

NAME:DATE: 15 AUGUST 2019

LINGUISTICS 146 SAMPLE FINAL EXAM

You may use a single double-sided page of notes as a reference as you take this exam. The lab and short-answer questions should be answered in full in the space provided. At the end of the exam period, you will turn in your copy of the exam and the transcript you used, with your name printed clearly above.

If you have questions during the exam, please raise your hand. This is *not* meant to be a test of general vocabulary, so if there is a word you do not understand, please ask for a definition: I will tell you if it is a content term, and I cannot answer.

YOU WILL HAVE BETWEEN 11:00 AND 12:00 TO COMPLETE THIS EXAM.

CHILD LANGUAGE LAB

30 POINTS

Use the transcript that you have been given to answer questions 1–2, as you did in your second Child Language Data Observation Reports. Be mindful of answering each subpart thoroughly, and citing evidence from the transcript where necessary in your response.

1. Put yourself in the child's shoes.

(a) (5 points) **Select a noun in the adults' speech.** Using *only* the context provided by the transcript, what could you infer about its meaning? Indicate the line number(s) where the noun appears, and write a partial word meaning for the noun. Explain your answer.

(b) (5 points) Now, **select a verb in the adults' speech.** Using *only* the context provided by the transcript, what could you infer about its meaning? Indicate the line number(s) where the verb appears, and write a partial word meaning for the verb. Explain your answer.

(c) (5 points) Would you predict that one of these words would be more difficult to learn? Motivate your answer using concepts discussed in lecture and the readings.

2. Select a morphosyntactic error made by the child.

(a) (5 points) **Describe the error** in as much detail as the transcript supports, citing the line numbers where you get your evidence.

(b) (5 points) **Write five 'training sentences'** that would give the child the positive evidence they need to correct the error.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

(c) (5 points) **Explain why** these specific sentences would be useful models for the child to correct their error.

**SHORT ANSWER I:
SPEECH PERCEPTION & WORD-LEARNING**

20 POINTS

Select one of the essay questions below, and answer it completely on the next page. Be careful to answer **all parts** of the question, and to include **at least two citations** in your response. Indicate the question you have chosen to answer by circling it. Most questions can be answered in multiple ways.

You will not receive credit for full or partial responses to more than one question.

3. In class, we have discussed the question of domain-specificity and human uniqueness in multiple areas of language development.
 - (a) (4 points) Based on the material presented in class and in readings, do you think *speech perception* abilities (e.g., our ability to distinguish between phonemes, segment words, etc.) depend on domain-specific (to language), uniquely human structures in the mind?
 - (b) (6 points) Cite evidence for and against your position.
 - (c) (4 points) Based on the material presented in class and in readings, do you think word-learning abilities (our ability to identify . referents and map sounds to meaning) depend on domain-specific, uniquely human structures in the mind?
 - (d) (6 points) Clearly describe evidence for and against your position.
4. What makes speech perception hard?
 - (a) (4 points) Describe the so-called problem of *invariance*, and the problem of *discrimination*.
 - (b) (4 points) How do infants solve these problems?
 - (c) (4 points) Describe the “functional reorganization” model, and contrast it to the “maintenance-loss” model.
 - (d) (8 points) Describe two studies that advance our understanding of speech perception, including their motivations, methods, and results.
5. In class, we discussed Quine’s problem of radical indeterminacy (the “gavagai” problem).
 - (a) (3 points) Describe Quine’s problem.
 - (b) (12 points) Describe how different theories of word learning approach this problem, including the associative theory, the social-pragmatic theory, and the word learning constraints theory.
 - (c) (5 points) How well do these different theories do in solving Quine’s problem?
6. Children’s early vocabularies are dominated by nouns, and concrete nouns in particular.
 - (a) (5 points) Describe three possible explanations for this observation.
 - (b) (10 points) Evaluate these explanations, using evidence from lecture and the readings.
 - (c) (5 points) Describe at least one study designed to address this question, including its motivations, methods, and results.

SHORT ANSWER II: MORPHOSYNTAX & BOOTSTRAPPING

20 POINTS

Select one of the essay questions below, and answer it completely on the next page. Be careful to answer **all parts** of the question, and to include **at least two citations** in your response. Indicate the question you have chosen to answer by circling it. Most questions can be answered in multiple ways. You will not receive credit for full or partial responses to more than one question.

7. What makes some grammatical structures harder to learn?
 - (a) (4 points) Describe four properties that facilitate learning of morphology.
 - (b) (4 points) Based on the above, describe an example of a morphological structure (in English) that you would expect children to learn early in language development.
 - (c) (4 points) Describe a morphological structure that you would expect children to learn later in language development.
 - (d) (8 points) What do these properties tell you about the process of language development?
8. Is children's knowledge of syntax abstract?
 - (a) (10 points) Describe what is meant by there being "continuity" versus "discontinuity" between the child and adult grammar, including one piece of evidence for each.
 - (b) (10 points) Explain the logic behind three studies suggesting that children's grammar is abstract, and summarize their results.
9. A variety of experimental methodologies are used in the study of language development.
 - (a) (4 points) Describe the challenge posed by studying language development.
 - (b) (6 points) Clearly describe the logic of one method used with infants, including a specific result obtained using this method.
 - (c) (6 points) Clearly describe the logic of one method used with verbal children, including a specific result obtained using this method.
 - (d) (4 points) What are the benefits and limitations of these methods?
10. In class we discussed multiple "bootstrapping" theories.
 - (a) (2 points) What is meant by "bootstrapping" in the context of language development?
 - (b) (10 points) Describe two bootstrapping theories *in detail*.
 - (c) (4 points) What is the child trying to learn in these theories?
 - (d) (4 points) What claims do they make about what is innate?

Thanks for a great summer!

(& I'm looking forward to reading your final projects.)