MLCS 582: Sociolinguistics
Fall 2010

Instructor: Professor Geneviève Maheux-Pelletier   Time: Thursday 14.00 – 17.00
Office: Arts 242-B   Place: Arts 430
Office Hours: T 11-12; R 12:30-1:30 (or by appointment)   E-mail: genevieve@ualberta.ca

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Course Prerequisite: Applied linguistics graduate student status or consent of instructor.

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?
      √ Yes   ☐ No, not needed, no such projects involved

Community Service Learning component
      ☐ Required   ☐ Optional   √ None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material available
      ☐ Exam registry – Students' Union
      ☐ See explanations below
      ☐ Document distributed in class
      ☐ Other
      √ NA (no exams)

Course Description and Objectives:

        This course is a graduate seminar that introduces students to the systematic study of language and society. The aim is to train students to do their own sociolinguistic research, from planning a study, to collecting and transcribing the data, and then to analyzing it. The first half of the course introduces students to sociolinguistic theory and to quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods of analysis, and both the readings and the class discussion will reflect this orientation. In the latter half of the course, we will then read sets of articles dealing with specific areas of sociolinguistics that apply these methods to answer research questions about a range of different languages in their social contexts.

Required Texts:

- Lesley Milroy and Matthew Gordon, 2003. *Sociolinguistics: Method and Interpretation.*

- Barbara Johnstone, 2000. *Qualitative Methods in Sociolinguistics.*

- Selected articles available electronically on eClass (see the list of articles on pp. 5-6)

Recommended:

Mackey, Alison (2005). "Introduction to Research." *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1-24.

Mackey, Alison (2005). "Qualitative Research." *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 162-84.

Grade Distribution:

- Participation in eClass discussions   10%
- Participation in-class discussions   10%
- Facilitated discussion (2*10%)   20%
- Final project   60%
      Abstract (October 28)   10%
      Preliminary paper (November 18)   10%
      Oral presentation (mini-conference   )   15%
      Final paper (December 8)   25%

Grading:
Marks for assignments, tests, and exams are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below (**"MLCS Graduate Grading Scale"**). The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course.

MLCS Graduate Grading Scale

A+	97-100	Excellent
A	93-96	Excellent
A-	90-92	Excellent
B+	87-89	Good
B	79-86	Good
B-	74-78	Satisfactory
C+	68-73	Satisfactory
C	63-67	Failure
C-	58-62	Failure
D+	54-57	Failure
D	50-53	Failure
F	00-49	Failure

Class participation:
Students are expected to have read the assigned reading(s) carefully before coming to class and to participate actively in class discussions by asking questions and collaborating to their answers. Given the heavy reading load, it is important to spread the readings throughout the week.

eClass participation:
eClass should be an interesting way to continue our conversation about sociolinguistics outside the classroom as well as a tool to help focus our discussions on issues that are interesting or difficult to you. You will be required to post your comments, questions, responses to your classmates <u>each Wednesday by 9 pm</u> for at least 8 of the class discussions.

Facilitated Discussions:
Each week we will discuss different articles, and each week a different student will present one of the assigned readings to the other students. These presentations should not be in the form of a formally-prepared presentation, but should instead be seen as "facilitated discussions". Everyone will have read the readings, so the student facilitator should simply summarize the content of the articles during the first part and then lead the class in a discussion with prepared questions,

relevance to other readings, the students' own ideas, etc. Each student will present two articles and is encouraged to meet with me <u>by Tuesday</u> of the week preceding your facilitated discussion to make sure that the format and content meets expectations.

Final paper:

More than half of your grade is based on an individual research project of your choice that is relevant to the course material, as well as its presentation. It will include the following components:

Abstract: About halfway through the semester, you should have decided on a paper topic. You will write an abstract for your paper, as if you were actually going to send it in for presentation in a scholarly conference. Several examples of abstracts will be provided at that time, and we will also discuss the format of a good abstract in class as well as length requirements (for the purpose of the class, maximum 350 words). It should be <u>sent electronically</u> by October 28 and be revised by the time the preliminary version of your paper is due.

Preliminary version: You will be required to submit a preliminary version of your paper on November 18. This will include a title, your revised abstract, a short abstract (100 words maximum) for inclusion in the program, a preliminary literature review including the theoretical background for your study, a methodology section, and at least an overview of your data analysis and conclusions. The more you have done by then, the more I will be able to give you feedback to be incorporated in the final version of your paper. Your paper should be written in English and is to be <u>submitted electronically</u>.

Presentation: The presentations will take place at a "mini-conference" during finals week at a mutual agreeable date and time. Your presentation should be in the format of an actual scholarly paper you would present at a real conference. Please plan to attend a few talks (such as those presented at the MLCS lecture series) this term to familiarize yourself with modes of presentations. In keeping with general procedures at applied linguistics conferences in North America, you should plan for twenty minutes for the presentation with ten minutes for discussion afterwards. Note that your presentation should offer a <u>brief overview</u> of the theoretical background and methodology, but <u>focus primarily on your data analysis</u>. You may then incorporate any input you receive in the discussion into your final paper.

Final paper: The final paper should be 18 to 20 pages long and be submitted in a <u>hard copy format</u> by December 8 at 4pm in my mailbox. I encourage you to read Mackey's articles (see suggested reading list) to inform yourself about what to include in a research report. Although about second language research, her advice is relevant to applied linguistics research in general and explains how to approach quantitative and qualitative research designs.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

All students should consult the "Truth-In-Education" handbook or Website (http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/) regarding the definitions of **plagiarism** and its consequences when detected.

Students not writing in their native language should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of "cheating" that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences. An instructor who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty.

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Students are allowed to miss one session without penalty regardless of the reason for their absence (excusable or not), after which one percentage point per absence will be deducted from the 10% attendance and participation grade.

Missed grade components due to absences may be excused if they are due to illness or domestic affliction. Instructors can no longer request a doctor's note for absences due to illness, but they may request other adequate documentation at their discretion such as a form from the student's Faculty or a statutory declaration. In other cases, including domestic affliction or religious conviction, adequate documentation must be provided to substantiate the reason for an absence. If grade components are missed as a result of an excusable absence (see policy for excusable absence above), they can be sent electronically to the instructor within two days or be rescheduled in the case of a facilitated discussion.

Assignments are not accepted late unless prior arrangements has been made with the instructor.

Required Notes:
"Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar." (GFC 29 SEP 2003). "The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University." (GFC 29 SEP 2003)

Date	Readings	Assignments
09/09	**Course introduction**, some definitions of sociolinguistics, discussion of interests and possible paper topics Wardhaugh (distributed in class)	
16/09	**Methods and Models** Readings: Milroy/Gordon chapter 1, Johnstone chapters 1&3, Tashakkori/Teddlie (eClass)	
23/09	**Planning a Study** Readings: Milroy/Gordon chapter 2, Johnstone chapter 4	
30/09	**Data Collection** Readings: Milroy/Gordon chapter 3, Johnstone chapter 7	
07/10	**Data Analysis: Quantitative** Readings: Milroy/Gordon chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7	
14/10	**Data Analysis: Qualitative** Readings: Johnstone chapter 5, 6, and 8	
21/10	**Sociolinguistic Variation** Readings (eClass): Labov, Fought, Boberg	
28/10	**Sociolinguistic Approaches to Discourse** Readings (eClass): Drew, Trester, Pagliai	Abstract (electronic format)
04/11	**Multilingualism and Code-Mixing** Readings (eClass): Bhatt, Auer, Myers-Scotton	
11/11	**Remembrance Day: No class!**	
18/11	**Second Language Sociolinguistics** Readings (eClass): Rindal, Nagy/Blondeau/Auger, Stevens	Preliminary paper (electronic format)
25/11	**Commodification of Language** Readings (eClass): Heller, Leeman/Modan	
02/12	*Mini-conference*	Oral presentation
08/12	---	Final paper due (hard copy)

Reading List for MLCS 582

Auer, P. (1995). 'The Pragmatics of Code-switching: A Sequential Approach.' In L. Milroy and P. Muysken (Eds.), *One Speaker, Two Languages: Crossdisciplinary Perspectives on Code-switching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 115-35.

Bhatt, R. (2008). 'In other words: Language mixing, identity representations, and third space.' *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 12(2): 177-200.

Boberg, C. (2009). 'The emergence of a new phoneme: Foreign (a) in Canadian English.' *Language Variation and Change* 21(3): 355-80.

Drew, P. (1997). '"Open" class repair initiators in response to sequential sources of troubles in conversation." *Journal of Pragmatics* 28(1): 69-101.

Fought, C (1999). 'A majority sound change in a minority community: /u/-fronting in Chicano English.' *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3(1): 5-23.

Heller, M. (to appear). 'The commodification of language.' *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39 (page numbers available upon publication).

Labov, W (1990). 'The intersection of sex and social class in the cours of linguistic change.' *Language Variation and Change* 2(2): 205-54.

Leeman, J., & G. Modan (2009). 'Commodified language in Chinatown: A contextualized approach to linguistic landscape.' *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 13(3): 332-62.

Myers-Scotton, C. (1995). 'Motivations for the markedness model.' *Social Motivations for Codeswitching: Evidence from Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 75-112.

Nagy, N., H. Blondeau, & J. Auger (2003). 'Second language acquisition and "real" French: an investigation of subject doubling in the French of Montreal Anglophones.' *Language Variation and Change* 15(1): 73-103.

Pagliai, V. (2009) 'Conversational Agreement and Racial Formation Processes.' *Language in Society* 38(5): 549-579.

Rindal, U. (2010). 'Constructing identity with L2: Pronunciation and attitudes among Norwegian learners of English.' *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 14(2): 240-61.

Stevens, G. (1999). 'Age at immigration and second language proficiency among foreign-born adults.' *Language in Society* 28(4): 555-78.

Tashakkori, A., & C.Teddlie, (2008). 'Introduction to mixed method and mixed model studies in the social and behavioral sciences.' In V. L. Plano Clark & J. W. Creswell (Eds.), *The Mixed Method Reader*. Los Angeles: Sage, 7-26.

Trester, A. M. (2009). 'Discourse marker "oh" as a means for realizing the identity potential of constructed dialogue in interaction.' *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 13(2): 147-68.

Wardhaugh, R. 'Introduction.' *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell: 1-21.