




# Session 4

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# English Language Varieties

- Language variety
- Regional and social varieties
- Stylistic varieties



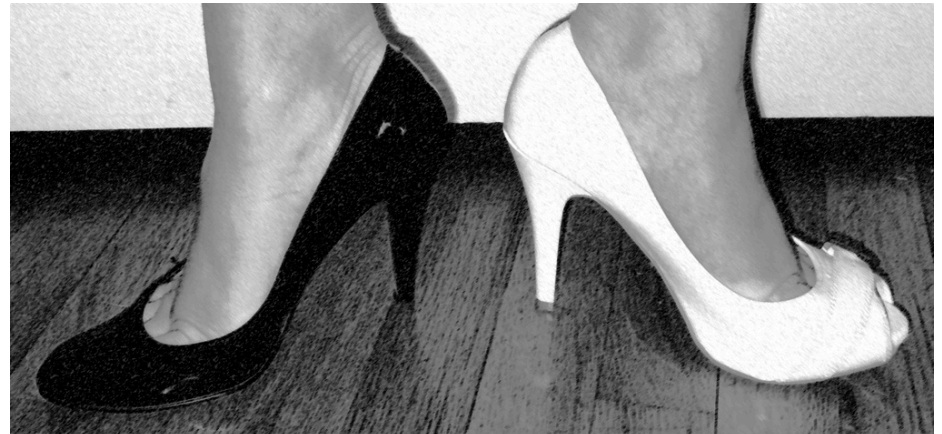
# 1. Language variety

- Total number of grammatical, lexical and phonological characteristics of the common core language as used by a certain subgroup of people



## 2. Regional and social varieties

- Standard language
- Dialect
- Ethnolect
- Idiolect
- Accent



**human systems thrive  
on variety and diversity  
~ Esko Kilpi**

# Standard Language

Variety  
associated with a  
particular social  
geographical  
region

Language variety  
related to a  
particular social  
class

- Standard variety – an upper class sociolect of a given central area or regiolect
- Standard BrE – Queen's English or Public school English
- British standard accent – RP
- Standard American English – General American – language standard of educated people

Received  
English or  
Formal English

# Dialect

- Used by socially and geographically delimited group of people
- Unstable varieties restricted to domestic or informal situations



# Examples

- Cockney
- Scouse /skaʊs/
- American Standard English – less geographically determined
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2ybcPTdTRo>

London

Liverpool

# Ethnolect

- Language variety of an ethnic group
- Black English, Hispanic English...etc
- Some of these varieties are categorized as **PIDGINS**

- From Chinese pidgin meaning business
- Originally has no native speakers
- Trading purposes
- Used as a sort of LINGUA FRANCA
- Simplified form of standard English
- CREOLE



# Idiolect

- Everyone's own dialect
- Usually modified in the course of time



# Accent

- A variety of pronunciation
- Can be divided into regional accents and social accents

# British English – American English



# Extra examples

- ◉ Block of flats – apartment building
- ◉ Car park – parking lot
- ◉ Chemist's shop – drug store
- ◉ Gearbox – transmission
- ◉ Holiday – vacation
- ◉ Petrol – gas
- ◉ Torch – flashlight

# Differences in pronunciation

- Vocalic level – short /a/ instead of short /o/ - e.g. stop
- Long /a:/ instead of short /o/ in polysyllabic words (e.g. doctor, comedy)
- /æ:/ instead of velar /a:/ e.g. dance
- /ei/ is monophthongized to /e/ e.g. make
- Consonantic level – intervocalic /t/ pronounced as /d/ - e.g. better, pretty
- Rhotic /r/ in American English – e.g. far

# Stylistic differences

- Formal style
- Informal style
- Language register

# Formal Style

- Formal and technical vocabularies
- Words usually longer and of foreign origin
- No ellipses
- Impersonal, passive constructions
- In some documents - archaisms /ɑ:ˈkeɪ.ɪ.z ə m/

Expressions  
which are no  
longer in  
common use  
today

# Informal Style

- Using colloquialisms (everyday words), slang, dialect and simple sentences



# Slang

- Consists of expressive, metaphorical, sometimes unserious or ironic words
- Refer to the things people feel strongly about
- Jargon /'dʒɑ:.gən/ – special type of slang – special occupational vocabulary (bucket of mud instead of chocolate ice-cream)
- Jargon can be classified according to the profession
- Argot /'ɑ:r.gou/ – very expressive colouring, spoken by the lowest classes

# Examples of slang

- Take a hit
- Ganja
- Smoke weed
- joint



# Informal vocabulary

Full of neologisms

Is emotionally coloured



# Language register

- Register – determined by the occupation the person is engaged in. (legal, economic,
- Set of features of speech typical of a given style and field, and characteristic of people working in this field.

Wednesday **26th March, 7,00** –  
Continuous assessment test



# 1. What is language

- Human language is a system of signs used for communication

### 3. Fill in the design feature of language which best matches the definition

- \_\_\_\_\_ - there is not a direct link between language form and its meaning. The name of entity is thus rather a matter of convention
- ARBITRARINESS

## 4. Explain the term onomatopoeic words and give an example

- Words that are coined on the ground of sound motivation. There is a similarity between the form of the word and its meaning



5. Fill in the design feature of language which best matches the following explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

- - „the human system of communication has two levels of structure. At one level there are distinct sounds or graphemes, at the other level there are distinct meanings. At the primary level we have units, which are composed of elements of the secondary level.“
- DUALITY



6. Fill in the design feature of language which best matches the following explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

- Humans can combine the elements into units (words) and the words into an indefinite number of sentences that need not have been used or heard before.



7. Fill in the design feature of language which best matches the following explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

- *“people can even speak about the future or things that do not exist.”*
- DISPLACEMENT



8. The design features which refers to the ability to pass language from one generation to another is called\_\_\_\_\_

- CULTURAL TRANSMISSION

## 9. Give 3 examples of different word classes

- Noun, adjectives, verbs

## 10. Explain the term Analytic language

- Does not synthesize grammatical morphemes with word stems but uses mostly independent prepositions or word order to express morphological categories
- Fixed word order

# 11. What do we call the old source language for Germanic language?

- Proto-Germanic language



12. Name 3 most important Germanic tribes that invaded the territory of great Britain in the 5 century

- ◉ Angles, Saxons, Jutes





# What does the abbreviation R.P. stand for?

- Received Pronunciation

16. What do we call a language variety of an ethnic group, such as Black English or Hispanic English?

- Ethnolect

## 17. Define the term „Lingua Franca“

- Language used as a means of communication among speakers of other languages.

## 18. What is the difference between a PIDGIN and a CREOLE?

- Creole is standardized pidgin

## 19. Give 3 examples of lexical differences between BrE and AmE

- Cooker – stove, autumn – fall, fill in – fill out



Give 1 example of differences  
in pronunciation between BrE  
and AmE

## 21. What is JARGON?

- Special type of slang
- It is a specific occupation-related vocabulary, which is hardly understandable for people that are not involved in the particular job



Thank You!

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