Dialects: Introduction

1. A dialect is a variety of a language spoken in a particular region (or social group or ethnic group) that shows systematic differences from other varieties.

2. Types of dialects:
   a. Regional dialects e.g. Irish English
   b. Social dialect e.g. RP
   c. Ethnic dialects e.g. African American English.

3. Rise of dialects: barriers
   a. geographical
   b. social
   c. ethnic

4. Prestige dialects e.g. RP versus stigmatized dialects e.g. Cockney.

5. Isogloss: geographical boundary of one linguistic feature e.g. *pen* = *pin* isogloss: both pronounced the same with a nasalized vowel [ɨ] transcribed [ɨ̃].

6. Mutual intelligibility is not a good criterion for drawing a distinction between dialects and language.
   Mutually intelligible e.g. Czech and Slovak.
   Mutually unintelligible: dialects of German, dialects of Chinese.

7. Language vs. dialect
   Whether two linguistic varieties are languages or dialects is primarily a political, not a linguistic, decision. Example: Serbo-Croatian, now Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian.