Psych56L/ Ling51
Fall 2008
Review Questions: Introduction to Language Acquisition

(1) Terms/concepts to know: phonology, lexicon, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, vocabulary spurt, prescriptive grammar, descriptive grammar, Language Acquisition Device (LAD), domain-general knowledge, domain-specific knowledge, Universal Grammar, empiricism, nativism, statistical learning, generativist, constructionist, social interactionist, connectionist, MLU

(2) Which grammar – descriptive or prescriptive - do linguists generally care about? What are some examples of prescriptive rules? What are some examples of descriptive rules?

(3) What are some practical applications to studying how normal children acquire their native language?

(4) Why is language learning thought to be about more than simply fulfilling the urge to communicate?

(5) Why are researchers interested in studying the communication systems of deaf children of hearing parents? What kind of information does this yield?

(6) What is the constructionist view on language acquisition? Is it incompatible with the nativist view? Why or why not?

(7) Would proponents of the social interactionist view find autistic children who have very good language problematic? Why or why not?

(8) Why is it important to do language acquisition research across different cultures?

(9) Why is computational modeling ia useful research method? Describe how computational modeling generally works. What does it usually test?