

S1 Exam in Linguistics

Activity one: Select the appropriate answer(s) (15 pts)

1/ In variationist sociolinguistics, establishing systematic relationships between linguistic variants and social factors primarily demonstrates: 1.5 pts

- a. Causality
- b. Age-graded variation
- c. Prescriptive norms
- d. **None of the above. Correct answer: Correlation**

2/ Labov's critique of Chomsky's focus on competence is built on the assertion that: 1.5 pt

- a. Language variation and change can only be studied from a prescriptive standpoint
- b. **Language variability is structured and socially embedded**
- c. Sociolinguistic analysis should focus exclusively on idealized forms of language
- d. a & b

3/ There is a general consensus among sociolinguists that sees that *identity* is, by its very nature,.. 1.5 pt

- a. a fixed set of sociocultural categories such as social class and age
- b. one core of the self that is independent from its broader social milieu
- c. unchangeable and determined by purely biological and genetic factors.
- d. **socially constructed, malleable, multilayered, and changeable**

4/ Which research approach focuses on exposing the ways in which socio-politically dominant groups capitalize on language to exercise and maintain power imbalances in society? 1.5 pt

- a. Linguistic anthropology
- b. Ethnography of communication
- c. **Critical discourse analysis**
- d. Dialect geography

5/ How does the concept of a 'dialect continuum' challenge traditional notions of language characterization? 1.5 pt

- a. It advocates the idea that all dialects are variations of a single language.
- b. It proves that dialects are always mutually intelligible.
- c. **It shows that language boundaries are often arbitrary and influenced by sociopolitical parameters.**
- d. All of the above

6/ which of the following accurately contrasts 'style' with 'register' ? 1.5 pts

- a. **style refers to different levels of formality, whilst register is a set of language items associated with discrete occupational or social groups**
- b. contrary to styles, the use of registers tends to be spearheaded by ethnic groups and marginalized indigenous communities
- c. differences in styles and registers have to do with different contexts of use.
- d. b & c

7/ Which of the following statements accurately reflects the nature of relationship between standard and non-standard varieties? 1.5 pts

- a. standard varieties are inherently superior due to linguistic complexity and richness
- b. the superiority of standard varieties is attributed to purely linguistic factors and has no social implications.
- c. standard and non-standard varieties are emblematic of prestige, power, and social dominance
- d. **non-standard varieties are viewed as aberrations of the norms and socially stigmatized.**

8/ Which hypothesis regarding the origins of AAVE suggests that early African Americans retained some features of their brought-along African languages while adapting to the local English dialects? 1.5 pts

- a. Anglicist hypothesis
- b. Neo-Anglicist hypothesis
- c. Creole hypothesis
- d. Divergence hypothesis

9/ According to Bucholtz (1999), what is a significant limitation of the traditional speech community concept in the context of language and gender studies? 1.5 pts

- a. It advocates a narrow focus on individual linguistic variations rather than group dynamics.
- b. It inherently excludes nonverbal communication as a factor in understanding group identities.
- c. It focuses on identity as a set of fixed and stable sociodemographic categories
- d. **It focuses on consensus as the organizing principle of community**

10/ what does recent sociolinguistic research suggest about the primary factor influencing how language varieties are evaluated? 1.5 pts

- a. The morpho-syntactic complexity of the variety itself.
- b. The geographical distribution of the language variety.
- c. **The social status and prestige ascribed to the social groups speaking that variety**
- d. None of the above

Activity Two: Read the following short sentences/dialogues and identify key grammatical features of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Write the name of each feature in the table below. (5 pts)

Sentences/dialogues	AAVE features	AAVE feature name
a. ain't no brothers on the wall?	ain't / Don't...no	Double/multiple negation
b. Don't call me no bum.	1 pt	marker
c. Jade don't come here no more, all right?		1 pt
She φ in the same grade	...Φ...	Zero copula
	0.5 pts	0.5 pts
The news be showing it too much. Me and my mom be praying in Spanish	..be...	Habitual be
	0.5 pts	0.5 pts
Everybody knew the Cowboys was gonna win again. Otherwise, she don't know Brenda..	...she don't	Verbal -s marking
	0.5 pts	0.5 pts

P.S. All examples are taken from *Language and Ethnicity* (Fought, 2006) and *African American English: A Linguistic Introduction* (Green, 2002)