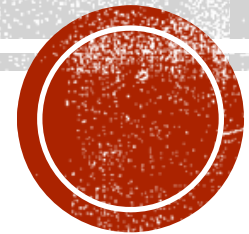


SOCIOLINGUISTICS

MA Semester Two

Dr. Ashraf R. Abdullah



SYLLABUS

What kind of linguistic choices do people make, and why do they make the choices they do? In this course, we will investigate the social basis of language, and the linguistic basis of social life: what happens when languages come into contact, how dialects form, how and why language changes, and how and why different social groups (age, gender, ethnicity, class) speak differently. We will also consider how people manage to carry on fluent, competent conversations, and how they convey their social relationships with their interlocutors in those conversations. Finally, we will explore how our knowledge of these issues is put to practical use.



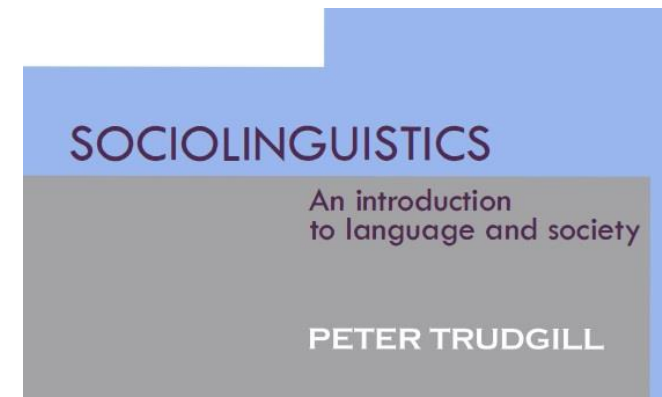
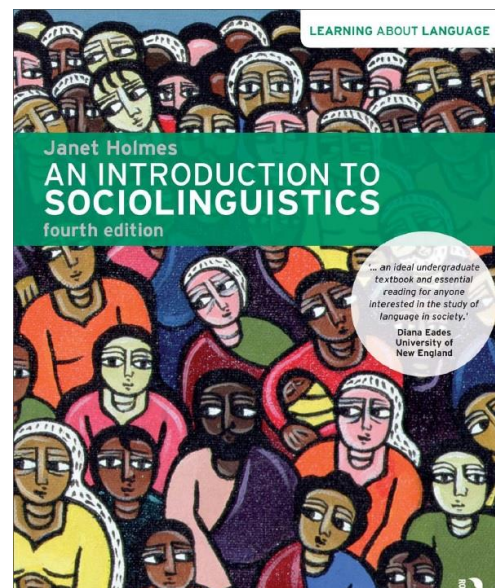
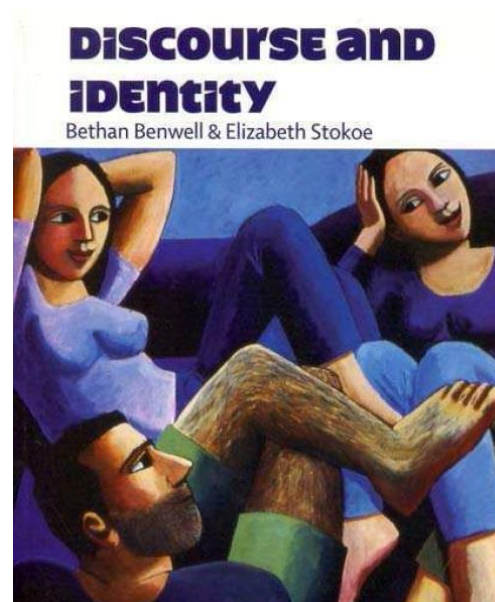
TEXTS AND RESOURCES

Primary texts:

- Holmes, Janet. 2013. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Fourth Edition. Abington, Oxon: Routledge.
- Wardhaugh, Ronald. 2006. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Fifth Edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Secondary texts:

- Auer, Peter (Ed.). 1998. *Code-Switching in Conversation*. London: Routledge.
- Benwell, Bethan & Elizabeth Stokoe. 2006. *Discourse and Identity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Edwards, John. 2009. *Language and Identity: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



REQUIREMENTS

Class participation

We will have a healthy mix of lecture and discussion in this class, and lectures will be participatory. The written assignments will be very similar to the in-class work, so these discussions will help you prepare. You will receive a grade for class participation, which will be worth 5% of your total grade. Attendance is required. *Documented* excuses (i.e. I need a note) will be accepted for illness or injury, or the death or severe illness of a close friend or family member.

REQUIREMENTS

Exercises

Assigned seminars will be due once per week in the form of PowerPoint presentations and are due by 8:30am on the day listed. They will be graded on a 10-point scale and may be revised and turned in for an increased grade up to one week after the original due date. The average of your grades for seminars is 5% of your final grade.

REQUIREMENTS

Major Assignment

You will have one major assignment to turn in. This is a mini-paper which analyzes some data by using the concepts we have learned, and by referring to examples discussed in class. The grade for the major assignment is 20% of your final grade.

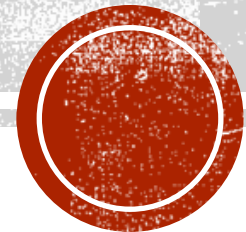
Academic Calendar

This is subject to correction.

Date	Week	Topic	Reading/Assignment Due
18 th Feb	One		
25 th Feb	Two	Introduction: What do Sociolinguists Study?	<i>Holmes, Ch.1</i>
		Language and Society	<i>Wardhaugh Ch. 1</i>
		Sociolinguistics and the Sociology of Language	<i>Wardhaugh Ch. 1</i>
4 th March	Three	Languages and Communities	<i>Wardhaugh Ch. 2</i>
		Language and Dialect, Regional Dialects, Social Dialects	
		Dialect vs. Accent	
11 th March	Four	Style, Context, and Register	<i>Holmes, Ch. 10</i>
		Addressee and Style	
		Accommodation Theory Context, Style and Class	
18 th March	Five	Pidgins and Creoles	<i>Wardhaugh Ch. 3</i>
		Lingua Francas	
		From Pidgin to Creole	

WEEKLY BREAKDOWN

See handout:



WHAT IS A SOCIOLINGUIST?

Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society. They are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different **social contexts**, and they are concerned with identifying the **social functions** of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning.



Example 2

Ray: Good afternoon, sir.

Principal: What are you doing here at this time?

Ray: Mr Sutton kept us in, sir.

Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and the way people convey and construct aspects of their social identity through their language.

Example 1

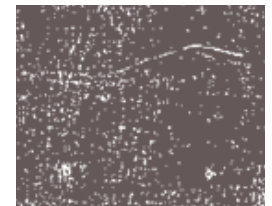
Ray: Hi mum.

Mum: Hi. You're late.

Ray: Yeah, that bastard Sootbucket kept us in again.

Mum: Nana's here.

Ray: Oh sorry. Where is she?



Exercise 2

Make a list of all the names you are called by people who know you. For each name note who uses it to you and when or where.

Do some people call you by more than one name?

What are the reasons why people choose one name rather than another for you?

Answers at end of chapter

Exercise 3

We often have different names for people when we are addressing them directly, as opposed to when we are referring to them in different contexts.

Note what you call your mother in different contexts:

(a) addressing her

- (i) at home alone with her
- (ii) on the telephone with friends listening
- (iii) in a shop.

(b) referring to her

- (i) at home to another family member when she is present
- (ii) at home to another family member when she isn't present
- (iii) to an acquaintance who doesn't know her
- (iv) to a sales assistant in a shop when she is present.

What influences your choice of address form and reference form in each of these contexts?

Answers at end of chapter



- Doctor My students
- Dr. Ashraf Colleagues and acquaintances (not close)
- Ashraf My mother
- Boss My employees
- Ashy Close and old friends from England
- Shoo Shoo Miss Shaimaa, Miss Dunia
- Sharoufy Close friends sometimes when they want something
- Abu Ahmed Friends and acquaintances outside the university
- Habiby/Hoby/Hayaty/Qalby/Rouhi/Sanadi/ya hilu Lina





Language and Society



Sociolinguistics and the Sociology of Language
Dr. Ashraf



Languages and Communities:



- Language and Dialect

?One of you?



- Regional Dialects and Social Dialects

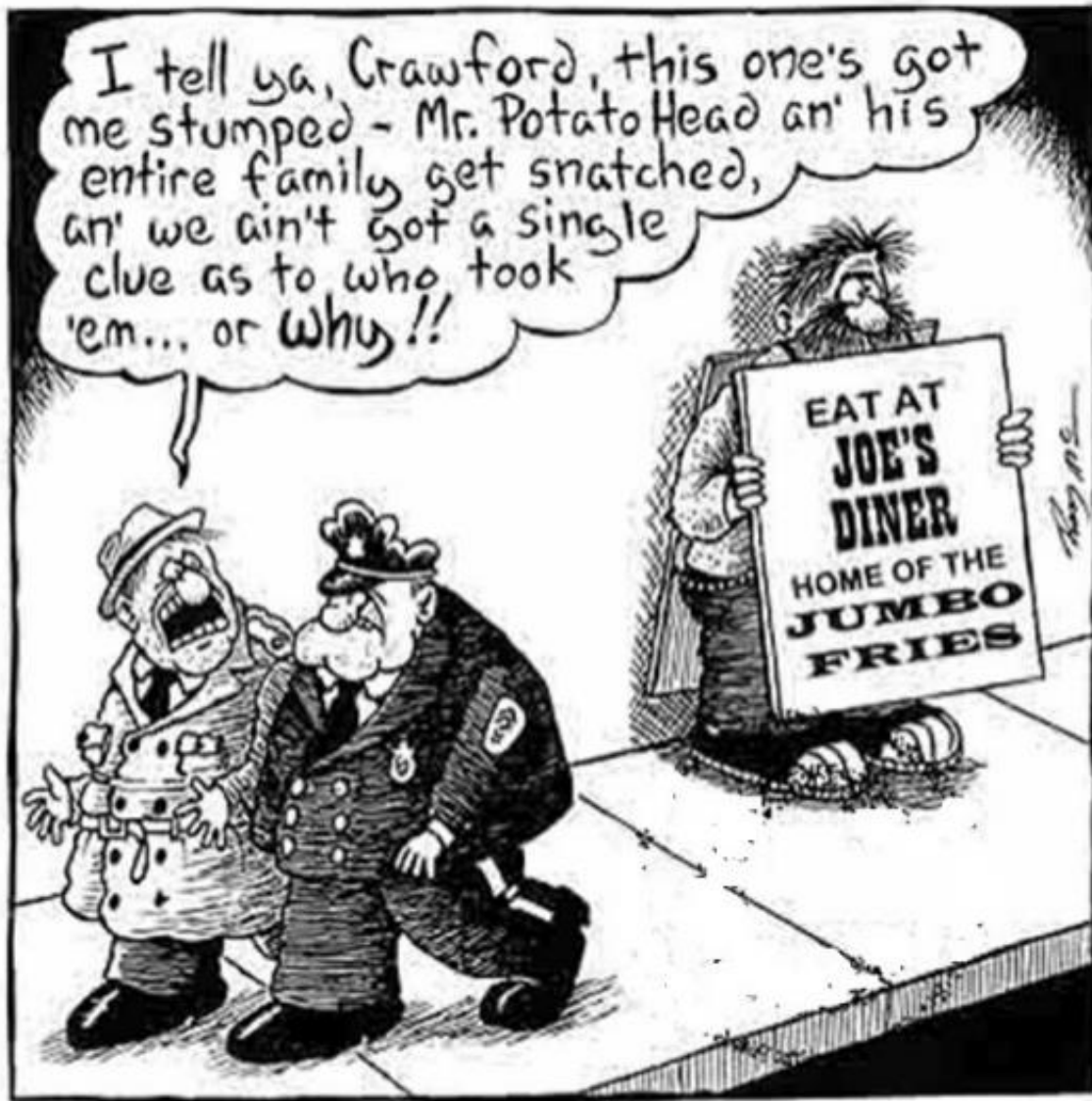


- Dialect vs. Accent

NEXT WEEK

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦







a *society* is any group of people who are drawn together for a certain purpose or purposes



a *language* is what the members of a particular society speak.



Definitions of language and society are not independent: the definition of language includes in it a reference to society.

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY



LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

- There are many ways in which language and society are related.

It is rare to find investigations of any language which are entirely cut off from concurrent investigations of the history of that language, or of its regional and/or social distributions, or of its relationship to objects, ideas, events, and actual speakers and listeners in the 'real' world.

That is one of the reasons why a number of linguists have found Chomsky's asocial view of linguistic theorizing to be a rather sterile type of activity, since it explicitly rejects any concern for the relationship between a language and those who use it.

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

We must acknowledge that a language is essentially a set of items, what Hudson (1996, p. 21) calls 'linguistic items,' such entities as sounds, words, grammatical structures, and so on. It is these items, their status, and their arrangements that language theorists such as Chomsky concern themselves with.

On the other hand, social theorists, particularly sociologists, attempt to understand how societies are structured and how people manage to live together. To do so, they use such concepts as 'identity,' 'power,' 'class,' 'status,' 'solidarity,' 'accommodation,' 'face,' 'gender,' 'politeness,' etc.

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

- Sociolinguists try to examine possible relationships between 'linguistic items' on the one hand and concepts such as 'power,' 'solidarity,' etc. on the other. We should note that in doing so we are trying to relate two different kinds of entities in order to see what light they throw on each other.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

- There are several possible relationships between language and society. One is that social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behavior – age grading.
- A second possible relationship is directly opposed to the first: linguistic structure and/or behavior may either influence or determine social structure – Whorfian hypothesis (languages rather than speakers can be ‘sexist’).
- A third possible relationship is that the influence is bi-directional: language and society may influence each other – “speech behaviour and social behaviour are in a state of constant interaction” (Dittmar, 1976: p.238)
- A fourth possibility is to assume that there is no relationship at all between linguistic structure and social structure and that each is independent of the other – Chomsky.

DEFINING SOCIOLINGUISTICS

- **Gumperz** (1971, p. 223) has observed that sociolinguistics is an attempt to find correlations between social structure and linguistic structure and to observe any changes that occur.
- **Chambers** (2002, p. 3) is even more direct: 'Sociolinguistics is the study of the social uses of language, and the most productive studies in the four decades of sociolinguistic research have emanated from determining the social evaluation of linguistic variants. These are also the areas most susceptible to scientific methods such as hypothesis-formation, logical inference, and statistical testing.'

DEFINING SOCIOLINGUISTICS

- It is a well-known fact that a correlation shows only a relationship between two variables; it does not show ultimate causation. To find that X and Y are related is not necessarily to discover that X causes Y (or Y causes X), for it is also quite possible that some third factor, Z, may cause both X and Y
- A worthwhile sociolinguistics, however, must be something more than just a simple mixing of linguistics and sociology which takes concepts and findings from the two disciplines and attempts to relate them in simple ways.



Holmes (1992, p. 16) says that ‘the sociolinguist’s aim is to move towards a theory which provides a motivated account of the way language is used in a community, and of the choices people make when they use language.’



Wardhaugh (2006, p. 12) simply states that “sociolinguistics, whatever it is, is about asking important questions concerning the relationship of language to society.”

DEFINING SOCIOLINGUISTICS



SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

- Some investigators have found it appropriate to try to introduce a distinction between ***sociolinguistics*** or ***micro-sociolinguistics*** and the ***sociology of language*** or ***macro-sociolinguistics***. In this distinction, sociolinguistics is concerned with investigating the relationships between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and of how languages function in communication; the equivalent goal in the sociology of language is trying to discover how social structure can be better understood through the study of language, e.g., how certain linguistic features serve to characterize particular social arrangements.

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

- **Hudson** (1996, p. 4) has described the difference as follows: **sociolinguistics** is 'the study of language in relation to society,' whereas the **sociology of language** is 'the study of society in relation to language.' In other words, in sociolinguistics we study language and society in order to find out as much as we can about what kind of thing language is, and in the sociology of language we reverse the direction of our interest.

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

- Coulmas (1997, p. 2) says that 'micro-sociolinguistics investigates how social structure influences the way people talk and how language varieties and patterns of use correlate with social attributes such as class, sex, and age.
- Macro-sociolinguistics, on the other hand, studies what societies do with their languages, that is, attitudes and attachments that account for the functional distribution of speech forms in society, language shift, maintenance, and replacement, the delimitation and interaction of speech communities.'

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

The view **Wardhaugh** takes is that both sociolinguistics and the sociology of language require a systematic study of language *and* society if they are to be successful. Moreover, a sociolinguistics that deliberately refrains from drawing conclusions about society seems to be unnecessarily restrictive, just as restrictive indeed as a sociology of language that deliberately ignores discoveries about language made in the course of sociological research.

Think about it Which approach do you agree with?

WEEK THREE: LANGUAGE AND COMMUNITIES (ONE OF YOU)

