

# Linguistics 001

## Mid-term Exam

October 23, 2002

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Your Penn ID No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please write your answers – in a legible way – in the printed copy of the exam. Correct answers should fit in the space provided. If you run into a problem with space because you’ve decided to cross out an answer you’ve written, you can write on the back of the sheet, indicating clearly where your answer is.

There are 29 questions. Each correct answer will be worth 4 points, up to a maximum of 100; thus there are four “extra credit” questions.

1. An article from **Language Variation and Change** entitled *Why worse is better: The double comparative in 16th- to 17th-century English* probably deals mainly with which level of linguistic analysis (choose one)?
  - (a) phonetics
  - (b) phonology
  - (c) morphology
  - (d) syntax
  - (e) semantics
  - (f) pragmatics
  
2. An article from **Computational Linguistics** entitled *Toward an Aposynthesis of Topic Continuity and Intrasentential Anaphora* probably deals mainly with which level of linguistic analysis (choose one)?
  - (a) phonetics
  - (b) phonology
  - (c) morphology
  - (d) syntax
  - (e) semantics
  - (f) pragmatics
  
3. An article from **Forensic Linguistics** entitled *The ‘telephone effect’ on formants* probably deals mainly with which level of linguistic analysis (choose one)?
  - (a) phonetics
  - (b) phonology
  - (c) morphology
  - (d) syntax
  - (e) semantics
  - (f) pragmatics

4. Draw a line connecting each topic (in the right-hand column) with the person (in the left-hand column) who made the greatest contribution to it:
- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Ferdinand de Saussure | “language games”   |
| Melville Bell         | the distinction among <i>syntax</i> , <i>semantics</i> and <i>pragmatics</i> |
| Ludwig Wittgenstein   | the grammar of Sanskrit  |
| Noam Chomsky          | phonetic transcription   |
| Paṇini                | formal language theory   |
5. Which of the following anatomical structures is normally to be found between the pharynx and the oral cavity? (choose one)
- (a) velum
  - (b) sternum
  - (c) cochlea
  - (d) larynx
  - (e) mandible
6. What is the primary function of this anatomical structure in speech production?
7. Based on a biblical story about the aftermath of a battle between the Gileadites and the Ephraimites, a term for an arbitrary linguistic marker that distinguishes one group from another is:
8. Estimates of vocabulary acquisition throughout childhood and adolescence suggest that on average we learn
- (a) about one word every ten days
  - (b) about one word a day
  - (c) about ten words a day
  - (d) about a hundred words a day
  - (e) about five hundred words a day
9. The typical number of qualitatively-different displays in a non-human animal’s communicative repertoire is said to be
- (a) about 3
  - (b) about 30
  - (c) about 300
  - (d) about 3,000
  - (e) about 30,000

10. The number of basic places of articulation specified for consonants by the IPA is
- (a) 3
  - (b) 11
  - (c) 31
  - (d) 111
  - (e) more than four billion
11. The consonants in the International Phonetic Alphabet are conventionally presented in a table where:
- (a) rows represent the dominant frequency components in their spectrum, and columns depend on the number of strokes in the letters used to write them
  - (b) rows represent the location of primary vocal tract stricture, and columns depend on the year of their discovery
  - (c) rows depend on their alphabetical order in French, the official language of the International Phonetic Association, and columns depend on their typical order in the syllable
  - (d) rows represent manner of articulation, and columns represent place of articulation
  - (e) rows represent front-back position of the tongue, and columns represent height of the tongue
12. A probable result of strong adherence to linguistic prescriptivism over several centuries within a given culture is
- (a) phoniatrics
  - (b) hyponymy
  - (c) onomatopoeia
  - (d) coprolalia
  - (e) diglossia
13. Give a morphological analysis for each of the four words below. Note that for each subset of two words, the stems share a certain part of speech, and the whole words share another one. Thus you should divide each word into a stem and an affix, and provide a lexical category for the stem and for the whole word, such that all the words in item (a) have the same stem category and the same overall category, and likewise for the words in item (b). Two examples are provided to suggest a format for the analysis. Note that neither English spelling nor pronunciation is always preserved exactly when morphemes are combined.

Examples:

aridity	arid+ity	stem is ADJECTIVE	whole word is NOUN
viciousness	vicious+ness	stem is ADJECTIVE	whole word is NOUN

(a) writer  
harassment

(b) foolish  
childlike

14. The analysis in the previous question (13) exemplifies (choose one)

- (a) connotational meaning
- (b) cliticization
- (c) infixation
- (d) inflectional morphology
- (e) derivational morphology

15. The following sentence is ambiguous:

*She put the block in the box on the table.*

Indicate the ambiguity by writing this sentence twice, in each case using a pair of matching parentheses to indicate the object (what she put), and a pair of matching square brackets to indicate the goal (i.e. where she put it). The method is illustrated on the following (unambiguous) example:

*She put (her keys) [on the kitchen counter].*

16. Based on a biblical story about the aftermath of a battle between the Gileadites and the Ephraimites, a term for an arbitrary linguistic marker that distinguishes one group from another is:

17. What are the three basic modes of sound production in the human vocal tract?

18. Give a brief explanation of the difference between the concepts of *sense* and *reference* in semantics.

19. In linguistic theory, the term *lexicon* refers to

- (a) a fold of tissue that vibrates to produce voiced speech
- (b) a figure of speech in which an attribute or commonly associated feature is used to name something
- (c) the constituent structure of the morphemes making up a word
- (d) a speaker's mental dictionary
- (e) a communicative strategy in which the emotional associations of words are used to mislead listeners

20. In the sentence

It's become an annual ritual in the Bronx, watching the Yankees *devour* one postseason opponent after another.  
the meaning of the italicized word involves

- (a) hyponymy
- (b) metonymy
- (c) sonority
- (d) diglossia
- (e) metaphor

21. Give two examples of prescriptive rules for English that form part of the established criteria for the educated written language, based on authentic patterns of usage.

22. Give two examples of prescriptive rules for English that can be argued to be artificial inventions of self-appointed language experts, with little or no basis in actual usage.

23. The word *linguistics* comes from
- (a) the Old English word for “gossip”
  - (b) the Greek word for “political debate”
  - (c) the Latin word for “tongue”
  - (d) the Sankrit word for “breath”
  - (e) the Old French word for “word”
  - (f) the Old High German word for “prayer”
24. “Semiotics” refers to
- (a) the study of historical relationships among languages
  - (b) the study of the biological foundations of conceptual categories
  - (c) the study of discourse structure
  - (d) the study of signs and signaling systems
25. A *fricative* sound involves
- (a) turbulent flow of air
  - (b) a sort of “bronx cheer” at the velum
  - (c) regular vibration in the larynx
  - (d) retroflexion of the tongue tip
  - (e) grinding the teeth
26. Name an apparent specialization for spoken language in *Homo Sapiens* that (aside from its linguistic value) is maladaptive. What is its linguistic value thought to be? Why is it otherwise a liability?
27. Which of the following is NOT a speech act?
- (a) order
  - (b) statement
  - (c) conjunction
  - (d) request
  - (e) threat

28. According to a theory due to H.P. Grice, non-literal “speaker’s meaning” often arises in conversation by logical inference from premises that include both the literal meaning of the sentence and also
- (a) the assumption that the participants are competing for the attention of spectators.
  - (b) the assumption that the participants are cooperating.
  - (c) the emotional patterns learned from childhood relationships.
  - (d) the web of associations deriving from the typical usage of the words in the message.
  - (e) the assumption that the participants know more than they are saying.
29. Language-related sex differences in human biology concern
- (a) the *corpus callosum* and the larynx.
  - (b) the striate cortex and the mobility of the tongue tip.
  - (c) the soft palate and the lips.
  - (d) the velum and the resonant cavities of the chest.
  - (e) the size of the nasal cavity in proportion to body size.