



Engl 230
Fall 2003-2004
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Monday, January 19, 2004

Final Exam

Remember to pace yourself. Good luck!

Part I Provide a definition for 3 of the 5 following terms. (12 pts)

1. Linguistic variable
2. Positive politeness
3. Sex-biased language
4. Cooperative principle
5. Terms of address

Part II True or False (10pts)

1. Tags (or tag questions) are linguistic devices that women always use to stress solidarity.
2. The change in T/V usage over time reflects a tendency for solidarity to replace power in personal relationships.
3. Advertisements for drugs that often make claims like "contains the most effective ingredient" or "contains the ingredient that doctors recommend most" violate Grice's Manner maxim.
4. A major problem encountered in relating linguistic variation to social variation is finding quantifiable factors in society, with 'social class' presenting the most complicated case for quantification.
5. Politeness, as defined by Brown and Levinson, is a universal that results from people's face needs. Positive politeness addresses positive face concerns and negative politeness addresses negative face concerns.
6. A shift in T/V usage may indicate a change in the social relationship that exists between the speaker and the hearer.
7. Implicatures are inferences drawn from what people say on the assumption that they are obeying the cooperative principle. The speaker of an utterance is committed to the truth of these implicatures.
8. Most studies of regional language variation and internal language change are based on the assumption that the main factors involved in such variation are time and space.
9. Brown and Levinson's theory of Politeness is based on the assumption that face wants are to be understood in individualistic terms and that people are rational beings, whose behavior is determined by the satisfaction of mutual face wants. This theory does not apply in societies where doing the right thing socially is more important than personal face requirements.
10. 'I know that John is away' entails 'I believe that John is away'.

Part III Answer *two* of the following three questions. (28 pts)

1. Studies of the use of address terms have led researchers to conclude that solidarity is more important than power in personal relationships. What arguments can you provide *for* and *against* such a conclusion? What role do address terms play in relating language to society?
2. How does the following excerpt from Tannen's *You Just Don't Understand* (1990, pp. 212-213) (1) illustrate the *cross-cultural* differences between men and women in conversation and (2) reflect the relative power of men and women in society?

Zoe is talking to a recently divorced man named Earl whom her sister has fixed her up with. Earl asks, "What's your favorite joke?" This is what happens next:

"Uh, my favorite joke is probably- O.K., all right. This guy goes into a doctor's office, and-

"I think I know this one," interrupted Earl, eagerly. He wanted to tell it himself. "A guy goes into a doctor's office, and the doctor tells him he's got some good news and some bad news- that one, right?"

"I'm not sure," said Zoe. "This might be a different version."

"So, the guy says, 'Give me the bad news first,' and the doctor says, 'O.K. You've got three weeks to live.' And the guy cries, 'Three weeks to live! Doctor, what is the good news?' And the doctor says, 'Did you see that secretary out front? I finally fucked her.'"

Zoe frowned.

"That's not the one you were thinking of?"

"No." There was accusation in her voice. "Mine was different."

"Oh," said Earl. He looked away and then back again.

"What kind of history do you teach?"

3. We often infer that two propositions are related to each other even when that relationship is not explicitly stated. In the following pairs of sentences, for example, we are likely to infer some relationship between the two propositions even though none is explicitly stated.
 - (a) I stopped at the bank on the way home from work. I withdrew \$200.
 - (b) I left because I wanted to. If I hadn't wanted to, I wouldn't have left.
 - (c) I went into the kitchen. The cookies burned.

After identifying the possible relationship between the propositions in the above sentence pairs, use the Gricean maxims to account for the inferred relationships. Which Gricean maxims are violated? Which ones are obeyed? How do inferences arise?