

## Didactic Scenarios 5 - April

Answer the following questions, being as specific and detailed as possible. Also exemplify wherever possible. You may want/need to refer back to the written topics.

### RULES OF CAPITALISATION

1. English capitalizes much more than Spanish, which sometimes poses problems for students, especially in basic levels, but also in intermediate and advanced ones. Comment on the major differences between English and Spanish capitalisation. (80-100 words)

### PRONUNCIATION

2. Letter <n> is not pronounced in the word *column*. Give two examples of the following silent letters: <b>, <c>, <g>, <h>, <k>, <l>, <n>, <p>, <s>, <t>, <w>.

### UNTIL

3. What type of clause is introduced by until in the following sentence: *I won't go home until I finish this project*? Why is the verb in the present simple if it refers to the future? Indicate other connectors with the same grammatical behaviour. (80-100 words).

### DUE TO

4. Is the following sentence grammatically correct? Please, explain in as much detail as possible: "We returned sooner than expected due to I had plenty of work" (80-100 words).

### SPELLING

5. Despite English having become an International Language for some time now, its two distinct spelling systems remain unaltered, namely BrE and AmE. Explain the most salient differences in spelling between American and British English (80-100 words).

## SUGGESTED ANSWERS

### Didactic Scenarios 5

1. English capitalizes much more than Spanish, which sometimes poses problems for students, especially in basic levels, but also in intermediate and advanced ones. Comment on the major differences between English and Spanish capitalisation. (80-100 words)

Spanish uses far fewer capital letters than English does. Here are the most common cases where English capitalizes that Spanish does not:

- Days of the week and months of the year: *Monday, April*.
- Nationalities and languages: *English, French, German*.
- Titles of movies, books, plays and similar words capitalize all content words, whereas Spanish only capitalizes the first word and proper nouns: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.
- The names of most religions and their adjectives: *my sister in law is Muslim; she is Catholic*.
- Ordinal numbers when used after a name: *Charles the Third*.
- Subject pronoun "I".

2. Letter <n> is not pronounced in the word *column*. Give two examples of the following silent letters: <b>, <c>, <g>, <h>, <k>, <l>, <n>, <p>, <s>, <t>, <w>, <u>.

(You would have to include two examples only per letter).

<b>: *climb, plumber, debt, subtle, dumb, lamb, limb, numb, thumb, tomb*

<c>: (the letter <c> is often silent when it is placed after an <s> (<sc>): *science, scissors, scent, scene, disciple, obscene, fascinate*.

<g>: *sign, foreign, campaign, align*

<h>: *heir, hour, honour, honest, rhyme, vehicle, ghoul, ghastly, ghost, exhaust*

<k>: *knock, knight, know, knot, knuckle, knee, knit, knife*

<l>: *talk, walk, stalk, half, behalf, folk, chalk, calf, palm, should, would, yolk, salmon*.

<n>: *autumn, column, condemn, damn, hymn, solemn*

<p>: *cupboard, receipt, psychic, corps, coup, pneumonia,*

<s>: *aisle, island, debris, viscount*

<t>: *listen, castle, Christmas, fasten, hustle, mortgage*

<w>: *answer, sword, whole, wrack, wrap, wrist, wrinkle, wreck*

<u>: *biscuit, build, circuit, disguise, guilty, guess, guest, guide, guitar, antique*

Double silent consonant (<gh>): *Bought, fought*

3. What type of clause is introduced by *until* in the following sentence: *I won't go home until I finish this project*? Why is the verb in the present simple if it refers to the future? Indicate other connectors with the same grammatical behaviour. (80-100 words).

The clause introduced by *until* is a future time clause which, although referring to future time, presents its verb in the present tense. This is a clear example of how the extralinguistic concept of *time* is independent of the grammatical category of *tense*.

Other connectors that introduce future time clauses while including the verb in the present simple are the following:

- *Before: I'll pack before I go to bed.*
- *After: I'll phone the hotel after I talk to him.*
- *When: I'll call you when I get home*
- *As soon as: As soon as I finish the report, I'll go to the bank.*

4. Is the following sentence grammatically correct? Please, explain in as much detail as possible: "We returned sooner than expected due to I had plenty of work" (80-100 words).

The sentence provided is **not** grammatically correct. *Due to* is a Prepositional Phrase (Prep P), and so it needs to be followed by a Noun Phrase (NP) or a gerund. However, in this case we have a clause (*I had plenty of work*), so a conjunction should be used instead. Things being like this, some alternatives would be:

1. *We returned sooner than expected because/as/since I had plenty of work.*
2. *We returned sooner than expected due to the amount of work/workload I had.*  
In this case, the clause would have been converted into a NP.
3. A third option would be inserting the phrase *the fact that*. It is unnecessarily wordy, as the word *because* would suffice, but it is still a possibility: *We returned sooner than expected due to the fact that I had plenty of work.*

5. Despite English having become an International Language for some time now, its two distinct spelling systems remain unaltered, namely BrE and AmE. Explain the most salient differences in spelling between American and British English.

AmE and BrE have two minor subsystems in spelling which present distinctive forms in only a small number of words:

- BrE *-our* vs. AmE *-or*, e.g. *colour/color, favourite/favorite, neighbour/neighbour*;
- BrE *-re* vs. AmE *-er*, e.g. *centre/center, theatre/theatre*
- BrE *-ise* vs. AmE *-ize*, e.g. *organise/organize*.

- In BrE <l> is doubled in verbs where the stress does not fall on the last syllable, whereas it does not double in AmE: *travelled/traveled; focussed/focused*.
- BrE words that are spelt with the double vowels <ae> or <oe> tend to be spelt with only an <e> in AmE: *leukaemia/leukemia; manoeuvre/maneuver; paediatric/pediatric*.
- Some nouns that end with <ence> in BrE are spelt <ense> in AmE: *defence/defense; licence/license; offence/offense*.
- Some nouns ending in <ogue> in BrE end with either <og> or <ogue> in AmE: *analogue/analog or analogue; catalogue/catalog or catalogue; dialogue/dialog or dialogue*.
- BrE often uses a single <l> in words formed from monosyllabic root words ending in <ll> and many of their derivatives, whereas AmE generally retains the double <ll>: BrE *enrol, enrolment, fulfil, fulfilment, instalment, wilful* vs. AmE *enroll, enrolment, fulfil, fulfilment, installment, willful*.
- BrE generally doubles the final <l> before adding *-ed, -ing, -er, -est* or *-or* in words with an unstressed final syllable. AmE generally does not: BrE *cancellation, labelled, modelling, traveller* vs. AmE *cancelation, labelled, modeling, traveler*.
- BrE retains the final silent <e> in certain words when adding suffixes, whereas AmE does not: BrE *acknowledgement, ageing, judgement, likeable, sizeable* vs. AmE *acknowledgment, aging, judgment, likable, sizable*.
- In BrE, the past forms of certain verbs may be spelled with a *-t* or *-ed*, whereas in AmE they almost exclusively end with *-ed*: BrE *burnt, dreamt, learnt* vs. AmE *burned, dreamed, learned*.
- While both *-wards* and *-ward* can be found on both sides of the Atlantic, BrE tends to favour *-wards*, while AmE tends to favour *-ward*: BrE *backwards, forwards, towards* vs. AmE *backward, forward, toward*.
- In addition to the above, several common words that do not fall into any of the above categories are also generally spelled differently in BrE and AmE. These include, among others: **BrE** *aluminium, cheque (noun), grey, jewellery, mould, per cent, plough, programme, sceptical, tyre (noun)* vs. **AmE** *aluminum, check (noun), gray, jewelry, mold, percent, plow, program, skeptical, tire*.