

NAME _____ E-MAIL _____

Università di Firenze Dipartimento di FORLILPSI a.a. 2019-20
Corso di Laurea magistrale in Lingue e Letterature moderne europee e americane
"Characteristics and Varieties Of North American English" John Gilbert
(N.B. This assignment is to be printed and put in the instructor's mailbox in VSR.)

PART I

Instructions: Indicate if the following sentences are **TRUE (T)** or **FALSE (F)**.

1. _____ ESL and EFL speakers have constituted the majority of the world's English speakers since about 1980.
2. _____ There was no strong centralizing influence on English until after the arrival of the printing process from China in the 18th century.
3. _____ The publication of Dr. Johnson's dictionary in 1755 was instrumental in the standardization of English spelling.
4. _____ By the 17th century, English had reached very much its present form.
5. _____ In the 18th century, prescriptive attitudes towards English developed which have been influential ever since.
6. _____ Lexis represents the greatest area of linguistic difference between British and North American English.
7. _____ The British Isles comprise the largest English-speaking community in the world.
8. _____ There are more dialects in England than anywhere else in the English-speaking world.
9. _____ There are unmistakable 16th and early 17th century characteristics in British English which have disappeared from North American English.
10. _____ There are 20 vowel phonemes in R.P. English but only 16 in General American.
11. _____ Most vowels are pronounced a little differently in R.P. and General American English.
12. _____ General American and R.P. do not have the same 24 consonant phonemes.
13. _____ The consonant system is fairly the same in all present-day varieties of English, with the major exception of the rhotic /r/.
14. _____ The greatest change in the consonant system in Later Modern English was the disappearance during the 18th century of the /r/ before a consonant or a pause in R.P. English.
15. _____ Irish, Scottish and General American English have a rhotic accent.
16. _____ There is a non-rhotic accent in the U.S. South and New England, and in Afro-American English.
17. _____ Northern English is the most distinct geographic variety of English in the U.S.A.
18. _____ Canadian English is considered a dialect of North American English.
19. _____ Afro-American English, also known as "Ebonics," is considered to be a separate English dialect by some linguists.

20. _____ Before <-u> and <-ew> General American pronounces <n>, <d> and <t> as /nj/, /dj/ and /tj/ (e.g. *new* as /nju:/).
21. _____ Caribbean English is generally considered to be a linguistic continuum with creole at one extreme and standard R.P. at the other.
22. _____ "Spanglish" is a hybrid of Latin American Spanish and North American English which is increasingly making its way into the mainstream culture of the U.S.A.
23. _____ The great majority of new words introduced into English over the last two centuries have come from British English.
24. _____ North Americans often think that R.P. speakers "drawl" while R.P. speakers often think that General American English is "clipped."
25. _____ The small extent to which various standard forms of English differ from each other in lexis, grammar and spelling is remarkable.

PART II

Instructions: Circle the letter of the correct or most appropriate answer.

- The greatest differences between British and North American English regard:
A. grammar B. lexis C. pronunciation D. spelling E. syntax
- Which of the following vowel phonemes does not exist in General American English?
A. /ɑ:/ B. /æ/ C. /ɒ/ D. /ɔ:/ E. /ʌ/
- Words like *bath*, *fast*, *can't*, *glass*, and *after* are pronounced with the phoneme /æ/ in General American and /___/ in R.P.
A. /ɑ:/ B. /æ/ C. /ɒ/ D. /ɔ:/ E. /ʌ/
- Words like *pot*, *log*, *odd* and *wash* are pronounced with the phoneme /ɑ:/ in General American English and /___/ in R.P..
A. /ɑ:/ B. /æ/ C. /ɒ/ D. /ɔ:/ E. /ʌ/
- Which of the following is British and not North American English?
A. sidewalk B. petrol C. French fries D. elevator E. cookie
- Which of the following is British and not North American English?
A. candy B. gasoline C. guy D. bloke E. truck
- Which of the following varieties of North American English has a non-rhotic accent?
1. Northern 2. Midland 3. Canadian 4. Afro-American 5. General American
- Afro-American English is most similar to which of the following varieties of North American English?
A. Canadian B. Northern C. New England D. Midland E. Southern
- Which of the following is British and not North American spelling?
A. color B. theatre C. traveler D. program E. realize
- The Chicano population in the U.S.A. is concentrated primarily in:
A. the Northeast B. the Northwest C. the Southwest D. the Midwest E. Florida
- The Puerto Rican population in the U.S.A. is concentrated primarily in:
A. the Northeast B. the Northwest C. the Southwest D. the Midwest E. Florida
- The Cuban population in the U.S.A. is concentrated primarily in:
A. the Northeast B. the Northwest C. the Southwest D. the Midwest E. Florida

NAME _____

John Gilbert

Part III

Instructions: Answer the following questions (type your answers double-spaced on a separate sheet of paper):

1. What is meant by the term "standard language"?
2. Explain the phenomenon of koinéization.
3. What are the 4 R.P. vowel phonemes which do not exist in General American English?