COVENANT UNIVERSITY
NIGERIA

TUTORIAL KIT
OMEGA SEMESTER

PROGRAMME: LANGUAGES

COURSE: ENG 324

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ENG324: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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i. Explain the concept diglossia
ii. Write note on the following:
   1. Slang
   2. Cliché
   3. speech community
   4. polyglot
   5. sociolect
   6. register
   7. style
iii. Explain with examples how geography influences language
iv. Identify the element of variation in the English spoken by Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo
v. Examine the effect of class in the speech of people around you
vi. What towns in Nigeria are you likely to find monolinguals and why?
vii. What is sociolinguistics?
viii. Discuss the relationship between language and gender
ix. Why do taboo and profane language differ from society to society
x. With example(s), differentiate between code mixing and code switching
xi. Distinguish between creole and pidgin
xii. From your sociolinguistic knowledge, explain why idiolects exist
xiii. How will you explain the concepts decreolization and depidginisation?
xiv. Identify the causes of variation in Nigerian English
xv. What relationship exists between language and education?
xvi. In a simple term, what is the difference between sociolinguistics and sociology?
xvii. How does culture influence language?
xviii. Examine the relationship between language and religion
xix. From sociolinguistic perspective, how will you explain the relationship between Nigerian pidgin and Nigerian English?
xx. What is glottophilia?

ANSWERS
1) From your sociolinguistic knowledge, explain why idiolects exist

Idiolect is the variety or form of a language used by an individual. It is an individual person's vocabulary and unique way of using language. It exists because of many differences that exist among persons. Some of these differences are:
   1. Age
   2. Education
   3. Class

4. Heredity

2) Explain the concept diglossia

Diglossia is a sociolinguistic situation in a language of a high, or socially prestigious, and a low, or everyday, form. It can also mean the existence of two different language in which one is socially more prestigious than the other. Classical examples of languages where such genetically-related dialectological relationship can be found are Arabic, Swiss German, Haitian Creole, and Modern Greek. Diglossia could be 1. Classical or extended 2. Partial or total 3. Homogeneous or heterogeneous. The following features basically define diglossia.
1. The circumstances under which each variety is used are clearly defined so there is little mixing between the two;
2. The two varieties are clearly separated linguistically, so that at one time a speaker may be speaking either the H-variety or the L-variety, but never something half-way between the two; and
3. Everyone can speak the L-variety, and will do so in informal or semi-formal situations, such as with friends and family members: not everyone can use the H-variety.

3) Identify the element of variation in the English spoken by Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo

In Nigeria, the English spoken by the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa persons varies so much that listening to them speak one can easy dictate their ethnic base. The major factors that cause the variation are
1. Language
2. Culture
3. Religion

The basic element of variation is phonology. In Yoruba, there is the conflation of the English labiodental /f and v/, in Hausa, the phonemes /p and v/ are respectively confused with /f and b/. there is the pharyngialisation of the English high-front palatal sound /i:/.

4) Explain with examples how geography influences language

Geography influences language in various ways. It is the major factor in the creation of dialects of a language. Different dialects of a language are often caused by geographic separation by rivers, forests, mountains and deserts etc. Geography introduces lexical items into a language –

the waters and other relief forms are sources of vocabulary, idioms, proverbs etc. of languages. Geography also affects culture, which, in turn, affects language use.

5) With example(s), differentiate between code mixing and code switching

Code switching and code mixing are two related but different terms in sociolinguistics. Code-switching occurs when a bilingual uses two languages at his/her disposal, where s/he begins an utterance in one of the languages and end in the other language. For example, a bilingual of English and any Nigerian language may say something like:
If I knew that it would rain today,.... (completes the sentence in any Nigerian language)
On the other hand, code mixing occurs when the bilingual user mixes up the resources of the two languages in his/her disposal. For example:
Well, (Nigerian language) *that* (Nigerian language) today-----. It often safe to say that code mixing is a paradigmatic mixture of two or more languages in a single utterance, while code switching is a syntagmatic/linear mixture of languages when speaking.

6) What towns in Nigeria are you likely to find monolinguals and why?
Any town/village in Nigeria where only one language is spoken is likely to have monolinguals, i.e. people who speak one language only.

7) How will you explain the concepts decreolization and depidginisation?

A creole is a language that has evolved from the mixture of two or more languages and has become the first language of a group. Creole languages are found in communities where a pidgin language earlier served as a useful lingua franca. Creoles are often the sole language of a community and so are capable of fulfilling all their speakers' linguistic needs. In being transformed into a creole, a pidgin's vocabulary is expanded and its structures made increasingly subtle, flexible, and precise. Decreolization, therefore means a process that elevates the a creole to the position of a language.
Pidgin, on the other hand, is a simplified language made up of two or more languages, used as a communication tool between speakers whose native languages are different. A pidgin is a simple language that arises from contacts between people with different mother tongues, in situations where relatively uncomplicated ideas are being exchanged. The speech is generally slow and supported by mime and gesture; the vocabulary is basic and taken mostly from the language of the most important group of speakers; and the grammar has much in common with that typically used by native speakers talking to non-native speakers, or by mothers talking to young children. When a pidgin becomes a mother tongue, it develops to creole. Depidginisation occurs when a pidgin becomes a creole.

8) Discuss the relationship between language and gender

Gender means the state of being male or female. In a society where people are possessed of a conviction of belonging to a particular sex, different orientation towards the use of language is bound to exist. Biologically and culturally human beings are separated into men and women. The anatomical configuration of man is different from that of a woman, much as there are sharp variations in their physiological makeup. Culturally speaking, women roles are clearly different from those of women in society. A community/society where women and men engage in

different occupations/trades or vocation, and since people with different preoccupation speak differently, it therefore means that language variations exists between men and women. Men use language that is associated with their trade and biological configuration. For example, the difference in the length of pharynx between men and women results in the difference in their pitch. Certain societies forbid women from using certain terms or expressions.

9) Examine the relationship between language and religion

Religion means people's beliefs and opinions concerning the existence, nature, and worship of a deity, and divine involvement in the universe and human life. It is a set of strongly held values, and attitudes that somebody lives by. It is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. Every religion has its values and norms that guide the activities (including language) of its followers. The differences in the values and norms often results in language variations even in s single speech community. For example, while difference exists in the language of those with and without religion in a community, variations subsist among people with different religions. Muslims, Christians, and traditional worshippers employ language that is associated with their faith.

10) In a simple term, what is the difference between sociolinguistics and sociology?

Sociolinguistics show how groups in a given society are separated by certain social variables like ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age, etc. and how adherence to these variables is used to categorise individuals in social class or socio-economic classes. Sociolinguistics differs from sociology of language in that the focus of sociolinguistics is the effect of the society on the language, while the latter's focus is on the language's effect on the society.