



English 232: Psycholinguistics  
Spring 2003-2004  
Prof. R. Diab

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**FINAL EXAM (Time: 2 hours)**

**I. DEFINITIONS**

Provide an appropriate (and brief) definition for TEN of the following expressions:  
(30 points)

1. Critical Age Hypothesis
2. Assimilation
3. Canonical babbling
4. Bilingualism
5. The logical problem of language acquisition
6. "Bootstrapping"
7. Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
8. Holophrastic stage of language acquisition
9. Code-switching
10. Reduction
11. Affective Filter
12. Information Processing Model

**II. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

Answer TWO of the three following questions: (20 points each)

1. Describe children's utterances during the "pre-linguistic" stage, from birth until around six months. In addition, discuss the importance of paralinguistic signs (e.g. facial expressions, gestures...etc.) in children's early attempts to communicate (in both pre-linguistic and linguistic stages). How do parents/adults interpret children's early utterances? What information is necessary in order to make reasonable interpretations? Can the same utterance by the same child have different meanings in different contexts? Explain, illustrating with examples.
2. What is "baby talk"? Identify the major phonological, syntactic, and semantic features of baby talk, discuss cross-cultural variations of baby talk and any research evidence supporting or refuting the importance of baby talk, and provide your own opinion regarding the necessity or importance of baby talk for children's language development.
3. In class, we have analyzed representative language data samples of children at different stages of language development. Based on those analyses, describe the following:
  - The development of children's morphology and syntax from around two years of age until around four, illustrating with examples.
  - The major semantic and pragmatic features of children's language around four and five years of age, illustrating with examples.

### **III. LONG ANSWER QUESTION**

**Several theories have attempted to explain first language acquisition. Among these are the Innateness Hypothesis, in addition to the Behaviorist-linked imitation theory, the reinforcement theory, and the view that children learn by analogy. First, explain the main position held by each of the two major theoretical perspectives (Behaviorist and Nativist). Secondly, critique these theories: Which seem(s) to account well for how we acquire our native language? Which seem(s) limited in scope, and why? What does research evidence indicate? Finally, provide your own opinion: Which theoretical perspective seems most convincing to you, and why? (30 points)**

GOOD LUCK!!! ☺