



Final Exam

Good luck!

Part I Provide a definition for THREE of the following terms. Your definition should also include a statement linking the term in question to a broader issue within Sociolinguistics. Provide examples where appropriate. (12 pts)

1. Linguistic variable
2. Observer's paradox
3. Sex-biased language
4. Cooperative Principle
5. Adjacency pair

Part II True or False. (Don't provide ANY justifications for your answers) (10 pts)

1. Tags (or tag questions) are linguistic devices that women always use to stress solidarity.
2. 'I order to you to resume breathing' is a felicitous performative utterance.
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. An isogloss is a geographical area characterized by a particular linguistic feature.
6. r-pronunciation was found to be an important linguistic variable in the study of regional dialects of the North Eastern United States.
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 not 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. Bundles of isoglosses define dialect boundaries.
10. 'I know that John is away' entails 'I believe that John is away'.

Part III Answer ONE of the following two questions below. (26pts)

1. 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? (3) Can you give an alternative explanation which does not rely on essential differences between men and women?



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?"

2. Based on what you know of how regional and social influences affect the way we speak, explain why it is inappropriate to talk about linguistic forms (i.e. accents, pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence structure, etc.) in terms of being 'good' or 'bad'.