

LING 414: Sociophonetics

Class Meetings	Tuesdays 5-7:30pm ICC 106
Professor	Jennifer Nycz jennifer.nycz@georgetown.edu Office hours: Tuesdays 2-4pm or by appointment in 224 Poulton Make appointments here: https://calendly.com/jn621
T.A.	Jon Havenhill jeh241@georgetown.edu Office hours: Wednesdays 3-5pm at the Midnight Mug
Textbook	Thomas, Erik. 2010. <i>Sociophonetics: An Introduction</i> . Palgrave. Other readings will be made available on Canvas.
Course website:	Canvas

Course Overview. Everyone has an accent. Moreover, everyone's accent varies depending on who they are talking to, what they are talking about, what kind of personal identity they want to convey, and other contextual factors, and listeners accordingly attribute social meaning to the variation that they hear. In this course students will learn how sociophonetic variation in production and perception can be systematically studied to answer questions about language, social meaning, and the link between them. The first part of the course will focus on the acoustic analysis of conversational speech. The second part will turn to the experimental study of speech perception and social meaning and the implications of sociophonetic variation for phonological theory. Students will develop skills throughout this course that will enable them to 1) make appropriate methodological choices when planning research projects in sociophonetics, 2) use tools such as ELAN, PRAAT, FAVE, NORM, and R to facilitate data processing, and 3) critically evaluate (socio)phonetic studies of language.

Requirements and Assessment

- **Engagement (10%).** Your attendance is required every day, and you must come to class prepared to talk about the day's readings and topic and to work in pairs or small groups on phonetic analysis. If you are shy or otherwise have difficulty participating in group discussions, come talk to me and we'll work out some strategies.
- **Pre-class exercises (10%).** Small assignments to be completed before class meets each week
- **Post-class reflection (5%).** Short questions to be answered after class meets each week
- **Homework (25%)** There will be several homework assignments in the first half of the term. These assignments will take you through a workflow from recording word list and spontaneous speech to analyzing and plotting the data
- **Final project and paper (50%)** You will carry out a small-scale sociophonetics research project (alone or in a pair). More details will be given in a separate handout, but the paper process will involve a **project proposal** (1-2 pages), three project **progress reports** (max 1 page each), an in-class project **presentation**, and the final **written paper** (about 15 pages).

Course Schedule & Required Readings

N.B.: Changes to the syllabus are possible throughout the term; please check the course website on Canvas regularly for any updates and tips on how to approach the readings. Readings will be added according to class interest.

Tuesday, January 16th: **Sources of variability in the production and perception of speech**

- Thomas Chapter 1.
- Foulkes, Paul, Scobbie, James M. & Watt, Dominic J.L. 2010. Sociophonetics. In Hardcastle, W., Laver, J. & Gibbon, F. (eds.) *Handbook of Phonetic Sciences* (2nd ed.). Blackwell: 703–754.

📅 ASSIGNMENT 1 (MAKING A RECORDING) GOES OUT

- Cieri, Christopher. Making a field recording. In Di Paolo & Yaeger-Dror (eds). *Sociophonetics: A Student's Guide*. Routledge: 24–35.
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Monday, January 22th 📅 ASSIGNMENT 1 (MAKING A RECORDING) DUE BY 12PM.

Tuesday, January 23rd: **Obstruents**

- Thomas Chapter 4.1–4.8
- REVIEW AS NEEDED: Thomas Chapter 2.1–2.3
- Install praat on your laptop. <http://praat.org>
- Install ELAN on your laptop. <https://tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan/>

📅 ASSIGNMENT 2 (TRANSCRIPTION) GOES OUT

- Rosenfelder, Ingrid. 2011. A short introduction to transcribing with ELAN.
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Monday, January 29th: 📅 ASSIGNMENT 2 (TRANSCRIPTION) DUE BY 12PM

Tuesday, January 30th: **Vowels 1: Word classes & measurement choices**

- Labov, William, Sharon Ash, & Charles Boberg. 2006. The North American English vowel system. Chapter 2 in *The Atlas of North American English*: 11–15.
- Thomas Chapter 5.1–5.4
- REVIEW AS NEEDED: Thomas Chapter 2.4–2.5
- Praat scripting tutorial (linked on Canvas)

📅 ASSIGNMENT 3 (MEASURING VOWELS) GOES OUT

Monday, February 5th: 📌 ASSIGNMENT 3 (MEASURING VOWELS) DUE BY 12PM

Tuesday, February 6th: **Vowels 2: Normalization, Plotting.**

➤ Thomas Chapter 5.5–5.6.

➤ Thomas, Erik & Tyler Kendall. 2007. NORM: The vowel normalization and plotting suite.

<http://ncslaap.lib.ncsu.edu/tools/norm/index.php>

➤ Install R and (optionally) R Studio on your laptop. <https://cran.r-project.org>, <https://www.rstudio.com>

📌 ASSIGNMENT 4 (PLOTTING VOWELS) GOES OUT

Monday, February 12th: 📌 ASSIGNMENT 4 (PLOTTING VOWELS) DUE BY 12PM

Tuesday, February 13th: **Liquids**

➤ Thomas Chapter 4.9–4.10

➤ Lawson, Eleanor, Jane Stuart-Smith, James Scobbie, Malcah Yaegar-Dror & Margaret Maclagan. 2010. Liquids. In Di Paolo & Yaegor-Dror (eds). *Sociophonetics: A Student's Guide*. (73–86)

📌 ASSIGNMENT 5 (CHOOSE-YOUR-OWN ANALYSIS) GOES OUT

Tuesday, February 20th: **Prosody**

➤ Thomas Chapter 6

Monday, February 26th: 📌 ASSIGNMENT 5 (CHOOSE-YOUR-OWN ANALYSIS) DUE BY 12PM

Tuesday, February 27th: **Voice quality**

➤ Thomas Chapter 7

Tuesday, March 6th: SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 13th: **Identifying sounds**

➤ Drager, Katie. 2013. Experimental methods in sociolinguistics. In Janet Holmes & Kirk Hazen (Eds.) *Research Methods in Sociolinguistics: A practical guide*. Wiley-Blackwell: 58–73.

➤ Niedzielski, Nancy. 1999. The effect of social information on the perception of sociolinguistic variables. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 18: 62–85.

➤ Hay, Jennifer, Paul Warren, and Katie Drager. 2006. Factors influencing speech perception in the context of a merger-in-progress. *Journal of Phonetics* 34: 458–484.

Friday, March 16th: 📌 FINAL PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE BY NOON

Tuesday, March 20th: **Identifying talkers**

- Bartłomiej Plichta & Preston, Dennis. 2005. The /ay/s have it. In T. Kristiansen, N. Coupland & P. Garrett (eds). *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia 2005* (Subjective processes in language variation and change), 107–30.
- Foulkes, Paul, Gerard J. Docherty, Ghada Khattab, and Malcah Yaeger-Dror. 2010. Sound judgements: perception of indexical features in children’s speech. *A Reader in Sociophonetics*, ed. by Dennis Preston and Nancy Niedzielski. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Friday, March 23rd: 📌 FIRST PROGRESS REPORT DUE BY NOON

Tuesday, March 27th: **Investigating meaning**

- Campbell-Kibler, Kathryn, 2009. The nature of sociolinguistic perception. *Language Variation and Change* 21(1). 135–56.
- Phrao, Nicolai, Marie Maegaard, Janus Spindler Møller, & Tore Kristiansen. 2014. Indexical meanings of [s+] among Copenhagen youth: Social perceptions of a phonetic variant in different prosodic contexts. *Language in Society* 43: 1–31.

Friday, March 30st: 📌 SECOND PROGRESS REPORT DUE BY NOON

Tuesday, April 3rd: **Sociophonetic variation & cognitive processing**

- Thomas Chapter 9.
- Sumner, Meghan & Arthur G. Samuel. 2009. The effect of experience on the perception and representation of dialect variants. *Journal of Memory and Language* 60. 487–501.
- Pierrehumbert, Janet. 2006. The Next Toolkit. *Journal of Phonetics*. *Journal of Phonetics* 34.

Friday, April 6th: 📌 THIRD PROGRESS REPORT DUE BY NOON

Tuesday, April 10th: **Sociophonetic variation & sound change**

- Thomas Chapter 10.
- Baranowski, Maciej. 2017. Class matters: The sociolinguistics of GOOSE and GOAT in Manchester English. *Language Variation and Change* 29 (3).
- Labov, William. 2006. A sociolinguistic perspective on sociophonetic research. *Journal of Phonetics* 34.

Tuesday, April 17th: **Project presentations/TBD**

Tuesday, April 24th: **Project presentations/Last Day**

FINAL PAPERS DUE MONDAY MAY 8TH BY NOON

Members of the Georgetown University academic community are bound by the Georgetown University Honor Code:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

We are obliged by university rules to report any apparent violations of the Honor Code to the Honor Council. According to the University Honor Code (<http://www.georgetown.edu/honor>), “Without regard to motive, student conduct that is academically dishonest, evidences lack of academic integrity or trustworthiness, or unfairly impinges upon the intellectual rights and privileges of others is prohibited.”

Violations of the honor system include cheating on exams or assignments, committing plagiarism, using false citations, submitting work for multiple purposes without prior permission of relevant instructors, submitting false data, falsifying academic documentation, abusing library privileges, and abusing shared electronic media. If you have any questions at all about the honor system, please contact us immediately.

Excused absences: In certain circumstances, absences may be excused. These include:

- **Absence for religious observances:** Students must notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with classes. Students who cannot be accommodated should discuss the matter with a dean.
- **Absence for athletic travel:** Student-athletes must provide their professors with a travel letter at the beginning of the semester which highlights potential absences. Students who cannot be accommodated for some or all absences should discuss the matter with the relevant Academic Coordinator for Student-Athletes.
- **Absence for documented illness:** Students who miss multiple classes due to prolonged illness should seek medical care and provide documentation of such to the Dean’s Office, which will communicate with the student’s professors. A prolonged absence may necessitate the students withdrawal from the course or from the University for the semester.
- **At the discretion of the professor:** There may be cases where an absence is undocumented but is, nevertheless, excused by the professor (e.g., absence due to a death in the family). Students should initiate a conversation with their professors about the nature and duration of the absence, in advance of the absence whenever possible. Students who anticipate missing multiple classes should inform the Dean’s Office.

When absences are excused, students remain responsible for all assigned work, and shall be provided with the opportunity to make up, without penalty, any work that they have missed.

Special accommodations: If you believe you have a disability that will affect your performance in this class, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

Technology: Laptop use is permitted for class purposes only. Tablets are ok for referring to class readings. No cell phones, please.