

**Level:** L3 (all groups)

**Allotted time:** 1h30

**Course:** Linguistics (Sociolinguistics)

**Teacher:** Dr.Elbah &Mrs. Malkia

### **First Semester Exam**

**Task One:** Read the following descriptions carefully and provide the specific sociolinguistic term that matches each definition. **(1 pt each)**

- 1.....: A functional speech variation determined by the context of situation, the subject matter, and the level of formality, rather than the identity of the speaker.
- 2.....: The linguistic result of a situation where two distinct varieties of a language are used within a single community—one for "High" functions (government, literature) and one for "Low" functions (street, home).
- 3.....: A stable language that emerges from the hybridization of two or more languages; unlike its precursor, it has been acquired by children as a native tongue and possesses a complete, complex grammar.
- 4.....: The specific, unique linguistic thumbprint of an individual speaker, comprising their distinct patterns of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.
- 5.....: A variety of a language that is distinguished by vocabulary and grammar (and often accent) which is characteristic of a particular social class or ethnic group rather than a geographic location.
- 6.....: The process or "moment" when a speaker alternates between two or more languages or dialects in the middle of a single conversation, often to signal identity or change the social distance between participants.
- 7.....: The morphological and phonological integration of a word from a donor language into a recipient language, eventually treating it as part of the native lexicon.
- 8.....: A linguistic variety that lacks a formal written system or institutional support and is often viewed as "incorrect" or "inferior" by speakers of the dominant variety, despite being rule-governed.
- 9.....: A rudimentary, contact language that arises for basic communication (usually trade) between groups who share no common language; it has no native speakers and a highly simplified structure.
- 10.....: A set of linguistic features that are "marked" by the speaker to show alignment with or distance from a particular social identity or "persona" in a specific interaction.

**Task Two:** Determine whether the following statements are **True** or **False**. (1pt each)

- If **True**, provide a brief explanation or a real-world example to support it.
- If **False**, correct the statement to make it scientifically accurate.

1. A "Standard Language" is linguistically superior and more logically structured than a "Non-standard Dialect."

.....  
2. The "High" (H) variety and the "Low" (L) variety are typically used in the same social domains.

.....  
3. Code-switching is usually a sign of language deficiency or a lack of vocabulary in one of the languages.

.....  
4. Mutual intelligibility is a binary and reciprocal relationship; if a speaker of language A can understand language B, then the speaker of language B can necessarily understand language A.  
.....

**Task 3:** In a short, well-structured composition, discuss the following statement by the sociolinguist Max Weinreich: "A language is a dialect with an army and a navy." Explain what this quote implies about the relationship between power and the status of a language variety.

**Note:** Both content and form (grammar and spelling) will be assessed.

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### **Answer Key for the First Semester Exam**

**Task One: Definitions (10points/ 1 point per correct term. No partial credit. Spelling must be recognizably correct).**

1. Register
2. Diglossia
3. Creole (or Creole language)
4. Idiolect
5. Sociolect
6. Code-switching
7. Borrowing (or Lexical borrowing)
8. Non-standard dialect (or Vernacular)
9. Pidgin
10. Style-shifting

**Task Two: True or False (4 points/ 1 point per question).**

- **0.5 point** for correctly identifying True or False.

- **0.5 point** for providing a scientifically accurate correction.

**Statement 1: False.**

While a "Standard Language" holds official status in institutions like schools and media, this prestige stems from social and political history, not from any inherent linguistic advantage. All dialects, including non-standard ones, are complex, rule-governed systems.

**Statement 2: False.**

In a diglossic community, the High (H) and Low (L) varieties serve different, separate purposes in social life. They are not interchangeable; for instance, the H variety might be used for a university lecture, while the L variety is reserved for everyday conversation with friends.

**Statement 3: False.**

Code-switching is a mark of communicative skill, not a flaw. Proficient multilingual speakers

switch languages strategically to achieve social goals, such as strengthening a bond by using a shared heritage language with a family member.

**Statement 4: False.**

Mutual intelligibility is not a simple two-way street. It can be lopsided and depends on factors like familiarity and dialect features. For example, while speakers of Danish often understand Swedish well, Swedish speakers may find Danish more challenging to comprehend, demonstrating its asymmetric nature.

**Task Three: Short Composition (6points)**

Assessed on **Content** (3 pts) and **Form** (3 pts).

**Content (3 points)**

**3 pts (Excellent):** Shows a strong grasp of the quote's meaning. Clearly explains that political/institutional power (the "army and navy") determines what is called a "language." Discusses ideas like prestige, official status, and social hierarchy, and may use a good example.

**2 pts (Proficient):** Shows a correct understanding. Identifies that power, not grammar, creates the language/dialect distinction and explains the difference in their social status.

**1 pt (Basic):** Shows a partial or unclear understanding. The explanation may be vague, oversimplified, or confuse linguistic and social reasons for the distinction.

**0 pts:** Does not address the role of power or misunderstands the quote entirely.

**Form (3 points)**

**3 pts (Excellent):** Well-organized with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Ideas progress logically. Uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation with an appropriate academic tone.

**2 pts (Proficient):** Organized and understandable. Ideas are clear but connections between them may be less smooth. Have a few minor errors that do not obstruct meaning.

**1 pt (Basic):** Poorly organized or disjointed. Frequent errors in grammar or spelling that make the text difficult to follow.

**0 pts:** Unreadable, off-topic, or too brief to evaluate.