

| Topic, question | Lecture | Reading |
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| Definition of writing 1. Give a definition of writing. Explain on the basis of your definition why the picture shows an example of writing or not. [picture given] 2. [definition given] | first, second, third | Crystal 2010, Fischer 2008, |
| The origin of writing 3. Where and when did writing start (according to the oldest records we have)? 4. What was the main function of the early forms of writing? 5. Name some of the oldest writing systems we know of. 6. Does writing have only one origin (if yes – where?), or did it develop independently at different parts of the world (if yes – where)? 7. What is crucial for the development of writing from more general symbols? | second | Crystal 2010, Fischer 2008, Olson 2001 |
| Writing systems (basic questions) 8. Explain: pictogram / ideogram / logogram. 9. Is the following sign pictographic, ideographic or logographic? Explain. a) the sign " + " b) the sign " ☺ " 10. Name the main types of writing systems and give an example (language name) for each. 11. What writing systems are used in Europe? 12. Name three different writing systems that are used in Asia. 13. Give an example of a language that traditionally is written with a syllabic writing system. 14. Give an example of a language that is written with 2 or more different writing systems (at one point in history) and explain why. | second, third | Crystal 2010 Coulmas 1996 |
| Creation, adoption and change of writing systems 15. Most often a given language gets its writing system by adopting (and adapting) one that is already in use for other languages. But there are also cases where a writing system has been invented for a language. Give two examples. 16. Which factors determine the choice of writing system? 17. What are the reasons for starting writing in a given language (that is, using a given language in written form)? 18. What could be reasons NOT to start writing in a given language? 19. Which persons or groups of persons may play an important role in the introduction of writing and what are their motives? 20. What are possible reasons for changing a writing system or script? 21. Give an example of a language which is written in more than one writing system. What are the reasons? | third | Smalley 1994a, Smalley 1994b |
| Written vs. spoken language 22. What is more important in linguistics (that is, for the study of language in general, not for learning a specific language): written language or spoken language? How was this question answered at different periods? 23. Name arguments for the primacy of speech. 24. Give arguments for the importance of written language in linguistics. 25. What is meant by “the written language bias” in linguistics? 26. Name three characteristics that distinguish written language (written texts) from spoken language (spoken texts). 27. Why is it problematic to compare “written language” and “spoken language”? | fifth | |

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| <p>Literacy (from the point of view of "New literacy studies")</p> <p>28. Explain the basic idea of the "ecological approach to literacy" (Barton), or of the so called "New literacy studies".</p> <p>29. Give two examples of literacy practices.</p> <p>30. "People have different literacies which they make use of, associated with different domains of life." (Barton 2007) Explain with examples.</p> <p>31. Explain with an example that a literacy practice may be gendered.</p> <p>32. Show with an example that "At any point in time a person's literacies are based on the possibilities provided by their past experiences." (Barton 2007)</p> <p>33. "We have awareness, attitudes and values with respect to literacy and these attitudes and values guide our actions." (Barton 1994: 47) Explain with examples.</p> <p>34. With a given example (such as those on slide 17 of the presentation of the sixth lecture) explain what a literacy practice entails.</p> | <p>sixth, seventh</p> | <p>Barton 2007</p> |
| <p>Literacy and orality (before the "New literacy studies")</p> <p>When looking for answers to the questions in this block, you may profit from this website: http://oralityandliteracy.wordpress.com/, from the website http://newlearningonline.com/literacies/chapter-1, and from articles in Wikipedia (entries: orality, literacy, Walter Ong, and others).</p> <p>35. What is the main thesis put forward by Walter Ong concerning literacy and orality?</p> <p>36. According to Ong, oral cultures and the way people in oral cultures think are characterized by several features. Name and explain 3 of these features.</p> <p>37. According to Ong, the introduction of writing/literacy makes a change by "separating". Name and explain 3 of these "separations".</p> <p>38. What is the main thesis put forward by David Olson concerning writing and the mind?</p> <p>39. Why are Ong's (and Olson's) theses difficult to prove?</p> <p>40. Who are the Vai, and why did the psychologists Scribner and Cole devoted a large research project to this people?</p> <p>41. What are the main results of Scribner and Cole's study (a) concerning the Vai, (b) with respect to literacy in general and to Walter Ong's (and others') view on literacy?</p> | <p>fourth, seventh, eighth</p> | <p>Ong 2001 etc. Olson 2001 Scribner&Cole</p> |

Questions for those who like to think further

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| <p>Comment on these thoughts, illustrate with examples:</p> <p>42. "Writing can also lead to modern dependency on writing which often gradually supplants traditional oral culture." (Smalley 1994: 707)</p> <p>43. „In multilingual situations different literacies will often be associated with different languages or different scripts." Barton 1994: 38</p> <p>44. „With written language you can do things you cannot with spoken. It does not just amplify spoken language. It extends the functions of language, and enables you to do different things." (Barton 1994: 44)</p> |
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