SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS
(ENG508)

MCQs and Important points
Lesson 1 to 10

INTRODUCTION TO SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS   (LESSON 1)

1. According to _____ , semantics is the part of linguistics that is concerned with the study of meaning.

Chapman	Frawley	Moore	Chomsky	b

2. _____ is the study of how languages organize and express meanings (Kreidler, 1998).

Lexical semantics	Compositional semantics	Linguistic semantics	Generative semantics	c

3. Pragmatics is the study of _____ as communicated by the speaker and interpreted by the listener".

words	meaning	phrase	sentence	b

4. According to Yule (2010), 'Pragmatics is the study of _____ meaning.

visible	literal	contectualized	invisible	d

5. _____ includes background knowledge context i.e. people know about each other and the world

pragmatics	semantics	morphology	phonetics	a

6. The relationship between the linguistic form and _____ function is of central interest in "Pragmatics".

declarative	quantitative	complex	communicative	d

7. _____ semantics deals with word meaning

composotional	lexical	general	linguistic	b

8. _____ semantics deals with the way the meanings of lexical items combine to give phrase and sentence meaning

lexical	general	compositional	linguistic	c

9. According to _____ (2011), Semantics is concerned with sentences and Pragmatics is concerned with utterances.

Surrey	Moore	Chapman	Chomsky	c

10. _____ is concerned with ways in which ideas relate to each other, can be combined

together and can be used to derive other ideas with confidence.

| Thought | logic | communication | form | b |

11. Logicians tend not to talk about _____

| realities | concrete | meaning | ideas | d |

12. The basic unit of traditional logic is the '_____; a significant term in the discussions of meanings in linguistics.

| logic | proposition | word | none | b |

13. Propositions are the meanings that are expressed by _____ sentences; can be the contents of thoughts.

| communicative | quantitative | A&b | declarative | d |

14. _____ holds that the meaning of a whole is made up by combining together, by 'adding', the meaning of its parts.

| logic | predicate | isolation | Compositionality | d |

15. The meaning of a proposition is composed of the meaning of subject plus meaning of the _____.

| predicate | object | verb | b&c | a |

16. _____ are interested in cases where what the speaker intends to convey is different from the words one chooses literally mean.

| Semantists | phonecian | pragmatists | phonologist | c |

17. What the speaker intends to convey is _____.

| explicit | implicit | logic | composition | b |

18. The implicit meaning conveys a lot _____ than what is literally expressed; and

| less | more | too less | equal or more | b |

19. _____ meaning underdetermines the meaning conveyed.

| invisible | logical | verbal | literal | d |

SEMANTICS AND LINGUISTICS

1. Semantics is a ------ term used to refer to the study of meanings.

non technical	technical	semi technical	social	b

2. The meaning covers a variety of aspects of the language but unfortunately, there is no general consideration to describe it (_____, 1997).

Saeed	Moore	Palmer	Bhutto :)	c

3. Modern linguistics includes various meditations regarding the knowledge of linguistics, i.e. how to pronounce the words, construct sentences and meanings (_____, 2004).

Saeed,	Palmer	Chomsky	Moore	a

4. Semantics has an association with the other fields of studies i.e._____, as they also investigate the creation and transmission of the meanings (Saeed, 2004).

soiology	psychology	philosophy	philosophy and psychology	d

5. One thing to keep in mind is that an _____ meaning is not a part of the general study of semantics.

Single	individual's	word	sentence	b

6. According to Palmer (1997), almost all the linguists, overtly or covertly, admit that in a linguistic model, semantics is on one end and phonetics on the other, while _____ is at somewhere in the middle.

semantics	phonetics	grammar	pragmaics	c

7. _____, in particular, has commented on the creativity of the sentence formation.

Moore	Chomsky	Saeed	Palmer	b

8. It is one of the _____ grammar's most important insights that relatively a small number of combination rules allow the speakers to use a finite set of words to create a very large and infinite number of sentences.

generative	transitional	general	a&b	a

9. To allow this, the rules for sentence formation must be _____, allowing the repetitive embedding or coordination of syntactic categories (Saeed, 2004).

fixed	bound	recursive	repulsive	c

10. According to _____ (1997), the term 'semantics was first used to refer to the development and change of meaning'.

Moore	Chomsky	Saeed	Palmer	d

11. 'arrive' originates in Latin '_____ - 'movement that ends at the banks of a river'.

arreare	arripare'	arripoor	river	b

12. Girl' originally referred to 'children in general' and was later restricted to 'female children' only, said by_____.

Krifka	Saeed	Palmer	Surrey	a

13. Money' is related to Latin '_____ (warn) because money was made in the temple of the goddess Juno Moneta (Rome).

mono	moneo'	mony	mani	b

14. Some changes arise from new needs – e.g. 'car' was an _____ word for 'chariot', until the motor-car was invented.

Latin	African	new	obsolete	d

15. One powerful source for meaning change is _____ (Palmer, 1997)

limitation	free will	need	taboo	d

16. The study of the origin and uses of particular words is called _____.

phonology	dermatology	etymology	graphology	c

17. _____ includes observations about previous meanings of a word or its precursors.

semantics	pragmatics	phonetics	etymology	d

18. _____ dictionaries attempt to quote at least the most recent origin of each word.

local	etymological	Pure	English	b

19. Semantics has not been the only concern of linguists; _____have also shown their interest in this subject.

philosophers	anthropologists	psychologists	all	d

20. Some philosophers have suggested that many philosophical problems may be solved by

the study of _____ language.

specific	ordinary	cultural	ancient	b

21. The problems of the nature of 'good' and 'evil', of right and wrong, are in _____ philosophy.

Linguistic	literal	social	moral	d

22. _____ logic is also concerned with semantics as some of its proposals range from simple syllogism to highly complex logical syntax.

Generative	Traditional	Simple	all	b

23. Logic makes use of concepts found in _____ language ('and', 'or', etc.).

specific	ancient	ordinary	cultural	c

24. _____ are also concerned with language as an essential part of the cultural and behavioral patterns of the people - a linguist should not ignore this.

sociologist	Anthropologists	philologist	philosopher	b

25. The relation between Psychology and Linguistics has given rise to _____.

Psycholinguistics	Sociolinguistic	pragmatics	semantics	a

26. _____, wrote book, *Sign, Language and Behavior published in 1946*.

Palmer	Saeed	Charles Morris	Surrey	c

27. It is believed that human language differs in kind _____ than a degree from other languages (Palmer, 1997).

less	more	equal	-	b

28. Scholars (e.g. Ferdinand de Saussure, 1974) are of the view that linguistics is a part of the general study of the use of the sign system, which is called _____.

semantics	pragmatics	Semiotics	syntax	c

29. _____ have probed the relationship that may be between the sign and the object it represents or in Saussure's terminology, between signifier and its signified (Saeed, 2004).

Phoenician	Semioticians	phonologist	pragmatists	b

30. _____ is any material thing that signifies, e.g., words on a page, a facial expression, an image.

Signified	Signifier	Indexical	-	b

31. _____ is a concept that a signifier refers to

Signified	signifier	Iconic	Indexical	a

32. Together, the signifier and the signified make up a _____.

picture	Iconic	Indexical	meaning	d

33. ____ is the smallest unit of meaning. Anything that can be used to communicate

sign	word	sound	alphabet	a

34. _____ signs are the signs where the signifier resembles the signified.

Indexical	Iconic	visible	literal	b

35. Similarity between a sign and what it represents. e.g., between a _____ and its real-life subject.

word	name	picture	sound	c

36. _____ Signs are the signs where the signifier is caused by the signified.

generative	Iconic	Indexical	literal	c

IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT SEMANTICS

1. "**Reference** has to do with the relationship which holds between an expression and what that expression stands for on particular occasions of its utterance" (Lyons, 1977).

2. According to Saeed (2004), **Reference** is "relationship by which language looks onto the world

3. Reference can be concluded as the meanings of a word in any language which exist in the **real** world.

4. Allan describes that "**Sense** is a de-contextualized meaning, abstracted from innumerable occurrences in texts".

5. **Sense** relates to the complex system of relationships between the linguistic elements themselves (mostly the words).

6. According to Saeed (2009), the "semantic links between elements within the **vocabulary** system is an aspect of their sense".

7. It can be concluded that "sense" exists in the **word** and this is a word to word relation.

8. According to Haung (2014), **proposition** is a declarative sentence, when uttered to make a statement, that is, to say something true or false, about some state of affairs in the external world.

9. The word **proposition** has come from philosophy and is the lowest level of language.

10. **Propositions** are words that exist in the lexicon and have a meaning.

11. A **sentence** is a group of abstract grammatical elements obtained from utterances.

12. The sentence is some higher level of language, it may have many **propositions**.

13. When a proposition is combined with grammar, it becomes a **sentence**.

14. We can say that a sentence is a complete expression while **proposition** is partial.

15. According to Leach (1981), "**Utterance** is a natural unit of speech bounded in articulation".

16. **Utterance** is always written in inverted commas to indicate that what is put between them is taken from a specific context on a specific occasion of use.

17. According to Saeed (2003), **Literal Meanings** - told by a dictionary of that language are called conventional meanings.

18. These **meanings** are a description of the word to which it refers to in the real world.

19. **Non-Literal** Meanings are Instances where the speaker deliberately describes something in untrue or impossible terms in order to achieve special effects. For instance, "I could eat a horse" or "my stomach is screaming for food".

20. Non-Literal Meanings are also traditionally called **figurative** and are described by a host of rhetorical terms including metaphor, irony, metonymy, etc." (Saeed, 2003, p.17).

21. These are associated meaning of the words - **symbolic meaning**.

22. There are **three** different schools of thoughts on the distinction between semantics and pragmatics.

23. One group of linguists says that only three fields of linguistics are pure linguistics i.e. **semantics, morphology, and syntax.**

24. By concluding this, we can say that Semantics is concerned with sentence meaning - meaning in language and Pragmatics is concerned with the speaker's meaning - meaning in **social context**.

THEORIES OF MEANING

1) Sometimes, we need to see meaning within the framework of an academic or scientific discipline; called **compositional** meanings.

2) The meaning of a word/phrase/ sentence depends on its **relationship with other words**, e.g. part of what makes up the meaning of 'tall' is that it is opposed to the meaning of 'short'.

3) **Holist theory** tends to be functional in the sense that it is some aspect of the uses of a piece of language which makes for its meaning. If you call something 'tall', you should be willing to call it 'not short'.

4) If meanings are not words, our next guess might be that meanings are something in the **mind: concepts, thoughts or ideas**.

5) **Holist theory** explains the patterns in how languages express meaning in terms of the nature of concepts – ultimately, the way the brain is structured.

6) There are some challenges faced by the Idea Theory to come up with a sound **psychological theory of what concepts or ideas are**. Secondly, it needs to provide a concept for every meaningful piece of language (Portner, 2005, p. 5)

7) There are certain philosophical views/theories which lead us to think that 'meanings are **out in the world'**.

8) Some theorists believe that meanings are **social** practices.

9) Reference as a theory of meaning, the simplest theory of meaning is to claim that **semantics** is a reference (Saeed, 2004).

10) To give the meaning of a word one shows what it **denotes**.

11) Proper names denote **individuals**, whereas, common nouns denote **sets of individuals**. 'Reference' picks out elements in the real world.

12) The **knowledge of meaning** involves (at least) the knowledge of conditions under which it is true or false

13) In Truth Conditions theory, the meaning of a sentence is called a **proposition**. The proposition expressed by a sentence amounts simply to its truth-conditions – a set of possible worlds.

14) **Truth Conditions** help us explain logical words (and, or, not) and semantic relations.

15) The meaning of **imperatives may be seen as 'satisfactory' or 'unsatisfactory'** instead of 'true' or 'false' (Portner, 2005, p. 12- 24).

16) Language is **creative** – we constantly hear new phrases and sentences never heard before.

17) **Semantic theory** has to provide an account of the knowledge of meaning which language users have and which allows for their ability to quickly and easily understand novel pieces of language (Portner, 2005, p. 34).

18) **Compositional Theory** says that the meaning of a piece of language is based solely on the meaning of its parts, and the way they are put together.

KINDS OF MEANING

1) **Linguistic meaning** is called 'denotative', 'logical' or 'cognitive' meaning.

2) Any piece of language is structured simultaneously on more than one level – at least **three** levels are necessary for linguistic competence.

3) For the **analysis of any sentence**, we need to establish a phonological representation, a syntactic representation, and a semantic representation.

4) Conceptual meaning is an **inextricable** part of what language is (Leech, 1981: 11-12)

5) To a large extent, the notion of 'reference' **overlaps** with conceptual meaning (Leech, 1981: 12).

6) **Connotative** meanings include not only physical characteristics but also psychological and social properties (sociability, maternal instinct).

7) Connotative meanings are concerned with the **real-world** experiences, one associate with the expressions one uses or hears.

8) The boundary between the conceptual and connotative meaning is based on the distinction between '**language' and the 'real world'**.

9) Connotative meanings are **peripheral**.

10) Connotative meanings are relatively **unstable** as it varies according to culture, historical periods and experience of the individual.

11) Connotative meanings, compared with conceptual meanings, are indeterminate and **open-ended** that may belong to any characteristics of the referent, real or imaginary.

12) **Social meanings** are those which a piece of language conveys about the social circumstances of its use.

13) Social meanings tell us about the **geographical or social** background of the speaker.

14) The usage of language by the society which determines its meaning based on multiple individual and social factors – e.g. social class of users, the degree of formality, etc. **Domicile (Very Formal), Residence (Formal), Abode (Poetic), Home (General)**.

15) **Affective meanings** reflect personal feelings of the speaker including the attitude to the listener or to the content of the talk (Leech, 1981).

16) Affective meanings are often **explicitly** conveyed through the conceptual or the connotative content of the words used.

17) Social norms of politeness may vary from **society to society**. Other factors (e.g. intonation, tone of voice) may also be crucial in the making of these meanings.

18) Affective meanings are largely a **parasitic** category in a way.

19) **Reflected** meanings are the meanings when we associate one sense of expression with another.

20) The case where the reflected meanings intrude through the sheer strength of emotive suggestion is most strikingly illustrated by words which have a **taboo** meaning. (Leech, 1981: 16)

21) **Collocative** meanings consist of the associations a word acquires on account of the meaning of words which tend to occur in its environment, e.g. 'pretty' and 'handsome' share the similar ground in the meaning, 'good-looking' but may be distinguished by the range of nouns with which they co-occur or collocate.

22) The collocative meaning may simply be an **idiosyncratic** property of individual words.

23) Sentences with similar conceptual meanings may have different communicative values based on **their contexts of organization**.

24) What is communicated by the way in which a speaker or the writer organizes the message, in terms of **the order, focus, and emphasis** (Leech, 1981).

25) **Thematic meaning** is mainly a matter of choice between alternative grammatical constructions.

26) In other cases, thematic meanings may be **stress and intonation** rather than grammatical construction that highlights the information in one part of a sentence.

MEANING, THOUGHT AND REALITY

1) **Noun** is the relationship between the image and the real world entity would be then one of resemblance.

2) **Sense** is variation in images that different speakers might have depending on their experience

3) **Concept** might be able to contain the non-visual features, e.g. a definition of triangle, may include a 'three-sided polygon, classifiable by its angles or sides'.

4) The experiments show that prototype theory involves a psycholinguistic notion that aids human categorization. **Prototypes** provide some insight into the way we conceive of certain ideas/objects.

5) Sapir (1949) proposed that the particular language we speak conditions our **conceptualization**.

6) Similarly, Whorf (1956) strengthened the idea of the link between language and thought into the notion he called **linguistic relativity**.

7) **Linguistic relativity's** basic premise is that the way we think about the world is determined by our culture and linguistic background.

8) The **cognitive science** (the interdisciplinary study of intelligence), rejected the idea of linguistic relativity.

9) Artists and scientists also claim that their creativity sometimes derives from ideas which are **non-linguistic images**.

1) The branch of semantics that deals with word meanings is called **lexical semantics** (Yule, 1994).

2) **Lexical relations** are relationships of the meanings of the words to other words (Bolinger, 1968:11).

3) **Lexical relations** are central to the way speakers and hearers construct meaning.

4) The lexical relation is used to indicate any **paradigmatic** relation among words.

5) Lexical relation is not just a semantic relation; so, it includes phonetic relations such as **rhyme and alliteration, morphological relations**.

6) "A **word is a minimum free form**… for the purposes of ordinary life; the word is the smallest unit of the speech" (Bloomfield, 1984: 178).

7) **Words** are independent entities that are being able to occur in isolation.

8) Contextual effects seem to pull word meanings in two opposite directions. First, restricting influence is the tendency for words to occur together repeatedly, called "**Collocation**".

9) The contextual effects can pull word meanings towards creativity and semantic shift.

10) **Homonyms** are unrelated senses of the same phonological words.

11) Different types of homonyms can be distinguished by their **syntactic** behaviors and spellings,

12) **Polysemy** is identified using the criteria of "relatedness"; when the senses are judged to be related under the same lexical entry,

13) However, there is a distinction made in lexicology between homonymy and polysemy; **both deal with multiple senses of the same phonological words**.

14) Synonymy is the notion of **sameness** of meaning.

15) According to Saeed (2014), synonyms are different phonological words which have the **same or very similar meanings**

16) Two words are synonymous: if the substitution of one for the other **does not change** the truth value of a sentence.

17) Synonyms are almost never truly **substitutable**.

18) Antonyms are words which are **opposite** in meaning.

19) **Simple Antonyms** - the negative of one implies the positive of the other - complementary pairs or binary pairs.

20) **Gradable Antonyms** - this is a relationship between opposites where the positive of one term does not necessarily imply the negative of the other.

21) **Taxonomy Sisters -antonym** sometimes describe words which are at the same level in taxonomy. Taxonomies are classification systems e.g. the color adjectives in English (i.e. red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown).

22) **Reverse**s - shows reverse relation in between terms describing movements, where one term describes movement in one direction, and the other the same movement in the opposite direction, e.g. push/pull, come/go, up/down, in/out, right/left.

23) **Converses** - describe a relation between two entities from alternate viewpoints, e.g. own/belong to, above/ below, employer/ employee.

Lexical Relations II

1) **Hyponymy** is a relation of inclusion. It includes the meaning of a more general word. E.g. dog and cat are hyponyms of 'animal', sister and mother are hyponyms of 'woman'.

2) The more general term is called **superordinate**. Much of the vocabulary is linked by such systems of inclusion, and the resulting semantic networks form the hierarchical taxonomies.

3) When the meaning of one form is included in the meaning of another, the relationship is described as **hyponymy**.

4) The concept of "**inclusion**" involved in this relationship is the idea that if an object is a rose, then it is necessarily a flower, so the meaning of the flower is included in the meaning of rose.

5) **Meronym** is a term used to describe a part-whole relationship between lexical items, e.g. we can identify this relationship by using sentence frames like X is part of Y or Y has X, as 'in a page is part of a book, or a book has pages'.

6) Meronyms vary in **three** ways

7) Meronymy differs from hyponymy in **transitivity**.

8) Hyponymy is **always transitive** but meronymy may or may not be.

9) Transitive: **nail as a meronym of finger** and finger of the hand.

10) Non-transitive: **hole is a meronym of button** and button of shirt, but hole is not a meronym of shirt (A shirt has holes!).

11) **Causative verbs** identify a relationship between an adjective describing a state and a verb describing a beginning or change of state (inchoative). For example, 'wide' as in 'the road is wide' and 'widen' as in 'the road widened'.

12) The verb which describes this change of state is known as a **causative verb**, e.g. 'widen' as in 'the City Council widened the road'.

13) **Agentive nouns** have the meaning 'the entity who/which performs the action of the verb'.

14) Berlin and Kay (1969) investigated that languages vary in the number and range of their **basic color terms**. To them, there are various ways of describing colors, including comparison to objects, languages have some lexemes which are basic in the following sense:

15) English has **eleven** – white, black, red, green, yellow, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange, and grey – color terms in its system.

Lexical Semantics: Fields and Collocations

1) **Paradigmatic relations** hold between concepts belonging to the same grammatical category.

2) A **paradigm** is a set of linguistic or other units that can be substituted for each other in the same position within a sequence or structure.

3) Linguistics often refers to the paradigmatic dimension of language as the '**vertical axis**' of selection.

4) **Syntagmatic** relations hold between two or more words co-present in a sequence.

5) Combinations based on sequential relations are called **syntagms**.

6) Syntagm is a linguistic term designating any **combination of units which are arranged in a significant sequence.**

7) A sentence is a **syntagm of words**.

8) A meaning of a word is **dependent partly on its relation** to other words in the same conceptual area.

9) The kinds of semantic fields vary from **culture to culture**. Anthropologists use them to study belief systems and reasoning across cultural groups.

10) According to Brinton (2000), a semantic field denotes a **segment of reality** symbolized by a set of related words.

11) The words in a semantic field share a **common semantic property**.

12) Most often, **fields** are defined by subject matter, such as body parts, landforms, diseases, colors, foods, or kinship relations (Brinton, 2000).

13) The words in a particular semantic field are "**incompatible**" (Palmer, 1996).

14) A creature **cannot be denoted both as a lion and an elephant** at the same time.

15) Words in a semantic field are **not synonymous**, but are all used to talk about the same general phenomenon.

16) The words anger, happiness, and sadness are not synonymous, but they are a part of the semantic field called "**emotional state**".

17) A **collocation** is either a highly frequent co-occurrence of two or more words or a combination of words which represents a fully grammatical structure, e.g. a noun phrase (Sinclair 2003: 173).

18) Firth argued that "you shall know a word by the company it keeps" (1957: 11).

19) **Collocation is a familiar grouping of words**, especially words that habitually appear together and thereby convey meaning by association.

20) **Collocations also define a sequence of words** or terms that co-occur more often than would be expected by chance. e.g., Strong tea is a correct expression and Powerful tea is considered as the wrong expression.

21) **Idioms are expressions** whose meaning cannot be inferred from the meaning of its parts.

22) Usually, **Idioms** are translated with **semantically** and not necessarily lexically equivalents in the target language.

23) Majority of idioms are **homophonous**, such as 'by and large' or 'far and away' (Cruse, 1986: 37).

24) They are grammatically well-formed and semantically transparent expressions. We **cannot replace its parts** with other semantically or syntactically equivalent lexemes.

25) An idiom is a **rigid word combination to which no generalities apply**; neither can its meaning be determined from the meaning of its parts; nor can it participate in the usual word-order variations. Idioms involve collocation of a special kind, for instance, 'kick the bucket', fly off the handle' and 'red herring'.