

Answer all questions in English and in essay form.

1. Explain the following terms with appropriate examples. (30 points)

syncretism
incorporation
subjectification
nominalization
grammaticalization

2. Read the description below for a classic psycholinguistic experiment and answer the questions that follow:

A group of Americans and Japanese speakers listened to a series of synthesized sounds that varied in small, physically equal steps from /ra/ to /la/ in 13 steps. Participants were asked to judge whether each sound was same or different from its preceding sound. Despite the equivalent acoustic step size, American listeners did not hear a difference until stimulus 7 on the continuum. In contrast, Japanese listeners did not hear any change in the stimuli at all.

- What is the term used in the literature to refer to this phenomenon? (4 points)
 - Based on these findings, speculate the possible outcomes for this experiment. Finnish and Estonian speakers listened to three synthesized sounds that are equivalent for their first formant, but differ in their second formant (1530Hz, 1250Hz and 850Hz). The first and the last sounds are prototypical phonemes in both Finnish and Estonian, but the second sound is a meaningful phoneme in Estonian only. Participants were asked to discriminate each sound against the other two. Predict Finnish and Estonian speakers' performance and provide reasons for your predictions. (6 points)
 - This cognitive tendency has been shown to develop quite early in human life. Briefly describe this part of human language acquisition and discuss possible mechanisms underlying such development. (10 points)
 - How does this cognitive tendency affect human language processing? Organize your answer from the perspectives of child language acquisition and adult language processing. (10 points)
3. Consider the following examples. Discuss the extent to which the suffix *-er* exhibits affixal polysemy and how it is linked to the argument structure of the noun/verb base. (20 points)

見背面

villager, freighter, walker, eater, printer, pager, hearer, fryer, sinker

4. Ambiguity is a central feature of language at many processing levels. At the level of words, a single spelling or pronunciation is oftentimes associated with multiple meaning senses. At the level of sentence, one sentence can be interpreted with different structures.

- a. For example, in the sentence 'The ticket agent admitted the mistake might not have been caught', the underlined phrase is temporarily ambiguous (before the rest of the sentence 'might not have been caught' continues to unfold). Explain how the underlined part is ambiguous by listing its possible syntactic roles. (6 points)
- b. How people comprehend linguistic input with ambiguity is thus a central interest in psycholinguistic research. Broadly speaking, two classes of comprehension theories have been developed. Modular two-stage theories argue that comprehension is done by first interpreting the sentence with the simplest syntactic structure. The alternative structure is only considered when the initial simplest syntactic analysis is erroneous. In contrast, the second type of comprehension models hold that syntactic as well as non-syntactic (e.g., lexical, frequency, pragmatic) factors contribute to comprehension simultaneously. Use the following made-up data to discuss **whether** and **why** these two types of theories would predict different comprehension processes for the sentence 'The ticket agent admitted the mistake might not have been caught'. (14 points)
- (i) The verb 'admitted' is more likely to be followed by a clause (75%) than by a direct object (10%).
 - (ii) The noun 'mistake' is more likely to be used as a direct object (60%) than a subject of a clause (20%).