjunctions with similar meanings. It is also possible to remark on the different roles of the adjuncts when they occur in the Theme of a clause.

Note that this task does not require a complete analysis of either of the texts.

Main sources: Thompson ch 4, 5, 6, 8 (and to some extent Halliday 1988)