ENG 241 - Sociolinguistics

5 ECTS credit points
Spring Semester, 2018

Instructor: Dr. Constantina Fotiou

Days, Time & Venue: Tuesday/Friday, 16:30–18:00, ΩΔ01, Room: 102

Office hours: Tuesday 13:00–16:00 and by appointment

Office Location: Dept. of English Studies, M Building, Kallipoleos Av., Room: M106

Email: constantina1605@hotmail.com

Brief description

The basic premise of sociolinguistics is that one cannot study language outside its context. The study of sociolinguistics can be seen “as a way of viewing the world around you” (to quote from the main textbook of this course, p. 1). This course introduces students to the field of sociolinguistics by focusing on language variation and how sociocultural factors affect linguistic behaviour, examining language ideologies, attitudes and myths as well as multilingualism, the presence, role and forms of English in today’s world and by exploring studies that are oriented towards social justice.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, the students will have:

- acquired an understanding of basic theoretical principles, concepts and methodological approaches underlying sociolinguistics
- understood how sociocultural factors affect linguistic behaviour
- studied the role variation plays in language and how it can lead to language change
- acquired an understanding of how some languages have more ‘power’ than others and how that can lead to the establishment of norms, standards, and the perpetuation of certain attitudes towards certain linguistic varieties
- gained an overall understanding of societal multilingualism and become familiar with various language contact phenomena
- studied the role of English in today’s world and explored examples of English varieties
- acquired an understanding of how research in sociolinguistics is related to social justice
Outline

Weeks 1–2 Introduction to the field of Sociolinguistics/Basic Concepts

Lecture 1  16 January 2018 – What do sociolinguists do?
  • W&F Chapter 1, pp. 1–7, 14–19
  • *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, Ch. 1, pp. 12–20

Lecture 2  19 January 2018 – On languages, dialects and varieties (1)
  • W&F Ch. 2, pp. 27–38, 40–42
  • *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*, Ch. 16, pp. 133–139
  • *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, Ch. 1, pp. 8–12 & 20–26
  • *Language in society: an introduction to sociolinguistics*, Ch. 1, pp. 11–20

Lecture 3  23 January 2018 – On languages, dialects and varieties (2)
  • W&F Chapter 2, pp. 38–40, 42–56
  • *Language in society: an introduction to sociolinguistics*, Ch. 1, pp. 21–22
  • *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*, Ch. 11, pp. 95–100.
  • *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, Ch. 2, pp. 52–58

Lecture 4  26 January 2018 – Defining groups of speakers
  • W&F, Chapter 3, pp. 62–77
  • Handbook of Language Variation and Change. Ch.19, pp. 409–412 & Ch.20, pp. 428–435

Weeks 3–5 Language variation, change & methods in variationist sociolinguistics

Lecture 5  30 January 2018 – Introduction to Language Variation
  • W&F, Ch. 6, pp. 142–157
  • *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Ch. 1, pp. 3–11

Lecture 6  2 February 2018 – Methods in Variationist Sociolinguistics & Research Ethics
  • W&F, Ch. 6, pp. 157–168
  • *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Ch. 2, pp. 12–18
  • *On the Sociolinguistic Interview* (notes on blackboard)
  • *Sociolinguistics Method and Interpretation*. Ch. 3, pp. 79–87

Lecture 7  6 February 2018 – First Wave of Variation Studies (1)
  • W&F, Ch. 7, pp. 169–185
  • *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. Ch. 3, pp. 75–89
Lecture 8 9 February 2018 – First Wave of Variation Studies (2)
- W&F, Ch. 7, pp. 169–185
- *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. Ch. 3, pp. 75–89
- Activities in Class

Lecture 9 13 February – Second and Third Wave of Variation Studies
- W&F, Ch. 7, pp. 185–195

Lecture 10 16 February 2018 – Language Variation and Change (1)
- W&F, Ch. 8, pp. 196–223
- *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, Ch. 4, pp. 109–145
- *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Ch. 22, pp. 185–191

Lecture 11 20 February 2018 – Language Variation and Change (2)
- W&F, Ch. 8, pp. 196–223
- *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, Ch. 4, pp. 109–145
- *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Ch. 22, pp. 185–191

Weeks 6–7 Language Attitudes, Ideologies and Myths & Mid-term

Lecture 12 23 February 2018 – Languages with an attitude & Language Myths
- W&F, Ch. 3, pp. 74–77, Ch. 4, pp. 88–90
- *Handbook of Language Variation and Change*. Ch. 7 ‘Language with an Attitude’
- *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*. Ch. 14, pp. 116–121

Lecture 13 27 February 2018 – Languages with an attitude & Language Myths
- *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Polities and Identities*, Ch. 2 ‘Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation, pp. 35–83 (notes on blackboard)

Midterm: 2 March 2018

Weeks 8–12 Multilingualism

Lecture 14 6 March 2018 – Multilingual Societies (1)
- W&F, Ch. 4, pp. 82–96
- *Language in Society*, Ch. 2, pp. 32–49

9 March 2018 – lecture cancelled
Lecture 15  13 March 2018 – Multilingual Societies (2)
- W&F, Ch. 4, pp. 82–96
- *Language in Society*, Ch. 2, pp. 32–49

Lecture 16  16 March 2018 – Multilingual Societies (3) (discussion related to language ideologies)
- Material on Blackboard

Lecture 17  20 March 2018 – On Linguistic Landscapes (& Practical Component)

Lecture 18  23 March 2018 – Multilingual Discourse (1)
- W&F, Ch. 4, ‘Multilingual Discourse’ pp. 96-110
- Extra notes to be given/available on blackboard

Lecture 19  27 March 2018 – Multilingual Discourse (2)
- English–Greek code-switching in Greek Cypriot magazines and newspapers – an analysis of its textual forms and functions. Journal of World Languages, 4:1, 1-27, DOI: 10.1080/21698252.2017.1385922 (a copy will be provided)

Lecture 20  30 March 2018 – Contact Languages: Structural consequences of social factors
- W&F, Ch. 5, pp. 114–134

Easter Break

Lecture 21  17 April 2018 – language maintenance, shift and language death
- *Introducing Sociolinguistics* Ch. 8 pp. 242–256, 265–270

Lecture 22  18 April 2018 (Wednesday) – On the English language (to make up for cancelled lecture)
- The growth and spread of British English (notes on blackboard)
- Brief history of American English (notes on blackboard)
- African American Vernacular English/AAVE (W&F, Ch.2, pp. 46–50)

Lecture 23  20 April 2018 – On the English language in Cyprus
- Notes on blackboard
Weeks 13-14 Sociolinguistics and Social Justice

Lecture 24  24 April 2018 – Language Policy and Planning (1)
- W&F, Ch. 14, pp. 367–393

Lecture 25  27 April 2018 – Language Policy and Planning (2)
- W&F, Ch. 14, pp. 367–393

Lecture 26  4 May 2018 – Sociolinguistics and Education
- W&F, Ch. 13, pp. 339–355

Final Exam: date/time TBA

Evaluation

Completion of two short exercise style assignments 10%
Completion of assigned reading before each class,
regular attendance & active participation: 10%
Mid-term exam: 25%
Final Exam: 55%

Main textbook (required)
to be purchased by students


Note:
The book has a companion website with additional online material, examples, exercises, chapter-by-chapter study guide and a list of key terms. Students are encouraged to use it.
Reading list


