# Chapter 2

*Describing Language*

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which type of language scientist is most interested in linguistic or cultural context?
   A) sociolinguist
   B) speech-language pathologist
   C) linguist
   D) behavioral psychologist

2. Which of the following theories of language development is the newest?
   A) semantic/cognitive
   B) sociolinguistic
   C) emergentism
   D) behaviorist

3. According to the sociolinguistic model, the motivation for language use and acquisition is
   A) direct reinforcement.
   B) effective communication.
   C) fear of punishment.
   D) the semantic rules.

4. All of the following are stages of early communicative functions, EXCEPT
   A) extralocutionary.
   B) illocutionary.
   C) perlocutionary.
   D) locutionary.

5. Off-line test tasks can tell us
   A) what children know.
   B) how children process language.
   C) how children access language.
   D) both B and C

6. In general, preschool children will perform better during language testing/sampling with
   A) a peer.

B) the researcher.

C) their classroom teacher.

D) both B and C

7. A language sample should fulfill the twin requirements of

A) truthfulness and faithfulness.

B) structure and experimentation.

C) naturalness and representativeness.

D) being theoretical and analytical.

8. A representative sample

A) contains the child's typical language performance.

B) requires a very restricted context.

C) can be best obtained in one situation rather than several.

D) is best obtained in a test situation.

E) none of the above

9. Cross-language studies attempt to investigate

A) universality.

B) acquisitional principles.

C) linguistic specificity.

D) relative difficulty.

E) all of the above

10. Numerical scores, such as MLU are

A) inadequate for describing language development in detail.

B) the main method for diagnosing a language disorder.

C) the most valuable measure of language performance.

D) none of the above.

11. Norms for MLU

A) are the same for each language.

B) are different for each language.

C) change from year to year.

D) are different for boys and girls.

12. Determining whether a child has mastered a language feature

A) is very difficult.

B) depends on whether he has been explicitly taught.

C) can be determined based on one language sample.

D) can be determined with certainty through standardized tests.

13. Psycholinguists are interested in the psychological processes and constructs underlying language.
    A) Psycholinguists
    B) Psychologists
    C) Speech scientists
    D) Speech-language pathologists

14. _____ stated that the semantic-syntactic relations apparent in children's early language correspond closely to categories of infant and toddler sensory-motor cognition.
    A) Skinner's *Verbal Behavior*
    B) Semantic Revolution
    C) The generative approach
    D) none of the above

15. Children use which of the following general cognitive processes to understand the communicative significance of utterances and create more abstract dimensions?
    A) intention-reading
    B) pattern-finding
    C) A and B
    D) none of the above

16. Which of the following are considerations that influence data collection?
    A) method
    B) population and language sample size and variability
    C) naturalness and representativeness
    D) all of the above

17. It may be appropriate to follow a few children for a period of time, called a *longitudinal study,* but inappropriate to administer a one-time-only test to the same limited number of children.
    A) observational
    B) treatment
    C) longitudinal
    D) none of the above

18. Grouping children by age and matching them in studies may be inappropriate.
    A) is the best method to conduct a study of language development
    B) may be inappropriate
    C) is not possible
    D) none of the above

19. Ways of collecting data include:
    A) diary accounts
    B) checklists
    C) parental reports

D) all of the above

20. Cross-language studies are usually designed to investigate:
    A) universality
    B) linguistic specificity
    C) relative difficulty
    D) acquisitional principles
    E) all of the above

## *True/False*

1. The language that young children hear is regular and grammatical.

2. An assumption of the semantic approach is that content or meaning precede language form.

3. In the emergentist theory, outcomes may arise that are not obvious or predictable based on input.

4. Emergentists believe that the LAD is innate.

5. Language data are usually collected in two ways: structured testing and experimental manipulation.

6. It is simple to collect and analyze a child's language.

7. If a preschool child answers incorrectly, it is a good indication that the child doesn't have adequate comprehension or knowledge.

8. A language sample should always contain at least 100 utterances.

9. The sample population should reflect the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic characteristics of the overall target population.

10. The most thorough, efficient, and accurate method for collecting data is written transcription.

## *Short Answer*

1. In early two-word utterances, meaning is signaled by _____-_____.

2. Cognitive precursors to language develop in the _____ year of life.

3. The unit of language that includes the form, content, and use of an utterance is the _____ _____.

4. Two routines that seem to be particularly important for early communication are _____ _____ and _____ _____.

5. The type of memory children use to hold information for a short time while the brain processes information is known as _____ _____.

6. In language research, the _____ and researcher's _____ _____ will influence the type of data-collection procedure used.

7. Formal elicitation tasks tend to produce _____ _____ child language than conversational sampling.

8. Theoretically, the most representative language sample for an older child should be elicited in _____ with _____ as a conversational partner.

9. A parent's adapted way of speaking to a child is termed _____.

10. _____ _____ attempt to measure operations at various points during processing and describe individual and integrative components.

### *Essay*

1. Discuss the limitations of each of the theoretical positions presented and explain the ways in which each subsequent theory attempted to address these limitations.

2. A behavioral notion of language development can be considered weak because it is dependent upon the inadequate language modeling of the adults within the infant's environment. Yet, it is these very adults that the sociolinguistic model credits with early language development. What happened to our knowledge of caregiver behavior in the intervening thirty years?

3. Explain the limitations inherent in each of the methods of collecting child language data.

4. Describe a study question that would be most appropriately answered using spontaneous conversational language sampling. Explain why. Then describe a study question that would be most appropriately answered using structured testing. Explain why.

5. Explain the observer's paradox and provide specific examples of how it would affect data collection. What are some ways to lessen the impact of this principle?