

1. Discuss how labeling a language as a "vernacular" inevitably leads to confusion.

RESPOND HERE: "vernacular" can be used in a number of ways. It usually refers to a non-standardized language that does not have official status. It is usually the first language a person will learn. It has a limited scope of use that is informal. Different definitions of "vernacular" place the emphasis on different criteria. "Vernacular" has also been used to refer to any language that is not the official language or a language that is used for everyday interaction, but not necessarily informally. This variety of meanings will inevitably lead to confusion.

2. Discuss the meaning of the "vernacularization" (p. 77) of Hebrew:

RESPOND HERE: Originally, Hebrew was a language of religion and ritual with no native speakers. Its move from this specialization to the national language of Israel has been termed "vernacularization."

3. In example 1 (p. 76) Mr. Patel is described as knowing six languages:

- Kathiawari, a local variety of Gujarati that he uses at home with his family,
- Marathi to buy his vegetables at the market,
- Hindustani to buy a ticket at the railroad station,
- Kacchi at work
- Standard Gujarati when reading the newspaper and
- English to follow a cricket commentary on the radio.

Using the information from the two lists on pp. 9 and 10, what might be the variables that determine the use of these varieties?

RESPOND HERE: who he is speaking to, where they are speaking, what they are speaking about, why they are speaking, where the participants fall on the solidarity-social distance scale, where both parties fall on the status scale (and the difference between them, where the conversation falls on the formality scale, where the content of the conversation falls on the referential/affective scales.

4. Why is it that a given language can be described both as a vernacular and a standard language?

RESPOND HERE: According to the "not the official language" definition of "vernacular," different languages will or will not be considered a vernacular based on the setting. Spanish would be considered a vernacular language for native speakers who live in the US, but not Spain, Mexico, or other countries where Spanish is an official language.

5. To what extent can a case be made for the inherent superiority of Dialect A over others of the same language (e.g., Dialects B, C, D, ...) when dialect A is chosen for codification and stabilization?

RESPOND HERE: I don't think that an argument could be made for the *inherent* superiority of one language or dialect over another, but one could certainly argue that the dialect that is the most commonly used, or the one used at court or by the upper or ruling class, or the one that is used in local schools. The argument would be, then, not that one dialect is inherently better than another but rather that one dialect has a jump start on the foundation of codifying a dialect, or a wider usage base than other dialects.

6. What are the processes that codification and stabilization of a linguistic variety entail?

RESPOND HERE: codification is achieved through grammars and dictionaries. Writing down and distributing the rules of the language (dialect) make it more stable because people can look at what the rules are a speech patterns can begin to shift in the same direction

7. What factors contribute to the prestige associated with standard varieties of a languages?

RESPOND HERE: standard varieties usually form around the political, soial and economic centers of a community and are initially used with an H function, so they would have a fair bit of prestige attached to them before they became the standard language.

8. In the context of World Englishes, what is the meaning of nativization?

RESPOND HERE: nativized varieties may express local aspirations or identities and will reflect that in stress pattern, borrowed vocabulary, and semantic concepts shared with other languages used in the community

9. According to Holmes, what factors will likely lead to a homogenization of Kachru's concept of the Inner, Outer and Expanding circles of English?

RESPOND HERE: I don't see evidence of homogenization. Although standard dialects of native speaking countries (such as British English) often serve as a template for the local dialect and can even be a sort of goal for more formal settings, the culture and other languages of the community will always mingle with the native dialect to form something new. The fact that these communities are so far removed from the native one and often from each other will mean that these varieties continue to diverge.

10. On page 80, Holmes notes that some varieties of "World English" or "New Englishes" often simplify the English that serves as the substrate/matrix/lexifier language. Examples in Singlish, which uses only one tag question—"isn't it?"—include:

- "You're American, isn't it" instead of "You're American, aren't you?"
- "He's on time, isn't it?" instead of "He's on time, isn't he?"

However, it is not only Singlish, which is considered a simplified variety of standard English, that shows no agreement between the main verb and the tag question:

- "Il est français, n'est-ce pas" (He's French, isn't it?)
- "È italiano, no?" (He is Italian, no?) as well as the more formal "È italiano, non è vero?" (He is Italian, is it not true?)
- "Er ist deutsch, nicht wahr?" (He is German, not true?)
- "Es mexicano ¿verdad? (He is Mexican, true?)"

Given a) the origin of Singlish and the role of English as the substrate/matrix/lexifier language and b) the fact that these four languages cited above do not require agreement between the main verb and the tag question, to what might you attribute the Singlish universal tag question of "isn't it"?

RESPOND HERE: since the native language does not require agreement between the main verb and the tag question, the Singaporean population is unlikely to make the distinction between "isn't it," and any other tag question. They may not even realize that it's not technically grammatically correct in English and would likely be confused when faced with any other tag question.

11. What is a lingua franca and what uses does it serve?

RESPOND HERE: A lingua franca is a language of communication between people whose first languages differ. It allows people who do not share a mother tongue to communicate by other means.

12. What is a pidgin, how does it develop and how does a pidgin become a creole?

RESPOND HERE: Pidgin languages are lingua francas developed by groups that need to communicate but do not share a tongue and are a mix of other languages. A creole is a pidgin that becomes a fully-fledged language. First a pidgin language acquires native speakers and then evolves to meet the new linguistic needs which then makes it a creole.

13. What is decreolization?

RESPOND HERE: when a creole language is used alongside a standard variety, features of the creole will tend to drift toward those of the standard

14. Why do pidgins have a simplified grammar and lexicon?

RESPOND HERE: they have simplified grammar because of the referential nature of the language. You only need to have enough grammar to get your point across; you're not trying to impress anybody. Pidgin languages are usually trade languages with limited utility so there's only enough vocabulary to cover what really needs to be talked about in the specific setting in which it is created.

15. Under what conditions is a pidgin likely to die or survive?

RESPOND HERE: when a creole language is used alongside a standard variety in a community with few social barriers, features of the creole will tend to drift toward those of the standard. The creole will usually survive if it is standardized.

16. Polysemy (polysemy) does not only exist in pidgins. In the document attached at the bottom of this Dropbox there is a file "Polysemy in English and Italian" where there are examples from English "race" and Italian "fare" (to do or to make). Given that polysemy may very well exist in all of the world's languages, why might it be particularly prevalent in pidgins?

RESPOND HERE: I didn't see anything about this in the book but I have a couple of guesses. I like the idea that most languages began as pidgins and if that were the case it'd be easy to see that a similar word in 2 languages might have 2 completely different meanings, so the pidgin language would likely include both meanings. The other thought I had was that language shifts over time. So a word like "cold" could start out meaning "not hot" and progress to mean "a comfortable temperature" and then progress to mean "a comfortable disposition; calm, collected" etc. and some of these meanings will become antiquated over time and some won't and some will become antiquated for a time and come back, etc.

17. How do linguists use the terms "acrolect," "mesolect" and "basilect."

RESPOND HERE: When a creole language is used alongside a standard variety in a community with few social barriers, features of the creole will tend to drift toward those of the standard. Eventually you end up with a continuum of varieties between the standard dialect and the creole. The one closest to the standard is "acrolect," the one closest to the creole is called "basilect" and those in-between are called mesolects.