

# Linguistics 001

## Final Exam

This exam has three parts: a section of multiple choice questions, a section of short fill-in questions, and an essay. Each section counts the same towards the overall exam grade.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Your SSN \_\_\_\_\_

### Part one

Multiple choice question. Select only ONE answer for each question.

1. Two languages are considered to be related members of a “language family”
  - (a) if the majority of members of the speech communities involved are of the same biological stock.
  - (b) if they developed by normal processes of language change from a common ancestor.
  - (c) if they share at least 50% of the words in their basic vocabulary.
  - (d) if their sound systems, word order and inflectional categories are essentially the same.
2. Language-related sex differences in human biology concern
  - (a) the larynx and the lips.
  - (b) the striate cortex and the mobility of the tongue tip.
  - (c) the *corpus callosum* and the larynx.
  - (d) the velum and the resonant cavities of the chest.
3. The typical number of displays in an animal’s repertoire is said to be
  - (a) about 3
  - (b) about 30
  - (c) about 300
  - (d) about 3,000
  - (e) about 30,000
4. In a logographic writing system, the basic written units generally correspond to
  - (a) phonemes
  - (b) morphemes
  - (c) concepts
  - (d) speech acts
5. Metered verse primarily involves restrictions on which aspects of language structure?
  - (a) phonology
  - (b) morphology
  - (c) syntax
  - (d) semantics
  - (e) pragmatics

6. Arabic and Turkish are
- (a) closely related members of the Semitic language family.
  - (b) both members of the Altaic language family.
  - (c) very distantly related members of the Afro-asiatic language family.
  - (d) not related languages in any generally accepted theory.
7. If we count up all the established language families, and the language isolates not known to be related to any other language, the total is
- (a) exactly six
  - (b) about twenty
  - (c) several hundred
  - (d) several thousand
8. American Sign Language is
- (a) a system of pantomime very similar to the linguistically unstructured gestural communication of deaf people in the rest of the world.
  - (b) a way of expressing American English by the substitution of conventional gestures for spoken words.
  - (c) a system specially developed at Gallaudet college, with its own vocabulary and structure, quite unlike the systems of unstructured pantomime used by deaf communities elsewhere in the world.
  - (d) one of more than 100 sign languages used in deaf communities around the world, each with its own vocabulary and structure.
9. Egyptian hieroglyphics can best be characterized as
- (a) a phonological writing system.
  - (b) a combination of a syllabic writing system with symbols representing important religious concepts.
  - (c) a logographic writing system.
  - (d) a pictographic writing system.
  - (e) a combination of ideographic elements with symbols representing linguistic sounds.
10. Human writing systems date from
- (a) the time of the Cro-Magnon fossils, around 35,000 B.C.
  - (b) the epoch of plant and animal domestication and the invention of pottery, around 8000 B.C.
  - (c) just prior to the Bronze Age, around 3000 B.C.
  - (d) the invention of the alphabet by North Semitic peoples in Palestine and Syria about 1700 B.C.
  - (e) Panini's grammar in about 600 B.C.
11. Of the 40 languages having the most native speakers in the world today, 11 are
- (a) Indo-Aryan languages of South Asia.
  - (b) Austronesian languages of Southeast Asia and the Pacific.
  - (c) Niger-Congo languages of Africa.
  - (d) Indo-European languages originating in Europe.
12. When young children create plurals like "childs" and "sheeps," we can characterize this as a case of
- (a) assimilation.
  - (b) analogy.
  - (c) semantic shift.
  - (d) replacement.

13. The meaning “group of people responsible for directing corporate affairs” for the word *board* is an example of semantic
- (a) shift.
  - (b) extension.
  - (c) amelioration.
  - (d) replacement.
14. Which of the following sentences expresses a direct speech act using a performative verb?
- (a) I promised you to take out the garbage.
  - (b) I will nominate you for class president.
  - (c) I sentence you to pay a \$500 fine.
  - (d) Leave me alone!
  - (e) I warned you not to do that again!
15. Which of the following is NOT a felicity condition for the interpretation of “I’ll be there at five o’clock” as a threat?
- (a) I am capable of being there at five o’clock.
  - (b) I am willing to be there at five o’clock.
  - (c) You do not want me to be there at five o’clock.
  - (d) I am not already there and already planning to stay.
  - (e) I am wearing a watch and it keeps correct time.
16. An article entitled “Why *great:greatly* but not *big:bigly*?” probably belongs to the area of
- (a) phonetics.
  - (b) phonology.
  - (c) morphology.
  - (d) syntax.
  - (e) semantics.
17. An article entitled “Observations on Grammatical Variation in Sumerian Literary Texts” probably concerns the area of
- (a) theoretical linguistics.
  - (b) historical linguistics.
  - (c) psycholinguistics.
  - (d) applied linguistics.
  - (e) computational linguistics.
18. Suppose you ask a friend what he thought of the new movie in town, and he replies “Well, the costumes were authentic.” Which Gricean maxim is most important in guiding you to the inference that your friend does not have a very high opinion of the movie?
- (a) quantity
  - (b) quality
  - (c) relation
  - (d) manner

19. Consider the pair of sentences “Several people approached. They seemed happy.” What is the co-reference relation between “several people” and “they”?
- (a) synonymy
  - (b) incompatibility
  - (c) deixis
  - (d) anaphora
  - (e) cataphora
20. The change from Old Indic /mudgara/ “mallet” to Maharastri Prakrit /muggara/ is an example of
- (a) syncope.
  - (b) epenthesis.
  - (c) metathesis.
  - (d) assimilation.
  - (e) apocope.

## Part Two

Give short answers, either in the space on the exam sheet or in your blue book, for **ANY FIVE out the following six** questions. You need not answer in complete sentences, but your answers should be clear. These are not essay questions: a couple of lines giving the essential information will be better than a couple of paragraphs.

1. Explain the distinction between *difference theories* and *dominance theories* of gender-correlated language traits.
2. What is the difference between *homonymy* and *polysemy*?
3. What is a *spoonerism*? Where does the term come from?
4. Describe the typical region of damage and the typical symptoms of Broca's Aphasia. Do the same for Wernicke's Aphasia.

5. Show (briefly!) how **any two** of the phonetic characteristics Crystal cites as typical of toddler language are illustrated (or contradicted) by the following items from Debby’s speech (note: the two columns are independent lists of items recorded at the cited ages).

12 months	18 months
gae “cat”	bash “brush”
bok “block”	siti “seat”
ba “ball”	opi “open”
dak “stuck”	apu “diaper”
bu “bird”	tapa “supper”
atch “watch”	gae “glasses”
af “woof”	tut “suit”
mes “mess”	oshi “ocean”

6. Name and briefly describe the meter of the following lines by W.H. Auden:

**But I can’t**

If we should weep when clowns put on their show,  
 If we should stumble when musicians play,  
 Time will say nothing but I told you so.

There are no fortunes to be told, although,  
 Because I love you more than I can say,  
 If I could tell you I would let you know.

The winds must come from somewhere when they blow,  
 There must be reasons why the leaves decay;  
 Time will say nothing but I told you so.

Perhaps the roses really want to grow,  
 The vision seriously intends to stay;  
 If I could tell you I would let you know.

Suppose the lions all get up and go,  
 And all the brooks and soldiers run away;  
 Will Time say nothing but I told you so?  
 If I could tell you I would let you know.

## Part Three

In your blue book, write a short essay that addresses **ONE** of the topics defined below.

You will be graded on the clarity and force of your exposition, as well as on the appropriateness, correctness and relevance of the particular examples and facts that you use to illustrate or to support your general points.

Although each topic definition may contain a sequence of questions or instructions, you do not need to follow the same sequence in your essay, as long as you address all of the specified issues at some point.

If you want, you may set your discussion in a larger context, as long as the defined topic is covered clearly and the larger context is relevant to your essential point.

1. Does human language differ in any important respects from the natural communication systems of other animals? If your answer is “no,” explain how all the essential characteristics of human language can be found in other animal systems. If your answer is “yes,” explain what biological and social factors might be responsible for the differences.
2. What was Freud’s theory of slips of the tongue and pen? Does more recent work tend to confirm or refute his ideas? How do the goals of modern speech-error researchers differ from Freud’s?
3. Since ancient times, people have speculated about what would happen if children were raised without any linguistic instruction. If a viable human social unit could somehow be created without any linguistic connections at all to existing groups, what do you think its communication system would be like? If it continued to develop in isolation over several generations, what would happen? Is there any concrete evidence that bears on these questions?
4. How can concepts and results from linguistics clarify the issues in current discussions about language standards and the treatment of minority languages and cultures? In your answer, discuss at least two of the following three controversies: bilingual education for immigrant children; cochlear implants and oralism vs. manualism in education of the deaf; and the educational use of African-American Vernacular English (“Ebonics”).
5. Describe the major stages of development in child language acquisition, giving examples from at least two of the following areas: sound, syntax, vocabulary, semantics, pragmatics.
6. Why do languages change? Cite some of the competing theories, give your own opinion, and be sure to include in your answer some specific examples of how languages actually do change.

## EXTRA CREDIT

For extra credit (up to 5% of the total available for the exam), answer the sixth (fill-in) question in part 2.

For even more extra credit (up to 10% of the total available for the exam), answer a second essay question.