Language and Society (due Tuesday, Sept. 3rd)

1. Trudgill discusses an example of a specific social context – talk to strangers on a train.
     What are the social features of this context?
     Where do you talk to strangers?
     Where do you not talk to strangers?
     How do you know when it's appropriate to talk to strangers?

2. Trudgill identifies two important aspects of language behavior: a) its function in establishing social relationships, and b) the way language conveys information about the speaker.
     What information about speakers did you learn from the language used in this class?

3. What are Trudgill's definitions for:
     a. dialect
     b. accent
     c. language
     d. variety

4. What is 'mutual intelligibility' and what function does it serve in linguistics?

5. What is the problem of discreteness versus continuity in dialect studies?

6. What is Trudgill's definition of Standard English?

7. What are some differences between Standard British English and Standard American English?

8. What is RP?

9. Why does Trudgill claim that value judgements about the correctness and purity of linguistic varieties are social rather than linguistic?

10. How does the physical environment affect language?

11. How does the social environment affect language?

12. What magical powers do taboo words have?