

## LING 224: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLINGUISTICS

(SPRACHE IN GESELLSCHAFT UND KULTUR)

WiSe2017

Tuesday 10:-11:30, G201

In this course we will engage with the relationship between human language and society, focusing on how language patterns both *reflect* and *reshape* social structure and cultural institutions. We will consider this nexus from a variety of perspectives, engaging with primary literature drawn from sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and the sociology of language. As we progress through the course, we will take into examination different facets of the social context that affect and are affected by speakers' linguistic behavior, including: demographic categories; solidarity and politeness; social stereotypes; political institutions; migration. As we grapple with these issues, we will introduce and key theoretical concept to the scientific study of language-in-context such as: linguistic variation, interaction, social meaning, style, language ideologies, standardization.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Andrea Beltrama  
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H132  
Office hours: Wednesday 11:30h-12:30h

**TUTOR:** Alena Heinermann  
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Tutorium time and place: TBA

**PREREQUISITES:** Ling101 (Introduction to Linguistics)

### READINGS (Ilias)

The class is designed as a seminar. As such, it is primarily meant to foster discussion and problematize issues, as opposed to search for definitive answers. There will be a *\*substantial\** amount of reading (3 to 5 articles, 100 pages per week), drawn from primary research in sociolinguistics and cognate disciplines. Because of this, *\*active\** class participation, willingness to engage with (at times) challenging readings and openness to different perspectives are constantly required throughout the course. Students are expected to do the readings **before** the class in which they are due, as well as to actively participate in class discussion. There is also a textbook, which I will make available on Ilias. Most of the time, lectures and discussion will **not** be following the textbook closely; however, you can use the textbook as a resource to review the main topics of the course, and to search for further materials for the final project.

Textbook: Wardaugh, Ronald. An Introduction to Sociolinguistics, 6th Edition. Wiley,

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE

### - Attendance and participation in lecture: 20%

You are expected to come to class and participate in discussion. To get a full participation grade, you can miss at most two classes.

### - 3 response papers: 30%

3 short (max. 500 words) essays that provide a critical discussion of **at least** two articles: one article must be *old*, that is, among those that have already been discussed in class; one article must be *new*, that is, among those that are assigned for a given week and have not been discussed yet. Each paper is due via email at 17:00h on the Monday before the class on which the new reading is assigned. You can pick whatever readings you like, but you cannot discuss the same article in more than one paper.

*Note:* There are essentially two ways of approaching this essay. One is to compare and contrast one aspect of the two papers, showing how the perspective of the authors differ on this point; the other one is to individuate a common theme across the papers, and discuss how such a theme is approached in each article. Either way, this paper **cannot** be a mere plot summary of the two articles. You will receive a full grade as long as you show that you have read the articles, and that you have made a reasonable effort to engage with their argumentation.

### - Final project: 50%

A 2000-word paper on a topic of your choosing. As for the content of the paper, you have two options: you could either design and carry out a small study collecting novel data; or engage in a critical review of the current literature on the topic. Whatever you prefer, you will have to come meet with me by **January 15** to discuss the topic that you chose, and how you intend to carry out your project. If you choose to do a literature review, you will also have to get my approval on the papers that you will read (and of course, I can help you choose them as well!). The grade on the project is determined as follows:

- **25%:** Presentation of the project to the class in the final two lectures (**Feb 6 or 13**)
- **75%:** Paper. The paper is due **April 1, 2018**. No April Fools'! You are of course welcome to submit it earlier.

**Tentative schedule** (Subject to change! Papers to be assigned on a week by week basis)

**Oct 24:** Language, the social, the cultural. Introduction.

**Oct 31:** No class!

### **Part 1: Variation and Demographics**

Nov 7: **Place.**

Keiser, S. 2005. Pennsylvania German in Ohio. Ms., Marquette University

Stoeckle, P. 2016. Horizontal and vertical variation in Swiss German morphosyntax. The future of dialects. Berlin: Language Science Press, 195-215.

Nov 14: **Social Hierarchies.**

Labov, W. 1972. The Social Stratification of (r) in New York City Department Stores. p. 168-178

Trudgill, P. 1972. Sex, Covert Prestige and Linguistic Change in the Urban British English of Norwich. p. 179-195

Nov 21: **Re-thinking place, re-thinking class. When correlations aren't enough.**

Holmquist, J. 1985. Social correlates of a linguistic variable: A study in a Spanish village. *Language in Society*. 14:191–203

Milroy, L. and Margrain, S. 1980. Vernacular language loyalty and social network. *Language in Society*. 9: 43-70

Jonhstone, B. 100% Authentic Pittsburgh”: Sociolinguistic authenticity and the linguistics of particularity

**Part 2: Variation and Indexicality.**

Nov 28: **Embracing social meaning.**

Ochs, E. 1992. Indexing gender. *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 335-358

Eckert, P. 2008. Variation and the indexical field. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. 12:453–76

Podesva, R. 2007. Phonation type as a stylistic variable: The use of falsetto in constructing a persona. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 11.4: 478-504

Dec 5: Reading week! No class!

Dec 12: **Social types**

Bucholtz, M. 2001. The Whiteness of Nerds: Superstandard English and Racial Markedness. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*. 11(1): 84-100

Kiesling, S. 2008. Dude. *American Speech* 79(3): 281-305.

## **Dec 19: Sociolinguistic cognition, experiments**

Carmichael, K. 2013. Place-linked Expectations and Listener Awareness of Regional Accents, Awareness and Control in Sociolinguistic Research. Cambridge University Press: 152-176.

Niedzielski, Nancy 1999. The effect of social information on the perception of sociolinguistic variables. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 18:62-85

## **Part 3: Ideologies, languages, nations.**

### **Jan 9: Language ideologies, part 1: prescriptivism and correctness**

Cameron, D. 1994. *Verbal Hygiene*. London: Routledge. Selected excerpts.

Zanuttini, Raffaella. 2015. *Our Language Prejudices Don't Make No Sense*. The Pacific Standard.

Pinker, Steven. 1994. *The Language Instinct*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial Modern Classics. Selected excerpts.

Boland, Julie and Robin Queen. If You're House Is Still Available, Send Me an Email: Personality Influences Reactions to Written Errors in Email Messages. *PLoS ONE* 11(3)

### **Jan 16: Language ideologies, part 2: dialects and standards.**

Gal, S. and J. Irvine. 2000. Language ideology and linguistic differentiation. In *Regimes of Language*.

Gal, S. 2006: Contradictions of standard language in Europe: Implications for the study of publics and practices. *Social Anthropology* 14:2.344-370

Milroy, J. 2001. Language Ideologies and the Consequences of Standardization. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3(1): 452-470

### **Jan 23: Migration: Alena Heinemann's guest lecture. Readings TBA**

### **Jan 30: Identity, nations, movies.**

Andrutsopoulous, J. Repertoires, characters and scenes: Sociolinguistic difference in Turkish-German comedy. *Multilingua* 31(2/3): 301-326.

Queen, R. 2004. 'Du hast jar keeneAhnung': African American English dubbed into German. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 8(4): 515–537

**Feb 6-13:** Student presentations