

# PRACTICE EXERCISES

## SEMANTICS

### I. Reference, referent and referring expressions.

**1. Which of the following could possibly be used as variable, constant reference, same referent, referring expressions?**

Mary, his brother, and, the Prime Minister, the man standing overthere, for, a girl, so, my parents, in, give, under, send, teacher, student, computer, the General Secretary of the Party and the President of the country, John is standing alone in the corner and the person in the corner, the Prime Minister of Britain and the Leader of the Conservative Party, Abraham Lincoln, this hen, the little dog with the floppy years, her sister, below.

**2. Pick out all the referring expressions in the following passage.**

Many people have read about the adventures of Sherlock Holmes, the brilliant amateur detective and his friend Dr Watson. They both “lived” in Baker street in London from where they solved some of the most daring and dastardly crimes and saved the world from evil Moriarty.

**3. What is intended by the word *mean*, *means*, *meant* and *meaning*, etc. in the following sentences, reference (R) or sense (S)?**

1/ Tom, what do you mean by proximity?

2/ Are to ring up and to telephone identical in meaning?

3/ Whenever my mother mentions the black sheep of the family, she means me.

4/ Find out the meaning of stagnant in your dictionary.

5/ Could you tell me what giant means?

6/ Look at the man sitting at the end of the table and you’ll know whom I mean.

7/ Library in English does not mean the same thing as librairie in French.

8/ When Helen mentioned “the fruit cake”, she meant that rock-hard object in the middle of the table.

- 9/ When Robert talks about “his former friend”, he means me.  
10/ Daddy, what does unique mean?  
11/ Purchase has the same meaning as buy.  
12/ Look up the meaning of apoplexy in your dictionary.  
13/ If you look out of the window now, you’ll see who I mean.

## II. Deixis and definiteness

### 1. Which of the following words are deictic?

- 1/ town    2/ him    3/ here    4/ they    5/ yesterday  
6/ Monday    7/ you    8/ I    9/ now    10/ play  
11/ them    12/ place    13/ today    14/ then    15/ Hue

### 2. Pick out all the deictic words in the following sentences.

- 1/ Let’s try our best to keep this city as safe as possible.  
2/ You have to go back to bed. I’ll phone the school and tell them that you won’t be coming in today.  
3/ I suppose I had better buy myself that thick coat I look at last week.  
4/ You haven’t bought me a Valentine’s Day present in years. What’s the special occasion this year?  
5/ I’ll meet you here tomorrow.  
6/ Why didn’t you come to Berlin with me yesterday?  
7/ They are lions in Africa.

### 3. Is there anything wrong with the following sentences in terms of definiteness?

- 1/ Do you still remember when we studied at a university?  
2/ Hi, do come into a building!  
3/ A: I gave the man some advice because he asked for it.  
   B: Whom do you mean?  
4/ Please don’t smoke in a room. It’s mine.  
5/ A man sitting in the corner is my uncle.

**4. In which of the following sentences does the definite article *the* signal definiteness?**

- 1/ The bee turns nectar into honey.
- 2/ We fed the pegeon in the park.
- 3/ The little boy playingwith the ball in the living room is my nephew.
- 4/ The cinema near my house is very modern.
- 5/ The girl in pink is my sister's daughter.
- 6/ The average American family eats at McDonald's twicw a week.
- 7/ The professor who taught me French is a Vietnamese.
8. The dog is a faithful animal.
9. The young like eating out at weekends.
10. The lady in the corner is my dearest aunt.

**III. Disambiguate the following ambiguous sentences by giving two paraphrases.**

1. Visiting relatives can be boring.
2. The child looked at the dog with one eye.
3. The woman on the horse hit the boy with a stick.
4. They gave presents to poor boys and girls.
5. He fed her cat food.
6. My father is looking for a match.
7. We admired the English history teacher.
9. He greeted the girl with a smile.
10. He turned over the field.
11. The sick pet was taken to a small animal hospital.
12. She felt worried about her son more than her husband.
13. My friend and I are getting married this summer.
14. They shot the servant of the actress who was on the balcony.
15. They left the car in the garage.
16. He carefully washed the stones he had found in the river.
17. He doesn't like Spanish teachers at this school.

18. Students hate annoying teachers
19. We saw a boy with a book that had no jacket.
20. What a big trunk!
21. The suit is very important to him.
22. Overtaking cars on the main road can be dangerous.
23. The bill is large.
24. He strips the bark and leaves.
25. Look at the beautiful girl's dress.
26. Because of the cold, she had to put on a warm coat.
27. What John disliked was being ignored by everyone.
28. Mary thinks the present is nice.
29. We need more experienced drivers to drive the buses.
30. They can fish.
31. It takes a good ruler to draw a straight line.
32. They are moving sidewalks.
33. The burglar watched the millionaire walk upstairs through the keyhole of the mansion door.
34. We found the boy revolting.
35. The drunken visitor rolled up the carpet.
36. We are waiting for her by the bank.
37. The dog barked at the cat in the park.
38. Bill gave Ben a punch.

**IV. Which of the following is an EQUATIVE sentence?**

1. Mr. Pham Minh Chinh is the current Prime Minister of Vietnam.
2. The girl over there is my daughter's roommate.
3. John is the person in the corner.
4. Henry the Eighth is the current President of the USA. (\*)

5. Hue is not a large city in Vietnam.
6. The largest city in Vietnam is HCM City.
7. HCM City is the largest city in Vietnam.
8. Mr. Bao is our teacher of Grammar and Semantics.
9. Jack is an idiot.
10. Fred is the person sitting next to my father.
11. Cologne is not the largest city in Germany.
12. Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam.
13. John is a liar.
14. George Bush was the President of the USA.
15. Taylor Swift is my favorite singer.
16. The lady John is talking to is my supervisor.
17. My uncle is holidaying in Italy.
18. Hanoi is a big city.
19. My father is the person at the corner.
20. *Gone with the wind* is my favorite film.
- 21.

**V. Which of the following is a GENERIC sentence?**

1. The whale is a mammal.
2. The whale over there is a mammal.
3. Gentlemen prefer blondes.
4. Jasper is a twit.
5. The male of the species guards the eggs.
6. A wasp makes its nest in a hole in a tree.
7. A wasp just stung me on the neck.
8. The dog is a faithful animal.
9. The rose is the queen of all flowers.

10. *Blackpink* is my daughter's favorite band.
11. Wellington is the capital of New Zealand.
12. The boy standing in front of the school gate is my supervisor's son.

## **VI. Comparison between Sentences and Utterances**

Decide which of the following is either sentence (S) or utterance (U)

1. Hundreds of houses were destroyed by the storm.
2. "Hundreds of houses were destroyed by the storm."
3. Who broke the glass? John.
4. "Hello"
5. Semantics studies the meaning of language.
6. "The train now arriving at platform one is the S1 from Hanoi."
7. "Not much"
8. "Help"
9. The drunken man rolled the carpet.
10. Sincerity may frighten the boy.
11. "Who is there?"
12. "Mine"
13. "It's mine"
14. "Where shall I .....?"
15. I would like a cup of coffee.
16. "Coffee, please"
17. In the kitchen.
18. Please put it in the kitchen.
19. "When did the Second World War break out?"
20. "In 1939."
21. "It broke out in 1935"
22. "Not at all"

23. "Bye"
24. "Pflaxstm"
25. "Well done!"
26. "So-so"

**VII. 1. a. Indicate the **predicators (P)** and **arguments (A)** in the following sentences:**

- 1/ Sally married a Swedish man.
- 2/ John is looking for a car.
- 3/ A man with a gun killed Bob.
- 4/ Every evening at sunset a swan flew over the house.
- 5/ John is my best friend.
- 6/ He is a very polite man.
- 7/ The battleship is sinking.
- 8/ The gift is precious.
- 9/ A man was in here looking for you last night.
- 10/ This engine has the power of forty buses.
- 11/ The children are running.
- 12/ Tom kicked the ball.
- 13/ Mary is reading a novel.
- 14/ That man is a stranger.
- 15/ Jane brought her favorite dish to the party.
- 16/ Tom is a coward
- 17/ The fly is on the wall.
- 18/ Mary gave her niece a beautiful dress.
- 19/ David bought his spouse a golden ring.
- 20/ Michael has recently published a novel.
- 21/ *Roar* is their favorite song.
- 22/ The librarian arranged the books on the shelf.
- 23/ Jane read a bed-time story to her little son.
- 24/ The letter is under the pillow.

25/ This novel is interesting.

**b. Identify the participant roles of each of the underlined noun phrases in the following sentences.**

1/ The President was sent a letter bomb from the terrorists.

2/ Alice saw her favorite film at the Odeon.

3/ Jenny gave the old man some food.

4/ The fire burned the building.

5/ Ben kicked the ball with his left foot.

6/ The cat chased the rat.

7/ Allen opened the trunk with a screwdriver.

8. Andrea has booked two tickets for her parents to see the film.

9/ The kids heard a loud noise in the kitchen.

10/ The vandals burned the factory with fire.

11/ Andrea bought her sister a new sweater.

12/ Jane sharpened the pencil with a pencil-sharpener.

13/ This song was composed by my close friend.

14/ We smelled the delicate fragrance of roses in the garden.

15/ Lucy was given a doll by her aunt.

**2. Decide each of the following sentences is Analytic (A), Synthetic (S) or Contradictory (C).**

1. The food looks tasteless.

2. Dogs are vegetarians.

3. Cats enjoy swimming.

4. John is Doctor Smith's son.

5. The manager sacked Ann, who went on working in her office for three more years.

6. Some cats can live longer than elephants.

7. My watch is slow.

8. Dogs eat vegetables.



9. It's not cold here in winter.
10. John is simultaneously a father and a mother.
11. Cows, humans and whales are all mammals.
12. Queens are rich.
13. Mammals produce live young.
14. That boy is a pig.
15. Queens are mothers.
16. China is China.
17. China is the most populous country in the world.
18. China is a large country.
19. The Chinese live in many parts of the world.
20. She wore a colorless pink dress.
21. The eagle is the strongest bird.
22. That is a volunteer teacher from Australia.
23. This is not my book.
24. Either John is here or John is not here.
25. The corpse is alive.
26. John is older than himself.
27. Mussolini was an Italian.
28. All brothers are male siblings.
29. Doctors are rich.
30. A man is a butterfly.
31. The hexagon is six-sided.
32. All misers waste money.
33. New Orleans is the largest city in Louisiana.
34. Kings are fathers.
35. Every female dog is a bitch.
36. She was Mary's younger sister. She was born three years earlier than Mary.

37. Oil is one form of liquid.
38. Spinsters are unmarried women.
39. It may rain heavily in summer.
40. Their car suddenly broke down. That was why they came to the meeting on time
41. All reptiles creep.
42. That lady is a man.
43. All cows are cattle.
44. Tulips are yellow.
45. Alice's supervisor comes from Australia.
46. Vietnamese children love cartoon.
47. My sister loves cats.
48. Students are afraid of exams.
49. Women like perfume and shopping.
50. My parents are my eldest brother's kids.
51. Daisy's puppy is so lovely.
52. Mai's ten-year-old son is a boy
53. Sam's wife is an English literature.
54. Young children are afraid of spider.
55. Our aunt is going to study abroad.
56. Michael was the former director of the company.
57. My brother is jealous of me because I am the only child.
58. Children tend to spend a great deal of time playing computer games.
59. All cats are vegetables.
60. Venice is a beautiful city.
61. My friend's daughter is studying abroad.
62. All spinsters are unmarried.
63. All cats like fish.
64. My family has travelled around New Zealand.

65. A clock is a device for showing time.
66. Americans often watch TV after dinner.

**VIII. State the relationship between the following pairs of sentences:  
Paraphrase (Pa), Entailment (E), Contradictory (C).**

1. My suit is navy. / My suit is blue.
2. I gave the money to the sales clerk. /  
The sales clerk received the money from me.
3. Mary is a spinster. / John is Mary's husband.
4. Ann has a dozen of picture books. / Mike has no picture books.
5. My boss has been sick for many years. / My boss is in bad/good health now.
6. Their grandparents died many years ago. / They are still living with their parents.
7. That shop is Mr. Smith's. / Mr. Smith is the owner of that shop.
8. There is a population increase in big cities. /  
Most of people don't like to live in big cities.
9. She never eats meat. / She's a vegetarian.
10. A tornado hit the city. / There was no damage at all.
11. John stared at the ceiling. / John looked at the ceiling.
12. She never drinks soft drinks. / She doesn't like lemonade.
13. Students detest linguistic subjects. / Students are not fond of linguistic subjects.
14. Mary owns three canaries. / Mary owns a canary.
15. Mr. Bond still smokes. / Mr. Bond used to smoke.
16. Rebecca arrived at home after Robert. /  
Robert arrived at home later than Rebecca.
17. She drank liquor. / She had strong alcoholic drinks.
18. The train departs at 12:25. / The train arrives at 12:25.

19. John is married to Rose. / John is Rose's husband.
20. The knife is too dull (to cut the rope). /  
The knife isn't sharp enough (to cut the rope).
21. We hid our valuables in the attic. /  
It was in the attic that we concealed our valuables.
22. Dad lent me a little money. / I borrowed a little money from Dad.
23. Jackie is a sailor. / Jackie is a seaman.
24. Herbert left the party before Jean. / Jean left the party after Herbert.
25. Oil paintings are more expensive than watercolors. /  
Watercolors cost more than oil paintings.
26. Rebecca arrived at home earlier than Robert. / Robert got home before Rebecca.
27. The Carlson hotel is more than a century old. /  
The Carlson hotel has operated for more than a century.
28. We ate lunch in the kitchen. / We ate in the kitchen.
29. The ladder is too short (to reach the ceiling). /  
The ladder isn't long enough (to reach the ceiling).
30. These paintings appeal to everyone. / No one is attracted by these paintings.
31. John concealed his secret from his family. /  
John revealed his secret to his family.
32. Mary is more intelligent than Jill. / Jill isn't as intelligent as Mary.
33. The President was assassinated. / The President is dead.
34. The party will commence after he departs. /  
The party is going to begin after he leaves.
35. Ian has a sister. / Ian has a female sibling.
36. Sally lives in Ohio. / Sally lives in the U.S.
37. Mary's husband is living. / Mary is a widow.
38. No student is over 20 years of age. / No student is over 25 years of age.
39. Ian owns a Ford Focus. / Ian owns a car.

40. My brother married a doctor. /

My male sibling joined in wedlock with a physician.

41. Ellen is envious of James. / James is the envy of Ellen.

42. Allan lives in Toronto. / Allan lives in Canada.

43. Take the elevator to the first floor. / Take the lift to the ground floor.

44. My brother is easy to please. / It is easy to please my brother.

45. John gave the book to David. / David received the book from John.

46. Lee kissed Kim passionately. / Kim was kissed by Lee.

47. Everybody knows that he is one of the greatest artists of our time. /

That he is one of the greatest artists of our time is widely known.

48. It is necessary that you be aware of these difficulties. /

You should be aware of these difficulties.

49. Getting angry with those rude people is quite normal. /

It is quite normal to get angry with those rude people.

50. Don't make light of those small projects. /

Those small projects should receive less attention.

51. Visitors usually frequent state department stores. /

Department stores run by the state are usually frequented by visitors.

52. Beautiful landscapes always appeal to me. /

I am always attracted by beautiful landscapes.

53. It is hard to please our grandparents.

Our grandparents are hard to please.