

Survey of Sociolinguistics

LIN 4600 . Section 4541 . Fall 2013 . T 5-6 R6 . AND 19

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Hours: Wednesdays: 10-11:30 am, Thursdays: 2-3:30pm & by appointment

Lu nekk, meneesna ko toxal, mu mel ni mu meloon, ba mu des wax

Anything can be moved and remain the same, except speech

Wolof proverb

Description

This course is an introduction to sociolinguistics, often defined as the study of language in its social and cultural context, and more recently as the study of language as social practice. Through a variety of readings, discussions, and assignments, we will explore what this means, and come to our own conclusions about what sociolinguistics is or should be. Among the topics to be covered in the course are language variation, language use in social interaction, multilingualism, language ideology, language change over time, the relationship between language and culture, language endangerment, and language and globalization.

Objectives

1. To provide students with a general understanding of the place of sociolinguistics within the discipline of linguistics as a whole, the major concerns of the field, the major theoretical approaches to the study of language in society, and an understanding of the tools necessary to apply such approaches to original research.
2. To train students to be able to propose and evaluate arguments about language in society in an informed and principled way.
3. To help students enhance their writing and expository skills.

Books and readings

The textbook for this course is Wardhaugh, Ronald. 2010. *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. (6th edition) Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. Additional readings will be made available to you by the instructor in electronic form, primarily through UF Libraries or Sakai. All readings are required.

Grades will be based on the following work

	%	Date
Short papers (5)	40	varies
Panel discussion (1)	10	varies
Mid-term	20	October 17
Class project write-up	20	December 3
Participation	10	
Total	100	

The assignment of a final letter grade will be based on the following scale:

A 92-100	B 81-84.9	C 71-74.9	D 61-64.9
A- 88-91.9	B- 78-80.9	C- 68-70.9	D- 58-60.9
B+ 85-87.9	C+ 75-77.9	D+ 65-67.9	E Below 58

You may consult the following website to see how the final letter grade is weighted with regard to overall GPA: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

A note on participation, class involvement, and classroom policy

The classroom is where we will accomplish much of our work this semester and you are expected to be a contributing member of our classroom community. This means that attendance and preparation are of paramount importance. You are expected to attend class and participate actively in class discussion. Active and informed participation means that you must complete assigned readings before the class period in which we will discuss them, and come to class informed and prepared to talk about the topic of the day. I hope that our class discussions and debates will be lively, and that you will feel free to express your opinions and disagree with each other in a manner appropriate to an academic setting. Mutual respect for class members is expected at all times in order to ensure a positive learning environment for a productive and enjoyable semester.

Attendance

If you are repeatedly absent or late for class, you will lower your final grade. If you miss more than three classes without a documented medical or academic excuse, one percentage point will be deducted from your participation grade for each additional time you are absent.

Assignments

Students are required to hand in all assignments at the beginning of the class period they are due. Please contact the instructor *in advance* if you cannot make a deadline. There will be no make-up assignments or tests and no extension of deadlines except in the case of a documented emergency or illness. Please also make sure you have at least one external backup of the assignments you do for this class. Computer or printer problems will not be considered a valid excuse for missing assignments.

Electronics

Please make sure that your cellphones and laptops are turned off or in sleep mode and put away before class starts. You may not take notes on your laptop, and e-mailing, web browsing, face-booking, texting, chatting and other cell-phone or computer activity is not allowed during class.

Academic dishonesty

Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy and receive a failing grade for the course (www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.php) It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism. If you have any questions about it, please consult the professor.

Students with disabilities

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this class, you should contact the dean of Students Office (www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/) so that special arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

Schedule of topics, readings and assignments (may be modified by the instructor in accordance with class needs)

	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 8/22	Introduction to sociolinguistics		
Week 2 8/27-29	What are we studying? Languages, dialects, varieties, & more	Wardhaugh Ch.1&2	8/29 SP#1 Sociolinguistic autobiography
Week 3 9/3-5	Pidgins & creoles: how are they different from other languages?	Wardhaugh Ch.3 Mufwene 1998	9/5 Panel 1
Week 4 9/10-12	Codes: who keeps them separate?	Wardhaugh Ch.4 Auer 2007	9/12 Panel 2
Week 5 9/17-19	Speech communities, communities of practice, and beyond	Wardhaugh Ch.5 Blommaert & Backus 2012	9/17 SP#2
Week 6 9/24-26	Variation in language	Wardhaugh Ch.6	
Week 7 10/1-3	Variation: Some findings & issues	Wardhaugh Ch.7	
Week 8 10/8-10	Language change over time: what sociolinguistics can tell us	Wardhaugh Ch. 8	10/10 SP#3
Week 9 10/15-17	Class project preparation	Butters 1982 Romaine & Lange 1991 Buchstaller & D'Arcy 2009	10/17 Mid-term exam
Week 10 10/22-24	Words, culture & language endangerment	Wardhaugh Ch. 9 Evans & Levinson 2009	10/24 Panel 3
Week 11 10/29-31	Ethnography of speaking	Wardhaugh Ch.10 Sherzer 1988 Irvine 1978	10/29 SP#4 10/31 Panel 4
Week 12 11/5-7	Sociolinguistics & writing	Backhaus 2005 Juffermans 2011	11/7 Panel 5
Week 13 11/12-14	Language in the digital age	Androutsopoulos 2006 TBA	11/12 SP#5 11/14 Panel 6

Week 14 11/19-21	Language & power	Wardhaugh Ch.13, 14
Week 15 11/26	Discussion of class project	
Week 16 12/3	Where to from here?	

Description of assignments

Short papers: 40% of your grade in this class comes from five short papers that you will write on various topics. These papers should be between two and three double-spaced pages (11 or 12pt font) in length. The papers are a forum for you to articulate some of your ideas about sociolinguistics based on observations you make about language in the real world, and to sharpen your powers of observation and develop a ‘nose’ for interesting sociolinguistic phenomena. In some cases the topics will be defined by the instructor; in other cases you will be given more leeway to formulate your own topic within certain parameters.

Panel discussion: Each student will participate in one 20-minute panel discussion based on the supplementary (non-textbook) readings for this class. This is a group assignment and students will be obliged to meet outside class in advance of the panel in order to choose the format and prepare the discussion. Panel discussions will be guided by a set of questions from the instructor and the group will receive a collective grade for the assignment. Each group will prepare a class handout to go along with their discussion, which should be submitted to the instructor at least two days in advance of the panel. You will receive more information on panel discussions in class.

Mid-term exam: This exam is designed to test your ability to read and interpret sociolinguistic data. You will be presented with a number of charts and diagrams to read and interpret, with specific questions to answer. It will also help you in organizing and interpreting data for the class project.

Final project write-up: Your final paper is based on the class project, which involves the collection and interpretation of data on the use of quotatives in American English. You will report on the collective findings of the class and the significance of the findings with regard to earlier studies on the same phenomenon. More information will be provided in class.

Bibliography of supplementary readings and where to find them.

- Androutsopoulos, Jannis. 2006. Multilingualism, diaspora, and the Internet: Codes and identities on German-based diaspora websites. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 10:520-547. (UF Library)
- Auer, Peter. 2007. The monolingual bias in bilingualism research. In Monica Heller, ed. *Bilingualism: a social approach*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan. (Sakai)
- Backhaus, Peter. 2005. Signs of multilingualism in Tokyo – a diachronic look at the linguistic landscape. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 175-176:103-122. (UF Library)
- Blommaert Jan, & Ad Backus. 2012. Superdiverse repertoires and the individual. (pre-publication version) http://www.tilburguniversity.edu/upload/d53816c1-f163-4ae4-b74c-0942b30bdd61_tpcs%20paper24.pdf
- Buchstaller, Isabelle & Alexandra D'Arcy. 2009. Localized globalization: a multi-local, multivariate investigation of quotative *like*. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 13:291-331. (UF Library)
- Butters, Ronald R. 1982. Editor's note [on be like 'think']. *American Speech* 57:149. (UF Library)
- Evans, Nicholas & Stephen C. Levinson. 2009. The myth of language universals: language diversity and its importance for cognitive science. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 32:429-492. (UF Library)
- Irvine, Judith T. 1978. Wolof noun classification: the social setting of divergent change. *Language in Society* 7:37-64. (UF Library)
- Juffermans, Kasper. 2011. 'Do you want me to translate this in English or in a better Mandinka language?' Unequal literacy regimes and grassroots spelling practices in peri-urban Gambia. *International Journal of Education Development* 31:643-653. (Sakai)
- Mufwene, Salikoko. 1998. Creolization is a social, not a structural, process. ms. U of Chicago. http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/mufwene/mufw_creol.html
- Romaine, Suzanne & Deborah Lange. 1991. The use of like as a marker of reported speech and thought: A case of grammaticalization in progress. *American Speech* 66:227-279. <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~romaine/romainelange.pdf>
- Sherzer, Joel. 1988. Talk about *tu* and *vous*. In *Languages and cultures: Studies in honor of Edgar C. Polomé*. M.A. Jazayery & W. Winter, eds. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter. 611-620. (Sakai)