

## Take-home Final Exam (due Dec. 10th, see other side)

Please answer any four of the following questions. Please type your responses, double-spaced, at least one page each in length. Be sure to number your answers. Questions? You may e-mail me.

1. Would you say the U.S. is a monolingual or a multilingual society? Defend your answer using reasons and evidence. You might refer to Ch. 6 of Spolsky and any other readings that help to support your answer.
2. Please define and distinguish between four terms: *language*, *dialect*, *register*, and *slang*. You may refer to lecture notes from Nov. 12, Spolsky and any other readings, and you may draw your examples from the *Serial* podcast. (We listened to excerpts from episode 1 in class, or visit <http://serialpodcast.org> )
3. Consider the concepts of *power* and *solidarity* as they relate to variation in language use (Spolsky Chs. 4 and 6). Sometimes people vary their word choice to indicate power: "Son, curfew is midnight – don't be late." Sometimes they vary word choice to indicate solidarity: "Danny, let's remember that midnight curfew, okay?" And sometimes people try to indicate power and solidarity *at the same time*: "Dan, bud – *midnight*. Got it?" Think of your own set of 3 examples like this (*power, solidarity, and both power and solidarity*). Briefly describe the scene and then create snippets of speech or dialogue that reflect each of the 3 concepts. (Label each one so that I know what it is supposed to illustrate: power, solidarity, or both power and solidarity).

4. In his book *Social Linguistics and Literacies*, James Paul Gee writes the following:

Each and every Discourse makes of us, while we are in it, a certain sort of person; each and every Discourse "calls forth" certain ways of viewing the world, ways of communicating to others, ways of valuing and thinking about the world and our fellow human beings. Most of what a Discourse does with us, and most of what we do with a Discourse, is unconscious, unreflective, uncritical. Each Discourse protects itself by demanding from its adherents performances which act as though its ways of being, thinking, acting, talking, writing, reading and valuing are "right", "natural", "obvious", the way "good" and "intelligent" and "normal" people behave. In this regard, all Discourses are false—none of them is, in fact, the first or last word on truth.

Review the lecture notes from Nov. 19, 2014, and then please explain, in your own words, what Gee means by Discourse (with a capital D).

5. In class and in the outline for my lecture on Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>, we discussed something called 'the alphabet effect.' In your own words, please tell what the alphabet effect refers to. Then, list at least 3 of its consequences and briefly explain them.
6. English has become the lingua franca in many parts of the worldwide, crowding out indigenous languages and making it difficult for some people to retain their own language and customs. Considering the spread of American films, music, language, fashion, and food, do you worry that the American 'tsunami' will bring the customs in traditional societies outside the U.S. to the point of extinction? Why or why not? List your reasons and explain them.



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