Middlebury College

LNGT0101A: Introduction to Linguistics/Fall 2011

Take-home Final Exam

Name: _____

Due on Thursday Dec 15th by e-mail no later than 12noon. If you are submitting a handwritten copy, please leave the hard copy in my mailbox in Farrell House, also by 12noon on Thursday Dec 15th. Delay policy applies. No extensions will be given, except for academically legitimate reasons. So, start working on the exam early!

If you have questions, please come to my office hours on the following dates and times (note the changes from my regular office hours):

> *Monday Dec 12th from 11am to 12:30pm, and*

> *Wednesday Dec 14th, from 12:15pm to 1:45pm.*

*This exam is worth **200** points (and 20% of your overall grade in this course, so please turn in "neat" work). The number of points each exercise is worth is explicitly indicated. Also, make sure you answer EVERY question. There are no second chances if you forget to answer any question(s).*

*This is an open book exam. So, feel free to refer to the textbook, the lecture slides, and your notes, while answering the questions. There's no time limit, either. Unlike with other homework assignments, however, you are **NOT** allowed to discuss questions on this exam with your classmates or anyone else. You have to work individually on the exam. Also, you can **NOT** rely on internet resources other than the materials on the class website to answer any of the questions.*

Any failure to observe the instructions given here constitutes a violation of the College's Honor Code system and will be treated accordingly. Finally, please make sure you write and sign the Honor Code pledge "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment," in the box below.

Instructions: Please read thoroughly and carefully!

*- This take-home final exam consists of **SIX** Parts, with a total of 13 exercises. Most exercises have sub-questions (typically, though not always, named A, B, C, etc.). Read each exercise carefully and make sure you answer ALL the sub-questions.*

*Important Note: Unlike with homework assignments, you have to **answer the questions in the provided empty table cells** on this exam sheet. Answers given in any other form will **NOT** be accepted.*

- Please do not edit the exam .doc file or delete the questions. Simply type your answers in the empty cells.

*- If you decide to handwrite your answers to the exercises, please make sure you submit legible handwritten answers, using a **pen** (not a pencil). A correct answer that is impossible to read is as good as a no answer. So, do submit neat work.*

- Finally, if you plan to submit your exam via e-mail, please make sure to name the file 'final_your_last_name'.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING PHONETIC SYMBOLS: Since your computer probably does not have the IPA font, some of the phonetic symbols in some of the exercises will not appear correctly in the .doc file. To avoid any confusion, **use the link to the .pdf file to print out a copy of the exam**. **Do NOT use the .doc file for printing.** If you want to type your phonetic transcriptions, you can always use this link:

http://weston.ruter.net/projects/ipa-chart/view/keyboard/

Finally, after you print out your answers from your .doc file, go over the hard copy and make sure that no phonetic symbols are missing in your answers. If any symbols are missing, you can then handwrite them in the hard copy. You are responsible for turning in neat and complete work. As mentioned before, there will be no second chances on questions missed or misinterpreted.

Good luck, everyone!

Part I: On things syntactic!

Exercise #1: Jac is spoken in Central America!	(15 points)

Consider the following sentence from a language that we will call *Jac*:

    (1)   xa   ix   te'   hum   wet   an
             gave she the book to   me
             "She gave the book to me."

Now, answer questions A, B, and C below.

A. If sentences in language *Jac* typically follow the word order in (1), then what is likely to be the basic word order in this language? Circle one.   (2 points)

SVO SOV VSO VOS OVS OSV

B. What is likely to be the head directionality of language *Jac*? Circle your choice, and state the evidence from sentence (1) supporting your answer.
    (3 points)

Head-initial   Head-final
Evidence:

C. Given your answers to parts A and B, and our discussion of similar languages in class, draw a tree structure for the sentence in (1), showing with arrows (if needed) how the "surface" word order is derived.   (10 points)

Exercise #2: Bar is spoken in Central Asia!   *(15 points)*

Consider the following sentence from a language that we will call **Bar**:

> (2)   äzum   tä-r   kitob   vuj
>   I   you-to   book   brought
>   "I brought a book to you."

Now, answer questions A, B, and C below.

A. If sentences in language *Bar* typically follow the word order in (2), then what is likely to be the basic word order in this language? Circle one.   (2 points)

> SVO   SOV   VSO   VOS   OVS   OSV

B. What is likely to be the head directionality of language *Bar*? Circle your choice, and state the evidence from sentence (2) supporting your answer.

                                                        (3 points)

                           Head-initial   Head-final

Evidence:

C. Given your answers to parts A and B, and our discussion of similar languages in class, draw a tree structure for the sentence in (2), showing with arrows (if needed) how the "surface" word order is derived.   (10 points)

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Exercise #3: Vanishing meanings!	(10 points)

<u>Note</u>: For the purposes of this exercise only, if you are not a native speaker of English, you are allowed to seek the help of an English native speaker for parts A and B of this exercise, but crucially the English native speaker cannot be another student in the LNGT101 class.

A. The following English wh-question is two-way ambiguous:

(i) *When did the boy say he hurt himself?*

First, state the two possible meanings of the sentence.   (3 points)

Meaning 1:
Meaning 2:

B. Now, consider this wh-question:

(ii) *When did the boy say how he hurt himself?*

Unlike (i), the question in (ii) is not ambiguous. It has only one meaning. State which meaning of the two you listed in part A sentence (ii) has.   (2 points)

C. Now, given what you have learned about wh-questions in this class, provide a **SYNTACTIC** explanation for **why** the ambiguity available in question (i) disappears in question (ii).   (5 points)

Part II: Things children do (or don't do)!

Exercise #4: Krista's morphology!	*(20 points)*

Consider the following utterances from a child named Krista.

	Krista's utterance	*Intended meaning*
1.	Mine name Krista.	My name is Krista.
2.	Last name Pegit.	My last name is Pegit.
3.	Tape right there.	The tape is right there.
4.	Daddy book	Daddy's book
5.	I'm got a book.	I've got a book.
6.	Read me story.	Read me a story.
7.	I'm do it.	I'll do it.
8.	He went outside.	He went outside.
9.	Open a gate, please.	Open the gate, please.
10.	Gramma's house	Gramma's house
11.	Smell flowers.	Smell the flowers.
12.	Wee boy fell down.	The wee boy fell down.
13.	That's mines ball.	That's my ball.

Now, answer the following questions A, B, C and D.   (Each question's worth 5 points)

A. Which grammatical morphemes are missing in Krista's speech?

B. Krista uses the past tense twice in the above utterances. However, this should not be considered enough evidence that she has acquired the past tense morpheme in English. Explain why.

C. Comment on Krista's difficulty with the first person singular possessive pronouns.

D. Do you think Krista has acquired the possessive -*'s* morpheme in English? Why or why not? Cite examples from the data.

It has been reported that hearing children growing up in homes with non-speaking deaf parents cannot learn spoken language from radio or even television. Can you think of any reasons for this? What are the implications of these findings for our understanding of the type of experience that is required for first language acquisition? Restrict your answer to a single paragraph.

Part III: Setting the Standard!

Exercise #6: The logic of the standard! *(10 points)*

Consider the following paradigms of reflexive pronouns from both Standard English (SE) and a non-standard dialect of English (NSE):

SE		NSE	
myself	ourselves	myself	ourselves
yourself	yourselves	yourself	yourselves
herself	themselves	herself	theirselves
himself		hisself	

Assume that all these forms are compound forms composed of a pronoun (either a personal pronoun or a possessive pronoun) and the word *self/selves*.

Now, answer the following question in a single paragraph.

People advocating the superiority of standard dialects often appeal to such claims as the regularity, logic, and symmetry of the standard dialect system. How does the case of dialectal variation cited above help us as we scrutinize language attitudes towards standard and nonstandard features of speech? Explain your answer in a single paragraph.

Exercise #7: Do you speak Slangish! *(15 points)*

The following is a popular belief about slang.

'Slang is bad and degrades the user and the language itself.'

On the basis of materials we covered in this class, state, in a single paragraph, whether you agree or disagree with it, providing reasons for your opinion. Make sure to illustrate your answer with examples of slang from English or any other language you know.

Part IV: Going back in time!

Exercise #8: Singing in Middle English!   *(10 points)*

Compare the Middle English (MidE) lyrics below to their Modern English (ModE) translation and answer the questions that follow. (**Note**: The MidE text is **not** written in phonetic transcription.)

Original text in Middle English	Translation in Modern English
Sumer is i-cumen in Lhude sing, cuccu! Grōweβ sēd, and blōweβ mēd And springβ βe wude nū	"Summer has come in; Loudly sing, cuckoo! Seed grows and meadow blooms And the wood grows now."

Now, answer the following questions A, B, C and D.

A. If the phonetic transcription of MidE "lhude" is [lu:də], then what affix converted the adjective *loud* into an adverb in MidE?

B. Given what you learned in this class about the history of English, how do you account for the change in pronunciation of the MidE words [nu:] 'now' and [se:d] 'seed' to how they are pronounced today?

C. How has the relative ordering of subject and verb changed since this was written?

D. What grammatical function do you think the word-ending sound [β] in words such as *grōweβ* and *springβ* was used for in MidE?

A. Each of the following words at one time had a meaning that is quite different from its current one. Identify each of these semantic changes as an instance of *narrowing*, *broadening*, or *shift*. If the change is semantic shift, indicate further if it is **elevation** or **degradation**. An illustrating example is given.   (10 points)

	Word	**Earlier meaning**	**Type of semantic change**
Example	hound	"any dog"	*Narrowing*
a.	aunt	"father's sister"	
b.	shrewd	"wicked"	
c.	butcher	"someone who slaughtered goats"	
d.	villain	"peasant/inhabitant of a farm"	
e.	myth	"story"	

B. For each of the following examples of language change, indicate whether the type of change involved in each case is *lexical, phonological,* or *morphological,* and what kind of operation caused the change, as in the given example.   (10 points)

Change	**Type of change**	**Operation causing change**
Example: The word for "path" in Modern Spanish is [senda], but it was [semda] in Old Spanish.	*Phonological*	*Assimilation in place*
f. English has Greek words such as *catastrophe* and Japanese words such as *typhoon*.		
g. The word for "ugly" in Ossetic became a negative prefix.		
h. Sanskrit [sneha] became [sineha] in Pali.		
i. The Classical Arabic words for "mother" and "father" can be used as possessive morphemes in Egyptian Arabic today.		
j. English had only *burglar* at one point, but now it also has *burgle*.		

The data on the next page are from three Uto-Aztecan languages. Using the comparative method for proto-language reconstruction, and the illustrating example in the table below as a guideline, fill in the rest of the table with:

     (a) the sound correspondence sets for each word **(6 points)**,

     (b) any sound changes that occurred, in which language(s), and the basis on which you determined the changes **(8 points)**, and

     (c) the reconstructed proto-Uto-Aztecan form **(6 points + 1 extra credit point)**.

<u>Important note 1:</u> *Do **not** repeat sound correspondence sets for different words. There should be no more than **twelve** sound correspondence sets in total when you finish this exercise (excluding the three already done in the illustrating example).*

<u>Important note 2:</u> *Also, do **not** repeat sound changes for multiple words. There should be no more than **four** sound changes in total when you finish this exercise.*

<u>Important note 3:</u> *Remember that the diacritic "ₒ" below a vowel indicates devoicing. Don't forget that vowels are typically voiced.*

Shoshone	Ute	Northern Paiute	Gloss	Sound sets	Sound change	Proto-Uto-Aztecan form
tuhu	tuu	tuhu	"black"	t-t-t u-u-u h-Ø-h	**h → Ø** **in Ute** (by phonetic plausibility, since /h/ typically deletes between vowels)	***tuhu**
nika	nika	nika	"dance"			
kasa	kḁsi	kasa	"feather"			
tuku	tu̥ku	tuku	"flesh"			
yuhu	yuu	yuhu	"grease"			
pida	pida	pita	"arm"			
kadi	kadi	kati	"sit"			
kwasi	kwḁsi	kwasi	"tail"			

Part V: Pidgins!

Question #11:Pidginization!	(20 points)

Below is a passage from *The Gospel According to St. Mark* in Cameroon English Pidgin (CEP). Read the passage, then answer questions A, B, and C below.

> a. Di fos tok fo di gud nuus fo Jesus Christ God yi Pikin.
>
> b. I bi sem as i di tok fo di buk fo Isaiah, God yi nchinda (= 'Prophet'), "Lukam, mi a di sen man nchinda fo bifo you fes weh yi go fix you rud fan."
>
> c. Di vos fo som man di krai fo bush: "Fix di ples weh Papa God di go, mek yi rud tret."

A. First, indicate how much you have understood from the passage above. **Note**: I will not accept "None" as an answer. If you understood none after the first reading, try a second reading, a third, etc., until you can at least see how this is an English-based pidgin. There has to be at least something that you could understand from the passage, even if partially. (5 points)

B. Now, go to the following link where you will find the Standard American English (SAE) translation of the CEP passage above.

LINK

Are your interpretations from Part A, even if partial, compatible with the English translation or not? Explain how in either case. (5 points)
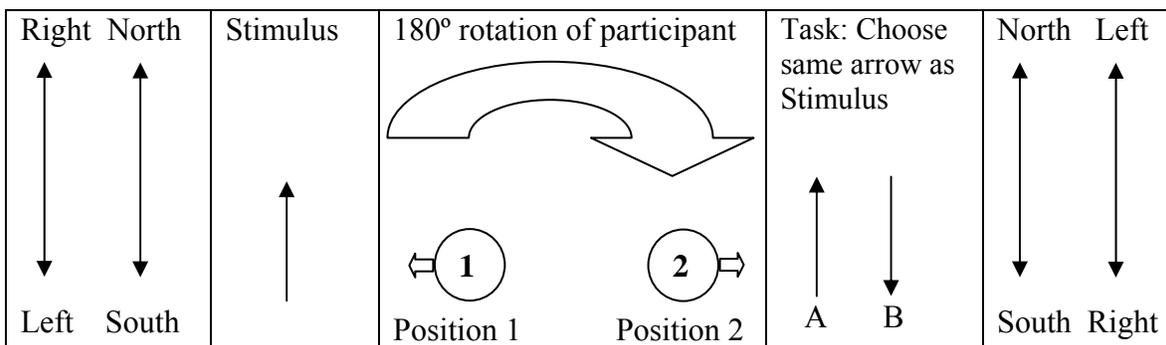
C. Now that you have both the CEP and corresponding SAE texts, state at least **two** linguistic similarities between the two English varieties, and at least **three** linguistic differences between them. *Note*: Similarities and differences can be lexical, phonological, morphological, or syntactic. (10 points)

Exercise #12: Language and spatial thought!	*(15 points)*

As we mentioned in class, several experiments were conducted to test the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (SWH), particularly with regard to cross-linguistic variation in the domains of colors and spatial terms. Below is a diagram for an experiment that was used to test spatial reference by speakers of languages like English, which rely on relative terms such as *left*, *right*, *front*, and *back*, as opposed to speakers of languages like Tzeltal (a Mayan language spoken in Mexico), which uses absolute terms similar to *north*, *south*, *east*, and *west* instead.

Right North	Stimulus	180º rotation of participant	Task: Choose same arrow as Stimulus	North Left
↕ ↕ Left South	↑	⟵ 1 Position 1 2 ⟶ Position 2	↑ ↓ A B	↑ ↓ South Right

In this experiment, a participant is first seated at a table, as shown on the left side of the diagram. An arrow on the table acts as a stimulus. The participant is asked to look at the arrow from that first position (this is Position 1 in the diagram), and remember which direction the arrow points. The participant is then turned 180º, so that she is facing the opposite direction (this is Position 2 in the diagram), as shown on the right side of the diagram. Now, two arrows are shown, A and B, pointing in opposite directions. The participant is asked to choose the arrow that matches the stimulus arrow she saw earlier.

Here's your task:

A. First, based on your understanding of the readings on the SWH, predict how speakers of English and Tzeltal would perform on this task. In other words, predict which arrow, A or B, speakers in each group would select, and why.

(5 points)

B. Second, no matter whether or not your predictions are borne out, do you think this kind of experiments can actually help us validate or invalidate the SWH? If yes, explain why. If not, explain why not. Restrict your answer to a single paragraph.

(10 points)
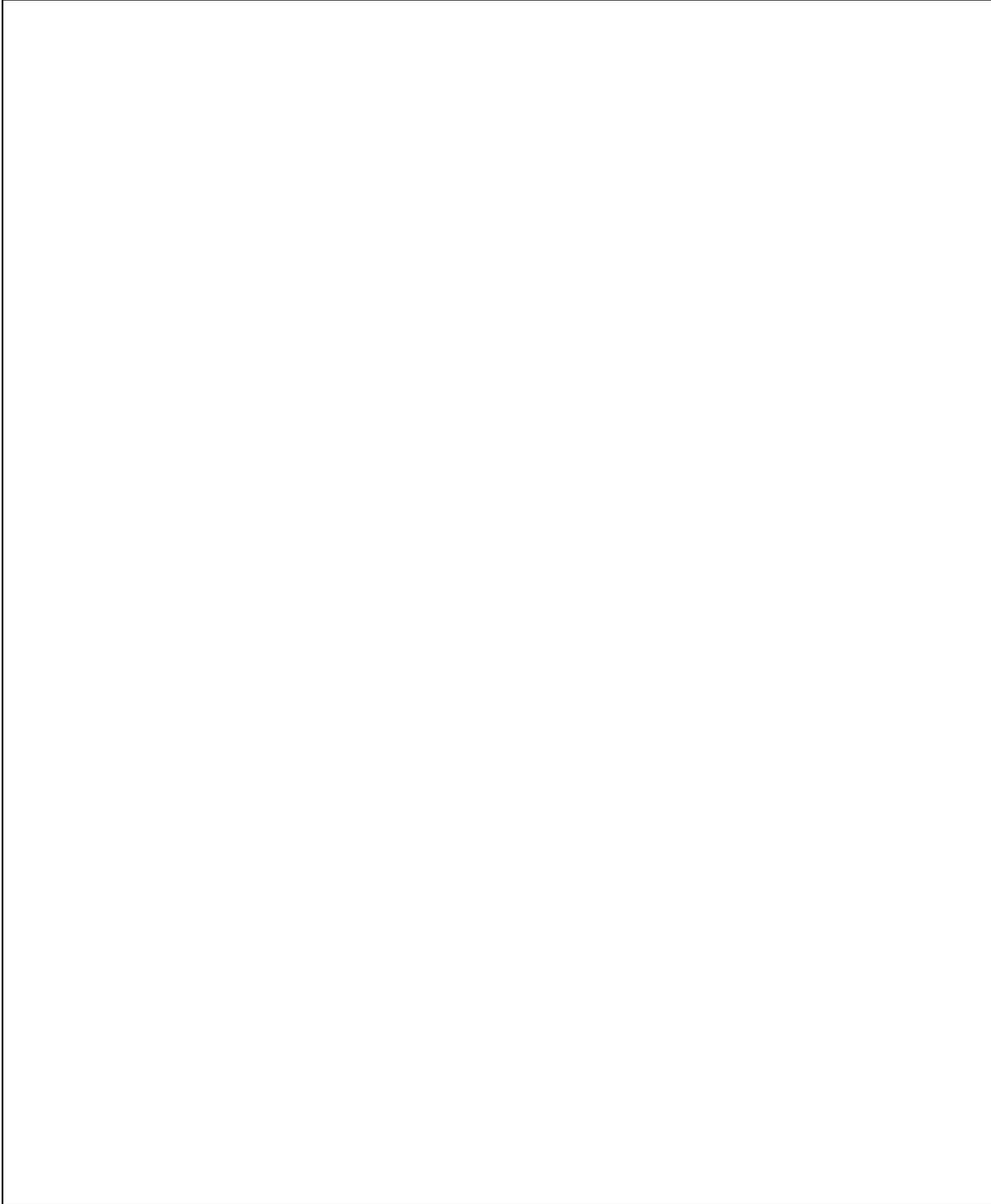
Exercise #13: Taking sides in the debate! *(20 points)*

In this class, we discussed a massive range of linguistic diversity from a wide variety of human languages. But we have also learned that such diversity is indeed in danger. In his article on language endangerment, the linguist Kenneth Hale states,
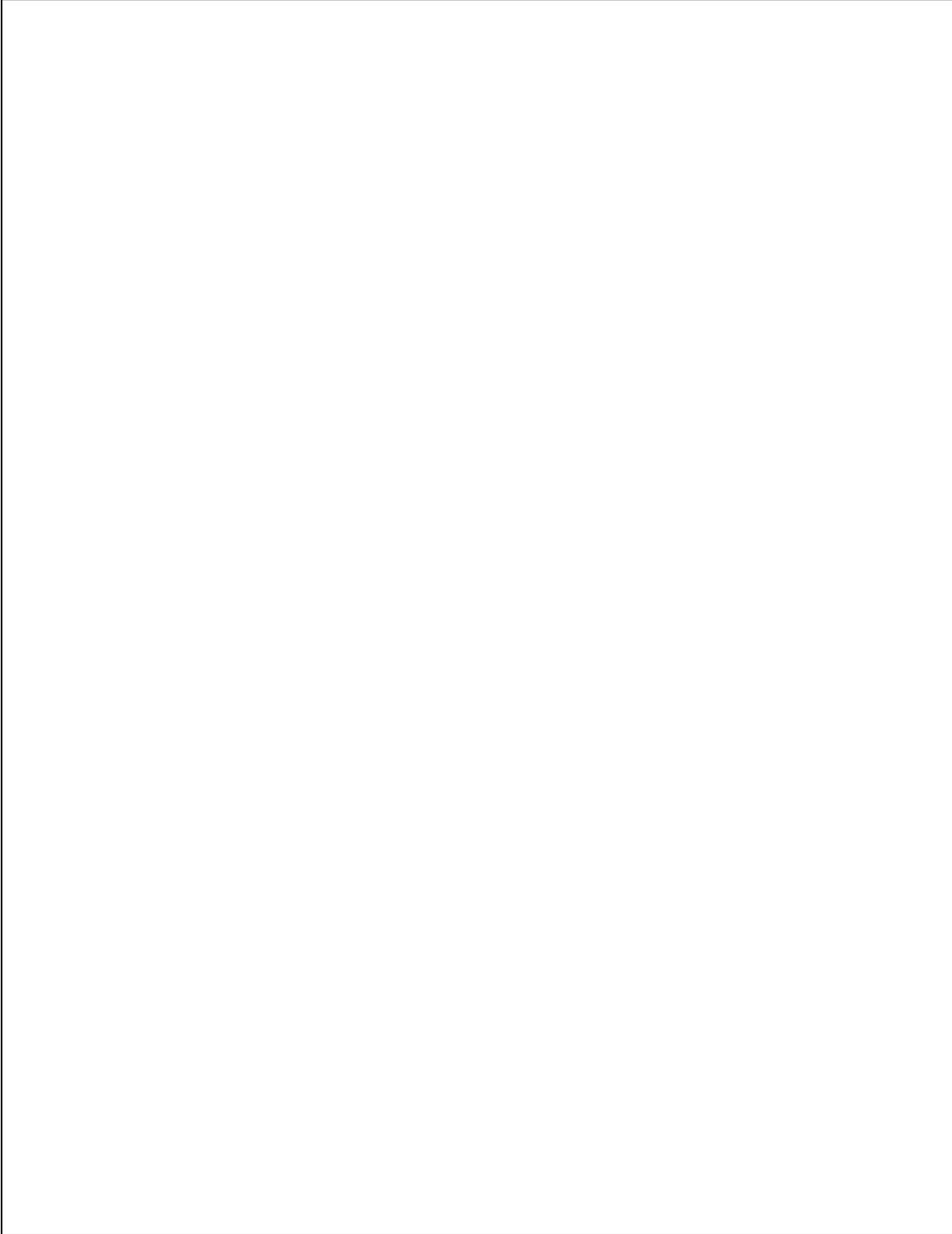
> "Of supreme significance in relation to linguistic diversity, and to local languages in particular, is the simple truth that language—in the general, multifaceted sense—embodies the intellectual wealth of the people who use it. A language and the intellectual productions of its people are often inseparable, in fact. Some forms of verbal art—verse, song, or chant—depend crucially on morphological and phonological, even syntactic, properties of the language in which it is formed. In such cases, the art could not exist without the language, quite literally…The loss of local languages, and of the cultural systems that they express, has meant irretrievable loss of diverse and interesting intellectual wealth, the priceless products of human mental industry."

Now, consider this quote from Peter Ladefoged's 1992 article "Another view of endangered languages" (published in the journal *Language*):

> "As a linguist I am of course saddened by the vast amount of linguistic and cultural knowledge that is disappearing, and I am delighted that the National Science Foundation has sponsored our UCLA research, in which we try to record for posterity the phonetic structures of some of the languages that will not be around for much longer. But it is not for me to assess the virtues of programs for language preservation versus those of competitive programs for tuberculosis eradication, which may also need government funds …
>
> Last summer I was working on Dahalo, a rapidly dying Cushitic language, spoken by a few hundred people in a rural district of Kenya. I asked one of our consultants whether his teenaged sons spoke Dahalo. 'No,' he said. 'They can still hear it, but cannot speak it. They speak only Swahili,' he was smiling when he said it, and did not seem to regret it. He was proud that his sons had been to school and knew things that he did not. Who am I to say that he was wrong?

In a short essay of no more than 250 words, state your position on the issue of language endangerment and preservation, in light of the two contrasting views cited above.

You have finished the exam. Congratulations!