

**Course Title:** Sociolinguistics  
**Course Number:** LING 551, Fall 2012  
**Section & Meeting Times:** Sec. 1-21722; T/Th, 2:00pm-3:15pm, SSW-2512  
**Final Exam Time:** Finals will be take-home, due by 3pm, Thursday, Dec 13.

**Instructor:** Assistant Professor DS Bigham  
**Office Hours:** EBA 325 :: T/Th 3:30–4:30  
EBA 329 - Sociophonetics Lab :: TBD  
I can also be available at other times by appointment.  
**E-mail:** douglas.bigham@mail.sdsu.edu

Anytime my office door is open, I'm available. Also, feel free to send professionally composed e-mail (see below), though I do NOT check e-mail after 5pm or on weekends. I am not responsible for e-mails unreceived or read late; if I haven't responded within 36 hours, you may send me a polite reminder.

**DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces you to the correlation of social structure and linguistic behavior. How is language used productively in society? How do social structures mirror, map onto, and transform linguistic structures? What is the relationship of language to gender and sexuality? To social class and education? To age and occupation? Is the variation we see in language something we can predict by knowing the social status of a speaker? Do speakers have control over how they manipulate this variation? What kinds of attitudes do speakers have about each other and do those attitudes influence linguistic behavior? These are the issues and questions we will discuss.

**TEXTBOOKS & READINGS:**

*Introducing Sociolinguistics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. 2011. Miriam Meyerhoff.  
Publisher: Routledge, ISBN-13: 978-0415550062, Cost: ~\$45 new

*The Routledge Sociolinguistics Reader*. 2010. Miriam Meyerhoff & Erik Schleeff (eds.).  
Publisher: Routledge, ISBN-13: 978-0-415-46957-9, Cost: ~\$50 new

Additional readings and materials will be made available via handouts and on Blackboard. Keep an eye on Blackboard for various course documents, readings, review sheets, etc. You are responsible for finding devices capable of displaying/printing relevant course material. "It wouldn't download/open/print/etc" is not a sufficient excuse. The Student Computing Center is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Love Library.

**PREREQUISITES:** A course in introductory linguistics (or concurrent enrollment).

**EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:** In this course, you will...

- Become familiarized with some of the foundational works in sociolinguistics.
- Acquire a vocabulary of key terms in sociolinguistics and know when to apply these terms.
- Recognize possible areas of sociolinguistic interest in the real world.
- Develop a clear research question that applies your understanding of sociolinguistics to a specific situation.
- Comprehend how your research question builds upon and critiques work already available.
- Develop a proposal and timeline for collecting the data you would need in order to address your research question.
- Describe how you would analyze such data to evaluate your original research question to arrive at a conclusion.

**EXPECTED STUDENT CONDUCT:** You are expected to respect your fellow students. When fellow students are talking, you should show them the same respect and attention as you show your professor. No questions are stupid. No ideas are crazy. Not everyone learns at the same pace or in the same way.

Your phone is NOT ALLOWED in class, for any reason. If I see or hear your cell or the “vibration” of your cell, you will get an F for participation. NO EXCEPTIONS. All other “devices” should be silenced. Headphones should remain off. If you plan on multi-tasking during class, please sit in the back of the room. Do not let your technology interfere with your or other students’ ability to participate or pay attention.

**E-mail:** E-mail sent to your professor and/or fellow students should be professionally composed with an opening (“Prof. Bigham, ...”), an explicit body (“This is Diana Prince from your LING 551 class, I have a question about diglossia...”), and an appropriate closing (“Yours, Diana” or “-Diana”). Unprofessional and/or disrespectful e-mail will be deleted without being read. I will not discuss grades or academic standing via e-mail. I do not check e-mail after 5pm or on weekends. It is suggested that you use Blackboard for sending course-related e-mail.

**Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, etc.:** Do not contact your professor via any non-SDSU-related online social network.

**ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING:**

- 10% - Sociolinguistic Data Collection
- 15% - Reading Q&As
- 10% - Readings Presentation
- 25% - Midterm
- 15% - Participation
- 25% - \*Final Exam [Track A] or Final Paper [Track B]

\*Graduate Students MUST take Track B, the Final Paper track. Undergraduates may be allowed to choose Track B; see me for details.

Grading Scale: A, B, C, D, F

100-90: A, 89-80 B, 79-70 C, 69-60 D, 59-0 F

Sociolinguistic Data Collection & IRB Training: 10% - Students will work in teams of three. Each team will anonymously observe and report on sociolinguistic data in the real world. Detailed instructions will be provided. Before observations begin, everyone will complete the SDSU IRB training module. IRB Certification is required to be turned in along with the completed write-up.

Readings Q&As: 15% - 5 total due, 3% each

Part 1: Due by 3pm on Wednesday. On Blackboard, post three analytical/critical questions about some aspect of Thursday’s readings; show an awareness of previously posted questions by avoiding repetition and incorporating other students’ questions into your own.

Part 2: Due by 7pm on Friday. E-mail me short responses to your original questions, discussing how they were addressed in class, what you’ve learned, how the responses to your questions bring about further questions, etc. Each of your questions should receive about 200-250 words of response (~600-800 total words for each Q&A). Individual responses less than 200 words will not be graded. Not all weeks are available for Q&As; check the syllabus and prepare accordingly.

Readings Presentation: 10% - Each student will present a 15-minute overview of one of the readings to the class and be prepared to field questions regarding the reading. In addition, Track B students will explain how the reading fits into the larger background literature of their project proposals (an additional 5 minutes is allowed for Track B students).

For all students: One hardcopy outline of your presentation will be given to your Professor on the day of your presentation. An example will be provided during the first weeks of class. You may NOT submit a Q&A Response during the week in which you present (except Week Four).

Midterm: 25% - Thursday, October 25. Midterm will be in-class, cumulative, short answer/essay. You will have 75 minutes to complete it. Your Professor will be out of town at a conference.

Participation (preparedness and discussion): 15% - All materials should have been read before the date listed on the syllabus so that you may fully engage in class discussion. We will be using Blackboard for additional discussion. Participation is determined by (a) in-class & online discussion and (b) additional “engagement” (like coming to my office hours, participating in every discussion, creating new online discussion topics, etc.).

Final: 25% - (see below)

Track A - Final Exam - The final exam will be cumulative essay exam. The Final Exam will be “take home” and will be ***due on Thursday, 13 December, by 3pm!***

Track B - Final Paper – ~3000 words, not including sections 0, V, or VI. The final paper will be a Research Proposal based on one area of possible sociolinguistic interest you have noticed in the real world. Your paper will have the following structure:

0. Abstract (400-500 words)
- I. Introduction and statement of the research question
- II. Critical review of the relevant literature
- III. Research proposal (what data you will collect, from whom, and why)
- IV. Research methodology (how and why you will analyze the data)
- V. Project timeline and resources description
- VI. Works cited and references (at least 10 references are required)

Final papers will be graded on content, grammar, and rhetorical form. If you do not feel comfortable with your writing skills, seek help at the Love Library Writing Center.

Track B Deadlines:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| October 23:  | Abstract & Research Question proposal due!      |
| November 20: | Project Outline / Paper Draft Due!              |
| December 6:  | Optional Second Draft Due!                      |
| December 13: | Final Paper DUE! Uploaded to BlackBoard by 3pm! |

Track B Students MUST meet with me during office hours twice: Once during Week Six and once during Week Twelve. These meetings ARE NOT OPTIONAL.

**HOMEWORK:** Assignments are due before the beginning of class on the date specified. Because of the nature of this class and these assignments, no late work will be accepted. We will be using BlackBoard to turn in all written assignments (including midterm & final).

- Form (spelling, punctuation, grammar, formatting, etc.) counts. If you're having trouble with these aspects of writing, please make use of the Love Library Writing Center.
- Use standard formatting: 1" margins, 1.5 line spacing, common font (Arial/Helvetica, Cambria, Calibri, or Times New Roman only).
- For typing IPA symbols use the Lucida Sans Unicode font.
- All files MUST BE SAVED AS \*.doc(x) or \*.rtf. No other formats will be accepted. Name your file thus: [last name]-[assignment name].doc [e.g., Bigham-QA2.doc // Bigham-Midterm.rtf]
- DO NOT FORGET TO ALSO PUT YOUR NAME AT THE TOP OF THE TYPED PAGE!!!
- If you cannot make it to class the day that an assignment is due, it is still your responsibility to get your work to me on or before the beginning of class-time on the due date.
- There will be no "extra credit" options.

**ATTENDANCE:** Come to class. Come to class on time. If you arrive late, do not interrupt the class or professor upon entering. Since participation counts for a large portion of your grade, it is STRONGLY suggested that you attend class and participate vigorously in the discussions—in class, online, and during my office hours. **If you miss class, do not e-mail me** to explain or ask for notes. People who miss class should be prepared to get the notes from classmates. People who repeatedly miss class or come late may be excluded from grading curve benefits.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Do not cheat. If you work with a partner on an assignment, indicate this at the top of your homework AND make sure you each turn in your own UNIQUE copy of the homework. In essays, failing to cite another person's words or ideas is cheating. Don't cheat. Don't even do anything that might get you suspected of cheating. Be honest. If you cheat, you will be given a grade of "F" for the course and will be referred to Student Affairs. If you have questions about the definition or specifics of "cheating" or "plagiarism" you may contact me, the Linguistics Dept. Chair, a member of the Student Discipline Office at (619) 594-3069. For further details regarding conduct, please refer to <http://csrr.sdsu.edu/>

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** For students with disabilities, I am available during my office hours to discuss any appropriate academic accommodations that might be necessary. Before course accommodations are made, a student may be required to obtain and/or provide documentation from the Office of Student Disability Services (for more information see: <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/sds/index.html> or call 619-594-6473).

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

\*Dates listed on the syllabus are subject to change

IS = Miriam Meyerhoff – *Introducing Sociolinguistics*;

RSR= *Routledge Sociolinguistics Reader*;

PDF/HO/Online = PDF on Blackboard, Handout, or online resource

### WEEK ONE – Introduction

T, 8-28: IS – Ch. 1

Th, 8-30: RSR-1: Schlee, Erik & Miriam Meyerhoff. (2010). Sociolinguistic methods for data collection and interpretation.

PDF: Cameron, D. (1990). Demythologizing Sociolinguistics.

PDF: Gumperz, J.J. (1968). The speech community.

### WEEK TWO – Variation and Language / Sociolinguistic Methods

DUE: Work Track A or Track B Finalized.

T, 9-4: IS – Ch. 2

RSR-19: Labov, William. (1972). The social motivation of a sound change.

PDF: Kroch, A. (1978). Toward a theory of social dialect variation.

Th, 9-6: Online: Human Subjects and the Institutional Review Board.

PDF: TBD (Sociolinguistic Variables)

PDF: TBD (Data Collection Methods)

### WEEK THREE – Variation and Style

DUE: Readings Q&A #1

Presentations Finalized

T, 9-11: IS – Ch. 3

PDF: Eckert, P. (2005). Variation, convention, and social meaning.

Th, 9-13: RSR-2: Bell, Allan. (2001). Back in style: Reworking audience design.

RSR-4: Zhang, Qing. (2005). A Chinese yuppie in Beijing: Phonological variation and the construction of a new professional identity.

### WEEK FOUR – Language Attitudes

DUE: Readings Q&A #2

Sociolinguistics Data Collection

T, 9-18: IS – Ch. 4

Online: Eckert, P. (2004). California vowels. Radio interview on *All Things Considered*.

<<http://www.stanford.edu/~eckert/vowels.html>>

<<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1693373>>

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Th, 9-20: RSR-7: Preston, Dennis. (2003). Language with an attitude.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

RSR-9: Purnell, Thomas, William Idsardi, & John Baugh. (1999). Perceptual and phonetic experiments on American English dialect identification.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WEEK FIVE – Politeness**

DUE: Readings Q&A #3a

T, 9-25: IS – Ch. 5

PDF: Fuller, J.M. (2003). The influence of speaker roles on discourse marker use.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Th, 9-27: RSR-5: Laver, John. (1981). Linguistic routines and politeness in greeting and parting.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

RSR-6: Ide, Sachiko. (1989). Formal forms and discernment: Two neglected aspects of universals of linguistic politeness.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WEEK SIX – Real and Apparent Time**

DUE: Readings Q&A #3b

T, 10-2: IS –Ch. 7

PDF: Labov, W. (2009). Transmission Problem in Linguistic Change.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Th, 10-4: RSR-21: Sankoff, Gillian & H  l  ne Blondeau. (2007). Language change across the lifespan: /r/ in Montreal French.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

RSR-22: Trudgill, Peter. (1988). Norwich revisited: Recent linguistics changes in an English urban dialect.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WEEK SEVEN – Social Class**

DUE: Readings Q&A #4a

T, 10-9: IS – Ch. 8

PDF: Woolard, K.A. (1985). Language variation and cultural hegemony: Toward an integration of sociolinguistic and social theory.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Th, 10-11: RSR-25: Kerswill, Paul & Anne Williams. (2000). Mobility versus social class in dialect leveling: Evidence from new and old towns in England.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

RSR-26: Nevalainen, Terttu. (1999). Making the best of 'bad' data: Evidence for sociolinguistic variation in Early Modern English.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WEEK EIGHT – Social Networks**

DUE: Readings Q&A #4b

T, 10-16: IS – Ch. 9

RSR-24: Milroy, Lesley & James Milroy. (1992). Social network and social class: Toward an integrated sociolinguistic model.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Th, 10-18: RSR-17: Rampton, Ben. (1998). Language crossing and the redefinition of reality.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

PDF: Cutler, C. (1999). Yorkville Crossing: White Teens, Hip-Hop, and AAE.

• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WEEK NINE – Midterm**

DUE: Midterm Take Home.

T, 10-23: PDF: Bigham, D.S. (2012). The San Diego Sociolinguistics Documentation Project.  
PDF: Bucholtz, M. (1999). 'Why Be Normal?': Language and Identity ... Nerd Girls  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Th, 10-25: (NWAV) \*\*\*IN-CLASS MID-TERM TEST\*\*\*

## **WEEK TEN – Gender**

DUE: Track B - Abstract & Research Question draft due!

T, 10-30: IS – Ch. 10  
RSR-27: Eckert, Penelope. (1998). Vowels and nail polish: The emergence of linguistic style in the preadolescent heterosexual marketplace.

Th, 11-1: TBD

## **WEEK ELEVEN – Gender cont'd**

DUE: Readings Q&A #5a

T, 11-6: RSR-30: Ochs, Elinor. (1992). Indexing gender.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
PDF: Cameron, D. (1997). Performing gender: Young men's talk and the construction of heterosexual masculinity.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

R, 11-8: RSR-31: Kiesling, Scott. (1997). Power and the language of men.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
RSR-32: Barrett, Rusty. (1998). Markedness and styleswitching in performances by African American Drag Queens.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WEEK TWELVE – Language Contact**

DUE: Readings Q&A #5b

T, 11-13: IS – Ch. 11  
PDF: Hinrichs, Lars. (2011). The Sociolinguistics of Diaspora: Language in the Jamaican Canadian Community.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

R, 11-15: RSR-15: Britain, David. (1997). Dialect contact, focusing, and phonological rule complexity: The koinéization of Fenland England.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
RSR-18: Meyerhoff, Miriam & Nancy Niedzielski. (2003). The globalization of vernacular variation.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

### **WEEK THIRTEEN – Thanksgiving**

DUE: Track B - Project Outline / Paper Draft Due!

T, 11-20: Google Docs MUSH online classroom day. Go to:  
<<https://docs.google.com/folder/d/0B6SsX0O1EqH3R XM5cnpTY09Rb1k/edit>>

Th, 11-22: THANKSGIVING - NO CLASS

### **WEEK FOURTEEN – Multilingualism and Language Choice**

DUE: Readings Q&A #6 (OPTIONAL; replaces lowest Q&A grade)

T, 11-27: IS – Ch.6  
RSR-14: Blom, Jan-Peter & John Gumperz. (1972). Social meaning in linguistic structure:  
Code-switching in Norway.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Th, 11-29: RSR-16: Heller, Monica. (2001). Legitimate language in a multilingual school.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
RSR-10: Ferguson, Gibson. (2006). Language education policy and the medium of instruction  
issue in post-colonial Africa.  
• PRESENTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

### **WEEK FIFTEEN – Summary Overview**

DUE: Track B - Optional Second Draft Due!

T, 12-4: IS-12  
PDF: Gordon, M.J. (2006). [Interview with William Labov]

Th, 12-6: LAST CLASS DAY – Take Home Exam Distributed

**Final Exam Due Date:** Thursday, Dec 13, 3pm  
Track A: Cumulative Take-Home Exam due by 3pm!  
Track B: Final Paper due by 3pm!