

Psych150/ Ling155

Spring 2015

Review Questions: Introduction & Representation

(1) Terms/concepts to know: phonology, lexicon, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, contrastive, phoneme, morpheme, phonotactic constraints, onset, rime, nucleus, coda, Maximum Onset Principle, minimal pair, place of articulation, manner of articulation, voicing, diphthong, allophones, complementary distribution, linguistic environment, lexical gap, compounding, derivational, inflectional, affix, prefix, suffix, infix, grammar, syntax, compositionality, grammatical category, recursion, embedded sentence, embedded NP, complementizer, dependency, gap, object-relative clause, subject-relative clause, long-distance dependency

(2) Does every language have a finite or infinite number of phonemes? What about morphemes? What about sentences?

(3) Do phonemes have to be combined only in certain ways to make morphemes? What about combining morphemes to make words? What about combining words to make sentences? Give an example to support your answer in each case.

(4) Do all languages combine linguistic units together the same way? (Hint: Do they all follow the same rules?)

(5) Given the syllables below, transcribed into IPA, identify how it would be spelled in English (assuming each syllable is a single word). Ex: /on/ = “own”. In addition, identify the onset and rime for each syllable, and divide the rime into its nucleus and coda. Ex: /on/: onset = nothing, rime = /on/, nucleus = /o/, coda = /n/.

(a) /ænt/

(b) /bɑg/

(c) /skwɪʃ/

(d) /mɪnt/

(e) /plez/

(f) /stɪɛtʃ/

(6) Why does it help to have knowledge of a language’s phonotactic constraints when listening to a stream of fluent speech? (Hint: Are there often pauses between words?)

(7) Given the minimal pairs below from a language, which sounds could you conclude are definitely phonemes in this language?

mæn, mɪn

mæn, mæd

mæn, bæn

skwɪʃ, skwɪs

skwɪʃ, skvɪʃ

skwɪʃ, sklɪʃ

(8) Do we always pronounce a phoneme the same way in every word it appears? Why or why not?

(9) What is one way to tell that two sounds are allophones of the same phoneme in a language?

(10) Is there cross-linguistic variation in how words match up with meanings? How do you know? (Hint: Are there words for certain meanings in some languages but not others?)

(11) How do we know that the relationship between any particular word (like “cat”) and its meaning is arbitrary? (Hint: Do all languages use the same word form for that meaning?)

(12) How do we know that the smallest unit of meaning can be smaller than an entire word? (Hint: Think about affixes.)

(13) Is there variation in how much inflectional morphology languages use? How do you know?

(14) How do we know that syntax is not completely determined by meaning? (Hint: Can you think of some sentences that seem to be reasonable meaning-wise but just can't be said that way?)

(15) Why is it more efficient to describe syntactic rules (and phrases) in terms of grammatical categories instead of individual words?

(16) What category of word is each instance of *glub* below? You should be able to observe the word's context (that is, how the word is behaving in combination with other words) in order to determine what kind of word it is (ex: adjective, noun, verb, adverb, preposition, etc.). Briefly explain what about the word's context indicated what category it was.

- (a) Wow, that's the *glubest* thing to do!
- (b) Aren't you *glubbing* that yet?
- (c) Where's the *glub*?
- (d) Wasn't it *glub* the table a second ago?

(17) Why is it useful for syntactic knowledge to be generative?

(18) What does it mean for structure to be hierarchical? Give one example of hierarchy in structure and briefly explain what makes it hierarchical.

(19) Indicate whether each of the following contain object-relative clauses, subject-relative clauses, or neither:

- (a) The girl that solved the Labyrinth had a grand celebration afterwards.
- (b) The celebration that the girl had went long into the night.
- (c) The girl thought that maybe it went on a bit too long.
- (d) Fortunately, no one seemed to mind that the celebration was very loud.
- (e) The king that the girl defeated didn't get to join in the celebration.
- (f) This made him a touch ornery, though he appreciated that villains don't often get to celebrate at the end of stories.
- (g) He really hated that he was a villain in the story, but supposed that the girl who had defeated him would forget about it all anyway.
- (h) Villains that win in stories aren't very popular, he realized.

(20) What makes something a long-distance dependency? (Hint: Think about whether words appear in between the word and the gap it's related to.)