

OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ ETAPA LOCALĂ – IANUARIE 2017
CLASA a XI-a

SECȚIUNEA B

SUBIECTUL I(25 items x1p=25 p)

I.A Read the text and choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D):

No student of a foreign language needs to be told that grammar is complex. By changing word sequences and by adding a range of auxiliary verbs and suffixes, we are able to communicate tiny variations in meaning. We can turn a statement into a question, state whether an action has taken place or is soon to take place, and perform many other word tricks to convey subtle differences in meaning. Nor is this complexity inherent to the English language. All languages, even those of so-called 'primitive' tribes have clever grammatical components. The Cherokee pronoun system, for example, can distinguish between 'you and I', 'several other people and I' and 'you, another person and I'. In English, all these meanings are summed up in the one, crude pronoun 'we'. Grammar is universal and plays a part in every language, no matter how widespread it is. So the question which has baffled many linguists is - who created grammar?

At first, it would appear that this question is impossible to answer. To find out how grammar is created, someone needs to be present at the time of a language's creation, documenting its emergence. Many historical linguists are able to trace modern complex languages back to earlier languages, but in order to answer the question of how complex languages are actually *formed*, the researcher needs to observe how languages are started *from scratch*. Amazingly, however, this is possible.

Some of the most recent languages evolved due to the Atlantic slave trade. At that time, slaves from a number of different ethnicities were forced to work together under colonizer's rule. Since they had no opportunity to learn each other's languages, they developed a *make-shift* language called a *pidgin*. Pidgins are strings of words copied from the language of the landowner. They have little in the way of grammar, and in many cases it is difficult for a listener to deduce when an event happened, and who did what to whom. **[A]** Speakers need to use circumlocution in order to make their meaning understood. **[B]** Interestingly, however, all it takes for a pidgin to become a complex language is for a group of children to be exposed to it at the time when they learn their mother tongue. **[C]** Slave children did not simply copy the strings of words uttered by their elders, they adapted their words to create a new, expressive language. **[D]** Complex grammar systems which emerge from pidgins are termed creoles, and they are invented by children.

Further evidence of this can be seen in studying sign languages for the deaf. Sign languages are not simply a series of gestures; they utilise the same grammatical machinery that is found in spoken languages. Moreover, there are many different languages used worldwide. The creation of one such language was documented quite recently in Nicaragua. Previously, all deaf people were isolated from each other, but in 1979 a new government introduced schools for the deaf. Although children were taught speech and lip reading in the classroom, in the playgrounds they began to invent their own sign system, using the gestures that they used at home. It was basically a pidgin. Each child used the signs differently, and there was no *consistent* grammar. However, children who joined the school later, when this inventive sign system was already around, developed a quite different sign

language. Although it was based on the signs of the older children, the younger children's language was more fluid and compact, and it utilised a large range of grammatical devices to clarify meaning. What is more, all the children used the signs in the same way. A new creole was born.

Some linguists believe that many of the world's most established languages were creoles at first. The English past tense –ed ending may have evolved from the verb 'do'. 'It ended' may once have been 'It end-did'. Therefore it would appear that even the most widespread languages were partly created by children. Children appear to have innate grammatical machinery in their brains, which springs to life when they are first trying to make sense of the world around them. Their minds can serve to create logical, complex structures, even when there is no grammar present for them to copy.

1 In paragraph 1, why does the writer include information about the Cherokee language?

- A To show how simple, traditional cultures can have complicated grammar structures
- B To show how English grammar differs from Cherokee grammar
- C To prove that complex grammar structures were invented by the Cherokees.
- D To demonstrate how difficult it is to learn the Cherokee language

2 What can be inferred about the slaves' pidgin language?

- A It contained complex grammar.
- B It was based on many different languages.
- C It was difficult to understand, even among slaves.
- D It was created by the land-owners.

3 All the following sentences about Nicaraguan sign language are true EXCEPT:

- A The language has been created since 1979.
- B The language is based on speech and lip reading.
- C The language incorporates signs which children used at home.
- D The language was perfected by younger children.

4 In paragraph 3, where can the following sentence be placed?

It included standardised word orders and grammatical markers that existed in neither the pidgin language, nor the language of the colonizers.

- A; B; C; D.

5 'From scratch' in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to:

- A from the very beginning
- B in simple cultures
- C by copying something else
- D by using written information

6 'Make-shift' in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to:

- A complicated and expressive
- B simple and temporary
- C extensive and diverse
- D private and personal

7 Which sentence is closest in meaning to the highlighted sentence?

Grammar is universal and plays a part in every language, no matter how widespread it is.

- A All languages, whether they are spoken by a few people or a lot of people, contain grammar.
- B Some languages include a lot of grammar, whereas other languages contain a little.
- C Languages which contain a lot of grammar are more common than languages that contain a little.
- D The grammar of all languages is the same, no matter where the languages evolved.

8 All of the following are features of the new Nicaraguan sign language EXCEPT:

- A All children used the same gestures to show meaning.
- B The meaning was clearer than the previous sign language.
- C The hand movements were smoother and smaller.
- D New gestures were created for everyday objects and activities.

9 Which idea is presented in the final paragraph?

- A English was probably once a creole.
- B The English past tense system is inaccurate.

- C Linguists have proven that English was created by children.
- D Children say English past tenses differently from adults.

10 Look at the word 'consistent' in paragraph 4. This word could best be replaced by which of the following?

- A natural
- B predictable
- C imaginable
- D uniform

11-14 Which THREE ideas best sum up the main ideas of the passage?

- A Some children are better at grammar than others.
- B Children have the mental capacity to create complex languages.
- C Children are better at learning grammar than adults.
- D Children prefer to invent their own grammar rules than to copy existing rules.
- E Children do not only learn grammar by copying other people.
- F All creole languages were perfected by children.

I.B. Read the text and answer the questions:

Before the grass has thickened on the roadside verges and leaves have started growing on the trees is a perfect time to look around and see just how dirty Britain has become. The pavements are stained with chewing gum that has been spat out and the gutters are full of discarded fast food cartons. Years ago I remember travelling abroad and being saddened by the plastic bags, discarded bottles and soiled nappies at the edge of every road. Nowadays, Britain seems to look at least as bad. What has gone wrong? The problem is that the rubbish created by our increasingly mobile lives lasts a lot longer than before. If it is not cleared up and properly thrown away, it stays in the undergrowth for years; a semi-permanent reminder of what a tatty little country we have now. Firstly, it is estimated that 10 billion plastic bags have been given to shoppers. These will take anything from 100 to 1,000 years to rot. However, it is not as if there is no solution to this. A few years ago, the Irish government introduced a tax on non-recyclable carrier bags and in three months reduced their use by 90%. When he was a minister, Michael Meacher attempted to introduce a similar arrangement in Britain. The plastics industry protested, of course. However, they need not have bothered; the idea was killed before it could draw breath, leaving supermarkets free to give away plastic bags. What is clearly necessary right now is some sort of combined initiative, both individual and collective, before it is too late. The alternative is to continue sliding downhill until we have a country that looks like a vast municipal rubbish tip. We may well be at the tipping point. Yet we know that people respond to their environment. If things around them are clean and tidy, people behave cleanly and tidily. If they are surrounded by squalor, they behave squalidly. Now, much of Britain looks pretty squalid. What will it look like in five years?

1. The writer says that it is a good time to see Britain before the trees have leaves because

- A. Britain looks perfect.
- B. you can see Britain at its dirtiest.
- C. you can see how dirty Britain is now.
- D. the grass has thickened on the verges.

2. According to the writer, things abroad used to be

- A. worse than they were in Britain
- B. similar to what they were in Britain
- C. better
- D. worse, but now things are better

3. For the writer, the problem is that

- A. rubbish is not cleared up.
- B. rubbish last longer than it used to.
- C. our society is increasingly mobile
- D. Britain is a tatty country.

4. Michael Meacher

- A. followed the Irish example with a tax on plastic bags.
- B. tried to follow the Irish example with a tax on plastic bags.
- C. made no attempt to follow the Irish example with a tax on plastic bags.
- D. had problems with the plastics industry who weren't bothered about the tax.

5. The writer thinks

- A. it is too late to do anything.
- B. we are at the tipping point.
- C. there is no alternative.
- D. we need to work together to solve the problem.

6. The writer thinks that

A.people are squalid.B.people behave according to what they see around them.C.people are clean and tidy.D.people are like a vast municipal rubbish tip.

7. According to the writer, plastic bags

A. are biodegradable B.will take from 100-1000 years to rot C will take 10 billion years to rot D.were forbidden in supermarkets

8.The writer,

A. claims that Britain will look better in the future B claims that it will look just the same C claims that it will look worse than it does; D wonders what Britain will look like

9. According to the writer, the alternative to the individual and collective initiative in working together towards changing the situation is

A. obsolete B totally unacceptable C. to continue doing the same things D debatable

10-12. Which three headlines would not be appropriate for the passage?

A. Dirty Britain B. Recycling procedures C.Britain today D Britain has become dirtier than it used to be E.Britain implements a new programme

SUBIECTUL II (50p)

Consider the text below and write a 300- word essay, suggesting solutions to two-three problems teenagers face today.

Teenagers face real problems on a daily basis during the most awkward growth stages of their lives; between 13 and 19-years-old. During this time, teens are exposed to some overwhelming external and internal struggles. Teens go through, and are expected to cope with hormonal changes, puberty, social and parental forces, work and school pressures, as well as encountering many conditions and problems. Teens feel overwhelmed when faced with unprecedented stresses concerning school and college, and career confusion situations. Those who have absentee parents are exposed to more unfavorable states of life. The issues that teenagers face today vary but these issues can be dealt with easily if parents and other guardians can understand the symptoms of their problems. Parents need to approach their children, who have been suffering from one or more teenage problems, carefully and in a friendly manner to discuss the problem(s). Many teens feel misunderstood. It is vital that their feelings and thoughts are validated and that the validation comes from their parents. (<https://www.modernghana.com/lifestyle/5465/16/the-most-common-problems-teenagers-face-today.html>).

Subiectul III (25 p)

Consider the passage below and write an article to an English-language magazine, focusing on your own worries about what future has in store for your generation (250-280 words).

Have we changed a bit? I wondered after going through last year's Google Zeitgeist. Are Selena Gomez and One Direction going to be among our top searches for images? Would Gagnam Style still make it as a top watched video?Nearing the year's end makes me think a lot. Are we getting any better at focusing on issues or becoming focused by all means? The trends will simply underline the hypothesis that habits are hard to change. Would Google autocomplete still predict the following search queries to complete the sentences starting with "You are" and bring the following recommendations of "You are my sunshine, "You are not alone" and "You are so beautiful" as top hits? (*I Wonder What the Future Has in Store for Us*)

NOTĂ

- **Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.**
- **Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.**
- **Timp de lucru: 3 ore.**