Sociophonetics
LING 492/792; Class Number 14605/14615; Fall 2002
MW 10-11:30am, 4068 Frieze

Syllabus

Instructors:
José R. Benkí (benki@umich.edu; 3-9173; 1085/4094 Frieze, Tuesdays 2-4pm)
Rusty Barrett (rustyb@umich.edu; 4-3725; 1089/4079 Frieze, Mondays 1:30-3pm)

When we had the idea for this course, we started off by calling it “Phonetics for sociolinguists.” However, it seems that phoneticians have just as much to learn from sociolinguists as sociolinguists from phoneticians. It also seemed to us that the course offered an opportunity much more than a simple “how-to” for sociolinguists.

This is a course on the areas of linguistic research shared by phonetics, sociolinguistics, and historical linguistics, three subfields that have addressed the issue of linguistic variability and change to a greater extent than most other traditional subfields of linguistics.

Prerequisites:
At least one course in phonetics/phonology (313), and preferably a course in sociolinguistics (340) or historical linguistics (317). Graduate equivalents are fine.

Requirements:
The requirements for this course consist of lab assignments, class presentations, class participation, and a course project.

6 Lab assignments (TBA) 20%
2 Reading presentations 20%
Class participation 10%
Project 50%
Total: 100%

The 6 lab assignments will occur early in the term and are designed to provide you with the skills necessary to do your projects. You will each lead the discussion of two assigned readings over the course of the term (reading presentations). There will be a handout explaining what that entails. For your class participation grade, during the semester you will turn in 6 substantive questions on any two readings before the discussion begins.

The project will consist of 3 parts, evaluated as follows:
Written paper (Due Dec 16) 70%
1st presentation (Oct 7/9) 10%
2nd presentation (Dec 9/11) 20%

Be prepared to (be) volunteer(-ed) next week for your reading presentations.
Schedule of readings:

All readings available electronically at <http://www.lib.umich.edu/reserves/items/index.html> except for Weinreich, Labov, and Herzog (reading for Oct 28)

Wed Sept 4 – Introduction

WEEK ONE – Background

Mon Sept 9 – Phonetic methodology
Wed Sept 11 – The problem of language change
   Reading: Hans Hock, Principles of historical linguistics Ch. 20 (overview of theories of sound change) 627–661

WEEK TWO – Speech analysis

Mon Sept 16 – Speech analysis
Wed Sept 18 – Speech analysis

WEEK THREE – Speech analysis

Wed Sept 25 – Kerswill & Wright (1990) 255-275

WEEK FOUR – Phonetics and sociolinguistic variation

Mon Sept 30 – Lesley Milroy and Matt Gordon, Sociolinguistics: method and interpretation. Chapter 6 Analyzing phonological variation

Wed Oct 2 – Guest speaker: Lesley Milroy
WEEK FIVE – Phonetic approaches to variation


WEEK SIX – Sociolinguistic approaches to variation

Mon Oct 14 – No class Fall Break

Wed Oct 16 – Gregory Guy – Variation in the group and the individual: The case of final stop deletion in Labov (ed), Locating language in time and space 1980

William Labov – The isolation of contextual styles 1972 Sociolinguistic patterns

WEEK SEVEN – Theories of language change

Mon Oct 21 – Guest speaker: Sally Thomason


WEEK EIGHT – Dialects of American English and the direction of sound change


WEEK NINE – What are the universal tendencies in the direction of sound change?


WEEK TEN – Chain shifts

Mon Nov 11 – Labov, General Principles of Vowel Shifting. In *Principles of Linguistic Change: Internal Factors*


WEEK ELEVEN – Mergers and Near-mergers


WEEK TWELVE – Lexical diffusion


WEEK THIRTEEN – Perceptual studies


WEEK FOURTEEN – Final project presentations

Mon Dec 9 –
Wed Dec 11 -

Mon Dec 16 - Final paper due at 5pm.