

LIN 7641 (3920) Spring 2007 Wednesday 8-10 MAT 003 Office hours : TU 2-4, TR 11-12, or by appointment	Hélène Blondeau blondeau@rll.ufl.edu Dauer 210 392-2016 ext 247
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**LIN 7641 SEMINAR IN LANGUAGE VARIATION**  
*Language, Variation and Change*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The topic of this year’s seminar is language variation and change. Since the seminal work of Labov, we have known that linguistic variation is not really ‘free’ but rather influenced in very systematic ways by social and linguistic factors. In this seminar, we will examine and discuss the methodology and theory which underly studies of language variation and change, using the framework of variationist sociolinguistics. Reviewing recent and classical studies, the course will provide the students with a solid understanding of the variationist perspective.

In addition, students will gain experience in all stages of a variationist sociolinguistic research and write an original research paper based on natural speech data gathered in social context. During the course of the semester, we will conduct weekly workshops to put into practice the methodology and theory of variation studies, and we will examine each step necessary for the analysis of sociolinguistic variation.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

**IN THIS COURSE YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT :**

- The approach for the study of language in its social context
- Methods in data collection
- Identification of a linguistic variable
- Circumscribing the variable context
- Social and linguistic factors constraining linguistic variation
- The relation of variation to language change
- Issues in quantitative measurement and variable rules analysis

**GRADES**

Activities	%	Important Dates
Participation	10	Every week
Article presentations	10	Variable
Assignments based on workshops	40	See Calendar for workshop dates
Final research project	40	
Preliminary proposal	(5)	March 14th
Oral Presentation	(10)	April 24th
Written version	(25)	May 1st

Article presentations :

- 20 minute presentation followed by a group discussion
- Bring a hand-out, or prepare a Powerpoint presentation
- Provide points for discussion

Participation

Your participation grade will be based on your personal involvement in class, and on your contribution to the discussion through Vista. Each Tuesday, you will have to post one discussion question or comment concerning your weekly readings.

## READINGS

**Textbook :**

Tagliamonte, S. A. 2006. *Analysing Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

**Required readings:**

A list of readings is provided in the calendar at the end of the syllabus. This list will be updated during the course of the semester. The updated version of the calendar will be available through the course website on Vista. Most of the readings can be obtained via the Reserve or the EReserve of the library. Where indicated, the readings are available through other electronic sites.

**Recommended reading :**

Labov, W. 1972. *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

**General references :**

Ammon U., Dittmar, N. and Mattheier, K.J. (eds.) 2005. *Sociolinguistics : An international handbook of the science of language and society, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Berlin : Walter de Gruyter.

Ammon U., Dittmar, N. and Mattheier, K.J. (eds.) 1988. *Sociolinguistics : An international handbook of the science of language and society*. Berlin : Walter de Gruyter.

Chambers, J. 1995. *Sociolinguistic theory*. Oxford : Blackwell.

Chambers, J. K., P. Trudgill, N. Schilling-Estes (eds.) 2002. *The handbook of language variation and change* Malden : Blackwell.

Fought, C. (ed.) 2004. *Sociolinguistic Variation. Critical Reflection*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.

Gadet, F. (ed.) 1992. *Languages 108: Hétérogénéité et variation: Labov, un bilan*.

Guy G. et al. (eds.) 1996. *Towards a social science of language, Volume 1 : Variation and change in language and society*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia : John Benjamins,

Guy G. et al. (eds.) 1997. *Towards a social science of language, Volume 2 : Social interaction and discourse structures*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia : John Benjamins,

Labov, W. 1972. *Sociolinguistics pattern*. Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press.

Labov W. 1994. *Principles of linguistic change, Volume 1 : Internal Factors*. Oxford & Malden : Blackwell Publishers.

Labov W. 2001. *Principles of linguistic change, Volume 2 : External Factors*. Oxford & Malden : Blackwell Publishers.

- Paolillo J. C. 2002 *Analyzing Linguistic Variation Statistical Models and Methods*. Stanford : Center for Study of Language and Information.
- Poplack, S. (ed.) 2000. *The English history of African American English*. Oxford & Malden : Blackwell Publishers.
- Poplack, S. and S. Tagliamonte 2001. *African American English in the diaphora*. Oxford & Malden : Blackwell Publishers.

**Major Journals:**

Language Variation and Change

Language in Society

Journal of Sociolinguistics