18.1 Language structure, perception and acquisition: evidence and transfer

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 8 marks**

KEY WORDS morpheme • syntax

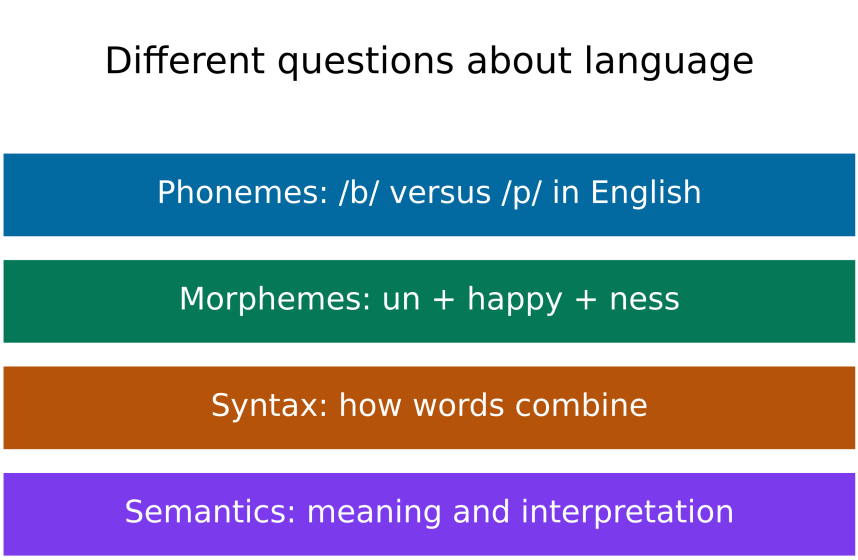
Objective

Order the units of language from phoneme to sentence; Explain speech perception and reading processes; Compare bilingual and second-language evidence. Original practice and authored marking guidance.

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

morpheme : The smallest meaning-bearing unit of language. **syntax** : The rules governing how words combine into phrases and sentences.

Phonemes distinguish sound categories; morphemes carry meaning. Syntax concerns organization of words; semantics concerns meaning; pragmatics concerns use in context. A grammatical sentence can be unusual in meaning. Children's rule-based errors can show productive generalization rather than exact copying. Both learning opportunities and biological constraints matter; a single error cannot decide every language-acquisition theory.



Worked case. A child says walked correctly and then says goed. What does the second form suggest about learning, and what would be an overclaim?

Goed applies a productive past-tense pattern to an irregular verb, consistent with overregularization. The child is doing more than repeating every form exactly. This does not prove that input or reinforcement never matters or that one complete theory has been established. Examine patterns across forms and development.

2 Practice

2.1 The word unhappiness contains how many morphemes? [1]

A. one B. two C. three D. five E. eleven

2.2 A sound acoustically intermediate between /b/ and /p/ is reported as clearly one or the other. This illustrates: [1]

A. sensory adaptation B. categorical perception C. the phonological loop D. bottom-up feature detection E. spontaneous recovery

2.3 Revisit the worked case. State one conclusion its evidence supports and one stronger conclusion it does not support. Explain the difference. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Explain how a message can have correct syntax but be misunderstood because of context, using an original example. Give the interpretation, supporting reasoning, a relevant alternative or limitation, and an appropriate check. [4]