

1. Please answer briefly the following questions (35%)

- A. What do the following have in common, if any, in terms of what is stated and what is meant? If you think they do have something in common, name it by a general concept or by an existing term that may help people to grasp what you are referring to easily. (9%)
- a. The marriage counselor files for divorce.
 - b. A fertility counselor has difficulty getting pregnant.
 - c. John posted on Facebook complaining how useless Facebook is.
 - d. When you play blackjack, chances are you will be up (to win) for a while, and then just when you thought things were going well, you lose it all.
 - e. "Oh great! Now you have broken my new iPhone."
 - f. The Titanic was promoted as being 100% unsinkable; but, in 1912 the ship sank on its maiden voyage.
- B. Try to first define the term that covers the linguistic examples (a-f) and then give us your rationale in terms of why people sometimes choose this way to communicate their ideas. (10%)
- C. Consider (g) and (h) below. Does your definition comprehensive enough to explain how we understand the woman's comment (g) and Coleridge's poem (h)? Consider the effect created by the woman's comment (g) or by the poem (h), and tell us why people often choose to communicate in such a more or less implicit manner. (10%)

g. *Woman*: I started riding these trains in the forties. Those days a man would give up his seat for a woman. Now we're liberated and we have to stand.
("The Subway," *Seinfeld*, Jan. 8 1992)

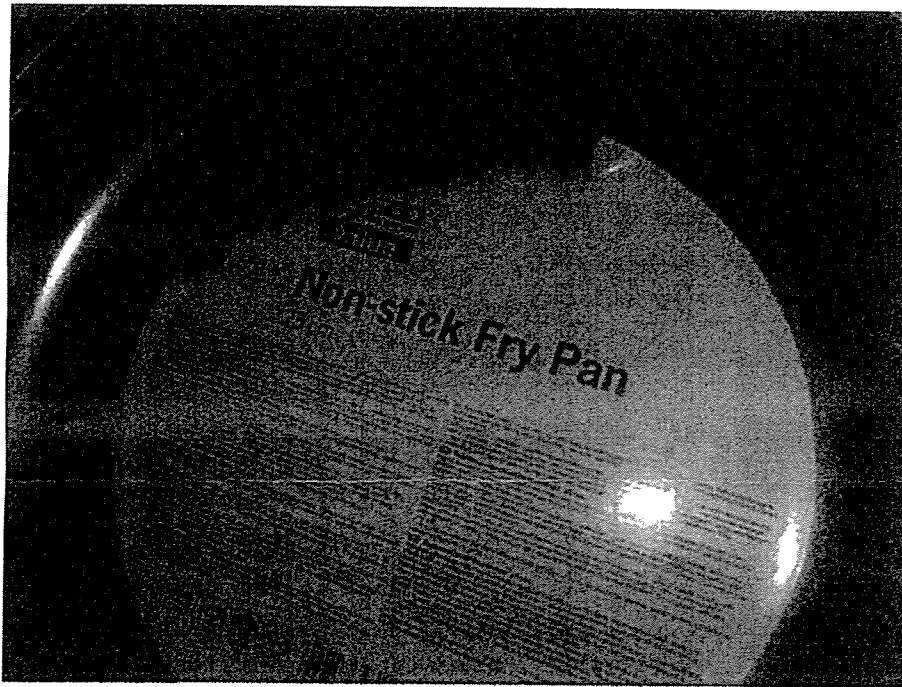
h.

"Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink."

(S. Coleridge)

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- D. Does the concept/term you gave to (a-f) above the following picture (i) and state whether (i) may fall under the general concept/term you have given to (a-f) above. Does the picture help in any way your understanding of the text message pasted in the back of the pan? (6%)



2. Write a well-organized essay of 200 words or less to justify your answer. You will be graded on how well you express your ideas as well. (15%)

Scientists have found that during a good laugh, three parts of the brain light up: a thinking part that helps you get the joke, a movement area that tells your muscles to move, and an emotional region that elicits the "giddy" feeling. Given the above, under what area of linguistics should laughter be studied under?

3. The following passage is adapted from (BLANKENSHIP and HOLTGRAVES, 2005).
Read it carefully and answer the questions below:

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Language is probably the most frequent medium for persuasive communications. And because of this, the linguistic content of a communication is crucial for determining persuasive success; strong arguments (assuming they are processed) are usually more effective than weak arguments. But linguistic style may also be important. How something is said may at times be as important as what is said. Linguistic style is a construct that encompasses a wide variety of linguistic and paralinguistic phenomena including speech rate, language intensity, indirectness, and so on. In the present research, we focused on an aspect of linguistic style referred to as powerless (vs. powerful) language. We chose to research this dimension because this variable has been of interest to scholars across a variety of disciplines for more than 25 years; variability in linguistic power is clearly a salient feature of how people use language. Surprisingly, however, relatively little research has examined the impact of this variable on persuasion, and the research that has been conducted has produced conflicting results.

POWERFUL VERSUS POWERLESS LANGUAGE

Powerless language refers to the presence of one or more linguistic features such as *tag questions, hesitations, disclaimers, hedges, polite forms*, and so on. Powerful language refers to the absence of these features. Earlier research by Lakoff (1975) related these styles to gender differences in language use (powerless language was believed more typical of women than men). Findings regarding gender differences were decidedly mixed, however, and this has led researchers such as O’Barr (1982) to conclude that a putative women’s linguistic style is neither characteristic of all women nor limited only to women. Most important, variation in women’s language appears to be more related to social powerlessness than to gender per se. Thus, what in the past was referred to as a female linguistic style gradually came to be known as a powerless linguistic style.

Researchers have examined the impact of a powerless linguistic style in a variety of contexts. For example, Erickson, Lind, Johnson, and O’Barr (1978) investigated the impact of powerful versus powerless language in the context of a witness’s testimony in the courtroom. They presented courtroom statements to participants, with the statements differing only in the type of language used (powerful vs. powerless).

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Powerless statements included hedges, intensifiers, formal grammar, and polite forms. Their results indicated that the use of the powerful style resulted in higher perceived credibility of the witness and greater acceptance of the position advocated than did the powerless style, and that this occurred regardless of witness gender.

Communication researchers have also conducted research on powerless language. Results from these studies have been consistent with those of the Erickson et al. (1978) study: The use of powerless language produces negative judgments of the communicator's sociability (attractiveness and likability) and competence. In addition, people who use powerful language (at least in the courtroom) are perceived more favorably with respect to social power, credibility, attractiveness, and intelligence relative to those who use powerless language. Overall, then, research on linguistic power suggests that those who use a powerless style will be perceived negatively on the dimensions of credibility, power, and competence.

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A. Write a summary of 150 words for this passage. (30%)

B. Provide five example sentences to illustrate the *powerless language* as defined in this passage. (20%)

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