**Language Science - PSYCH-UH 2218 Name:**

**Problem set 4 Student ID:**

**Language prejudice/discrimination in your home country (30 points)**

I’d like you to think about an example of language prejudice and/or discrimination in your home country. This could be a minority language that is criticized by the majority (spoken or signed), it could be a linguistic feature that is adopted by a small group of speakers (like vocal fry or uptalk), or it could be a language policy that disadvantages certain groups (like one-language policies).

1. Please tell me the language name or community name of the speakers, and give some background on the social context. Just a sentence or two is fine. It can be longer if you need it, but I don’t require a long description.
2. Please describe one linguistic feature that is targeted for criticism. This could be a syntactic property, a lexical property, or a phonetic property. Give concreate examples if you can. You can mention more than one; but please mention at least one because we will analyze it in subsequent questions! Just a few sentences is probably enough to describe the feature. If you need more space that is ok, but I don’t require this to be long.
3. Please describe the types of criticisms that are levied against speakers that use this feature. To be clear, I am not asking you to repeat the specific vile things that people say. Instead, I would like you to describe the types of criticisms – e.g., that the grammar is “broken”, or that it is “slang”, or that the speakers are somehow “lazy” or “uneducated.” Again, just a couple of sentences is fine.
4. Please describe any real-world consequences that speakers of this language or feature face due to discrimination – examples are discrimination in jobs, education, housing, or any other opportunities. Again, just a couple of sentences is fine.
5. Now I would like you to analyze this feature using tools from our class. The idea is the same as we saw in lecture – you are trying to respond to the criticisms using science. Typically, this will entail showing that the feature follows a complex grammatical rule (a syntactic rule, a morphological rule, a phonological rule) that is either similar to the grammatical rules in the socioeconomically “powerful” language of your country (i.e., the one that is not criticized) or similar to the grammatical rules in languages in other countries that are not criticized. I understand that we only know a small amount of linguistic analysis in this class, so I will not be looking for all of the details to be perfectly correct. Instead, I am looking to see that you understand the general logical approach that we can take to use science to show that the specific criticisms are incorrect. This will be a bit longer, but one paragraph should be fine.
6. Finally, I would like you to consider whether the language/linguistic feature is the true source of the prejudice and/or discrimination that the speakers face. The way we do this is to consider whether the speakers also face prejudice or discrimination for some other feature of their identity, such as race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, or even regional location. If they do face prejudice or discrimination over these other features, then it is possible that these other features are the source of the discrimination, and that language is simply a more “socially acceptable” way of levying criticism. Think about this, and describe any overlap that you observe. This might be a few sentences to one paragraph.