

LING5373 – CRN25401 Language Variation

Spring 2016

Time: Monday and Wednesday 6-7:20pm

Location: LART220

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Liberal Arts Building, Room 217

Office Hour: Mon & Wed 3-4pm, or by appt.

Textbook:

Tagliamonte, Sali A. (2012) *Variationist Sociolinguistics: Change, Observation, Interpretation (Language in Society)*. Wiley-Blackwell. Available at Amazon at around \$85 (there is a FREE Two-Day Shipping for Students)

We will be also reading key articles about the topics that you will be working on.

This is a course especially designed to train students in empirical quantitative linguistic research on the basis of natural data gathered in social context. You will either 1) have a project in mind or 2) join in a class project. If you decide to pursue your own topic, it will have to be discussed with the instructor first. The class project will focus on a choice of linguistic variable in English or Spanish, at your choice, and it can be carried out in groups of 2 or 3. Following techniques discussed in class, you will carry out all the steps of a full-fledged research project, from sample design and organization, to data analysis and interpretation.

This course will be conducted in a workshop form and is assessed in the following way: Regular assignments will lead you through the step-by-step procedures for conducting research in the variationist paradigm. Many of the classes will be carried out in the computer lab where we will work 'hands on' with the variable rule program. Another possibility can be that students bring their computers to class, in which case we do not need to go to the lab. Questions, problems and discussion will be based on students' experience in completing the assignments. You will be expected to bring questions on your research in progress to class. In the last week of class, students will present their preliminary findings in a conference-style talk. The final assessment will be a formal, written synthesis of the work you have done for these weekly assignments conducted during the term. It will challenge you to interpret and synthesize the experience and knowledge you gained from the course.

Assessment:

Assignment 1	15%
Assignment 2	15%
Assignment 3	10%
Assignment 4	10%

Three presentations (6.6% each)
Final paper

20%
30%

Preliminary calendar – subject to change

Date	Required Reading	Topic
Jan 20	Chapter 1: 1-10	Introduction: Language variation and change
Jan 25	Chapter 1: 10-21 Guy (1993)	Inherent variability in the speech community
Jan 27	Bailey et al. (1991) Wagner (2012)	The apparent time construct Language change vs. age grading
Feb 1	Class cancelled due to weather conditions	
Feb 3	Chapter 2 * Labov (1963) Roberto * Labov (1972) Yumira	Social factors The social motivation of sound change
Feb 8	Chapter 3 Nestor * Labov (1990) Luis	Linguistic factors: phonology & morpho-syntax
Feb 10	* Guy (2007) Majd * Krock (1989) Donette	Phonological and morphosyntactic variation
Feb 15	Chapter 4	Hands on with variation – LAB
Feb 17	Pope's visit – class canceled	
Feb 22	Chapter 4	Designing a research Project - LAB
Feb 24	Chapter 5	The linguistic variable - LAB * HAND IN ASSIGNMENT 1 (your variable)
Feb 29	From Tagliamonte (2006)	What's your hypothesis?
Mar 2	PRESENTATION OF ASSIGNMENT 1 (INCLUDE INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENTS)	
Mar 7	***** SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	
Mar 9	***** SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	
Mar 14	Chapter 5	Quantitative analysis - LAB
Mar 16	* Poplack (1993) Sandra * Poplack (1980) Yumira	Language contact
Mar 21	Chapter 7	Phonological variables and lexical frequency
Mar 23	* Bybee (2002) Nestor	Lexical frequency
Mar 28	* Lavandera (1978) Luis Chapter 8 Roberto	Morpho-syntactic variables
Mar 30	* Kroch & Small (1978) Majd * Sankoff (1988) Donette	Grammatical ideology and syntactic variation
Apr 4	* Amastae (1989) NM * Díaz Campos (2011) Sandra	Hispanic sociolinguistics
Apr 6	Tagliamonte (2006)	Trouble shooting * HAND IN ASSIGNMENT 2 (your analysis)
Apr 11	Tagliamonte (2006)	Distributional analysis

Apr 13	Your say	Work on your analysis.
Apr 18	Tagliamonte (2006)	Interpreting and reporting your results
Apr 20	Your say	Work on your results
Apr 25	Chapter 12 – Sandra Tagliamonte (2006)	Sociolinguistic explanation Finding your story
Apr 27	Your say	* HAND IN ASSIGNMENT 3 (your results)
May 2	The whole story - Student presentations	
May 4	The whole story - Student presentations	

The final paper is due 13th May

Course Policies:

It is a great idea that you make an appointment with me to discuss your ideas and plans for success in this class!

Absences: You are allowed up to three unexcused absences. After three unexcused absences, your grade may drop by half a letter grade for each unexcused absence. Don't squander your three freebies on trivia. You may need them for dead car batteries, etc. If you do or must miss (even the first day of class), it is your responsibility to get notes, assignments, etc. from another student.

Presentations: each student will choose two articles (marked with *) to present to the rest of the class. Give the instructor the names of the two articles by the second class. The third presentation is the individual project. Each presentation can last from 20-30 min. You should prepare Power Point slides and/or handouts for this. Send a copy of the presentation to the instructor a day before. This will be posted on Black Board.

Assignments: Instructions will be posted on Black Board when the time comes. We will also discuss them in class, so that you have a clear idea of what is expected of you. The deadline to submit each assignment is on the calendar. Hand them in printed at the beginning of the class. If you are absent that day, make sure that you send a hard copy to the instructor previous to the due date. The instructor **will not** print your work.

Final Paper: leave a copy at the Languages and Linguistics office (LART 137) on the due date.

Online Material

Goldvarb is downloadable from: <http://individual.utoronto.ca/tagliamonte/goldvarb.htm>

Additional book material can be found here:

http://individual.utoronto.ca/tagliamonte/2011_SLX_Book.html

References

- Amastae, Jon. 1989. The intersection of s-aspiration/deletion and spirantization in Honduran Spanish. *Language Variation and Change* 1:169-183.
- Bailey, Guy; Wikle, Tom; Tillery, Jan and Sanda, Lori. 1991. The apparent time construct. *Language Variation and Change* 3: 241-264.
- Bybee, Joan. 2002. Word frequency and context of use in the lexical diffusion of phonetically conditioned sound change. *Language Variation and Change* 14: 261-290.
- Díaz-Campos, Manuel. 2011. Becoming a member of the speech community: Learning socio- phonetic variation in child Language. *Handbook of Hispanic Sociolinguistics*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Guy, Gregory. 1993. The quantitative analysis of linguistic variation. In *American Dialect Research: Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the American Dialect Society, 1889–1989*. Edited by Dennis R. Preston, 227-249.
- 2007. Variation and phonological theory. In Guy Bailey & Ceil Lucas (eds.) *Sociolinguistic Variation: Theories, Methods, and Applications*. Cambridge University Press: 5–23.
- Kroch, Anthony. 1989. Reflexes of grammar in patterns of language change. *Language Variation and Change*, 1:199-244.
- Labov, William. 1963. The Social Motivation of a Sound Change. *Word*, 19:3, 273-309, DOI: 10.1080/00437956.1963.11659799.
- 1972. *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- 1990. The intersection of sex and social class in the course of linguistic change. *Language Variation and Change* 2: 205-54.
- Lavandera, Beatriz. 1978. Where does the sociolinguistic variable stop? *Language in Society* 7, 171-183.
- Poplack, Shana. 1980. *Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: toward a typology of code-switching*. *Linguistics* 18, 7/8. 581-618.
- 1993. Variation theory and language contact. In *American dialect research: An anthology celebrating the 100th anniversary of the American Dialect Society*, ed. by Preston, D., 251-286. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Sankoff, David. 1988. Sociolinguistics and Syntactic Variation. In Newmeyer F, editor. *Language: The Socio-cultural Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Tagliamonte, Sali. 2006. *Analysing Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wagner, Suzanne Evans. 2012. Age Grading in Sociolinguistic Theory. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 6/6: 371–382.