Linguistics 70
Midterm preparation

With respect to sociolinguistic variation (i.e., differences in language usage along regional or social lines such as age, gender, formality, status), you should be able to:

- differentiate folk linguistic and empirical observations about language usage;
- identify and discuss folk linguistic observations, reactions, and attributions;
- differentiate observations from attributions about language usage;
- apply Lippi-Green’s model of “assuming the communicative burden”;
- know and exemplify the range in availability, accuracy, detail, and control within a folk linguistic paradigm (where paradigm = system of thought and belief).

You should be familiar with the following concepts with respect to dimensions of sociolinguistic variation:
- folk linguistics;
- word rage;
- accent, sentence structure, word choice, grammar;
- linguistic facts of life, such as: languages change, languages are linguistically equal, speech is not writing, language varies, variation is socially meaningful;
- linguistic variation and the social meaning of variation.

You should understand the relevance of the following concepts to the study of standard varieties:
- idealized or abstracted variety, reference point;
- folk linguistic beliefs about standards and correctness;
- differentiate internal and external definitions of the standard;
- misguided prescriptive rules.

You should understand the relevance of the following concepts to the study of regional varieties:
- isogloss, dialect, accent;
- perceptual dialectology; salient and unsalient features; Shibboleth;
- qualitative descriptions (drawl, twang, brogue); associative labels (hick, country);
- drawl as an illusion;
- highlighting and erasure in stereotyping;
- aspects of regional varieties such as the South, the Midwest, and California.

You should understand the relevance of the following concepts to the study of status and style:
- Formality and folk linguistic attitudes about formality;
- Examples of formality variables: cluster reduction, -in, aint;
- Categorical vs gradient patterns of variation;
- Slang, from folk linguistic and empirical perspectives.

You should understand the relevance of the following concepts gender and language:
- verbal hygiene;
- Perceived vs actual differences in men’s and women’s speech;
- Indirect structures;
- Folk linguistic misattributions about supposedly female style variables (hesitancy, unclarity);
- Theoretical views: deficit, difference, dominance approaches.

You should understand the relevance of the following concepts to the relationship between age and language
- Discourse and quotative like: usage and attitudes;
- Usage of dude: reference, address;
- folk linguistic beliefs about dude; cool solidarity; history; dude and gender;
- online & text abbreviations: LOL, wtf, etc.