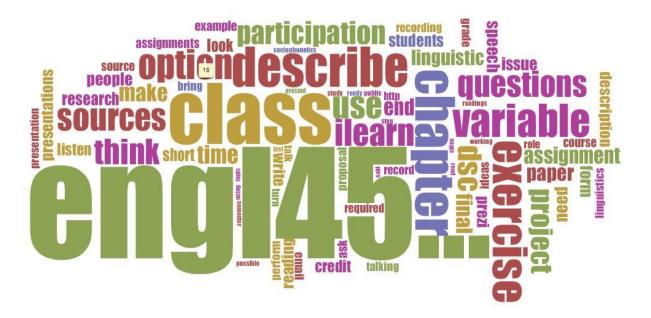# Tennessee Tech

Department of English

Spring 2015

ENGL 4541

Sociolinguistics

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<tr><td>

Dr. Paulina Bounds

Assistant Professor of Linguistics

306A Henderson Hall

Class time: MW 1.30-2.50, HH 305

Credit Hours (3 credit)

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Office Hours: M 12.10- 1.30 pm and by appointment

Email: pbounds@tntech.edu

Phone: 931-372-3763

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REQUIRED MATERIALS

Required Text Book: Mallinson, Christine, Becky Childs, Gerard Van Herk. *Data Collection in Sociolinguistics: Methods and Applications*. 2013. Routledge.
http://sociolinguisticdatacollection.com/

You will be required to use ILearn, Microsoft Word, and Prezi.

CLASS OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce students to some basic concepts of sociolinguistics and to the history and present status of this discipline. At the end of the term, students will have gained perspective with which to evaluate common questions regarding language and linguistics in the context of the culture and society of its speaker. This class will be intensive in the amount of readings, writing assignments, and expected participation.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

1.   On Mondays we will have "Talking Mondays," for those days, you will perform an exercise connected to the topics that we covered during Wednesday class. Oftentimes, you will have to explore outside sources that is relevant to that topic. The source can be of any kind, I mean ANY kind. We are going for creative and versatile ways to gain more understating of the exercise. You will write up a short description of the exercise and you are welcome to reflect on any part of your experience while working on the exercise. You will post that to Discussion before class time. You need to have your description and any sources that you used (if possible) in class, as we will be talking about it in class. You are expected to be able to talk about your work and show us relevant evidence to support your points

2.   You will also have 2 tests that will be in a form of short answer/definition.

3.   You will have a final project to perform. It contains three components: proposal, paper, and Prezi presentation. We will treat this project as if you were creating a research project for a conference. You will submit a proposal (aka abstract), you will write up your paper (just as if you were submitting it for publication), and you will create a Prezi presentation to present to the class (just as if you were presenting at a conference). For your presentation, you should provide visuals to go with the topic you are presenting, and make it not only interesting when it comes to the content, but also when it comes to the visual appeal. The paper portion of this project will replace the final exam. The paper will be 5-7 pages long and will be a argumentative research paper. The idea for your project will be chosen by you, but needs to be approved by me. The project needs to have at least 3 scholarly sources included, but at the same time you need to present your point on the topic (a.k.a. Thesis). Deadline for the proposal will be announced in class, the presentations will happen at the end of the semester, and the paper will be due on the date for our final exam.

4.   Your "Mental Participation" grade will be based on a short answer to a "pop quiz" type of question, that I will ask you to reply to in writing at the end of each class (except for Talking Fridays). The questions asked throughout the semester will be created to see how well you paid attention to the ideas presented in class, and how well you understood what they were. If you are not there during the quiz, you will get a 0 for that day. There are no make-up opportunities for those quizzes.

POLICIES

One basic principle governs my policies: you are an adult and thus have both the privileges and responsibilities that go along with being an adult college student.

Participation *is* a requirement in my class. My definition of participation is that you come to class ready to discuss the assigned reading for that day. I am aware that some people are not naturally talkative, and that is fine; but, to get the full participation credit you *will* have to chime in at least once in a while, and ideally you will do so in a thoughtful and meaningful way. There are also things that may negatively impact your participation grade: sleeping in class, disrupting class, showing up late, text-messaging, playing on Facebook, etc.. In short, I believe that as adults you understand what acceptable behavior is and I should not have to remind you of this. If I have to, then you will understand why your participation grade has been affected.

Class attendance is required. I assume that you will attend all class meetings and bring the appropriate books and supplies. If an urgent matter prevents you from doing so, it is your responsibility to get notes and announcements from another student. I do not post lecture notes, nor will I respond to in-person or email inquiries asking me for a summary of what happened in class or whether I said "anything important." Something important will happen during every class meeting. Because your contributions and interaction with your classmates and professor are significant components of the learning process in this course, your on-time attendance and active class participation are crucial to the course's success. Every three instances of tardiness will be counted as one absence.

All assignments are due by class time. They need to be posted to ILearn. However, you also need a copy of the daily assignment with you in class. The choice is yours: you can

bring your laptop/tablet to access ILearn or you can bring a print out. If you do not have access to your assignment in class, you will get only half of the credit for that assignment. If the assignments are late (submitted after or during class), you will not get any credit for them. The only exception to this is if you contact me at least 24h before the assignment is due and ask for an extension. I need to grant you the extension for this exception to be valid. Because you are allowed to have laptops/tablets in class, I expect you to use them for the purpose indicated. If I see you using it for other things like checking your email, FB, or other, you will get one warning, after that I will assign zero for that day's homework assignment.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Test 1,2 -each 15%

Mental Participation – 15%

Talking Mondays - 20%

Presentation - 15%

Final Paper- 15%

Proposal – 5%

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Students with a disability requiring accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS). An Accommodation Request (AR) should be completed as soon as possible, preferably by the end of the first week of the course. The ODS is located in the Roaden University Center, Room 112, phone (931) 372-6119.

PLAGIARISM

When you summarize, paraphrase, or quote someone else's media, words, or ideas, you must cite your source. You should be especially careful to avoid plagiarizing Internet sources (for example, email, chat rooms, web sites, or discussion groups). It does not matter whether you borrow material from print sources, from the Internet, from on-line

databases, or from interviews. Failure to cite your source is plagiarism. Students who plagiarize may receive an "F" or a zero (0) for the assignment or an "F" for the course. There are official websites that will give you more information about plagiarism:
http://plagiarism.org/
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/
http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml

The syllabus and schedule are tentative and subjected to changes. All changes will be announced in class and posted on ILearn

Month	Day	What we do in class
January	21	Class introduction
	26	Kretzschmar "Linguistics of Speech" Chapter 1 Kretzschmar review of "Principles of Linguistic Change" Milroy review of "Principles of Linguistic Change" Available in Content on ILearn
	28	Milroy Chapter 1 and 5 (On ILearn in Content)
February	2	Exercise 1: You will take two ideas/linguists/trends/ideologies that you have learned about in the previous readings that you find EITHER in the most opposition to each other OR to be the most similar to each other. You will explore those two ideas/linguists/trends/ideologies beyond our reading (find at

		least 3 sources about each, the sources can be of any kind) and write up a short description of each, focusing on either the similarities or differences between them. Upload it to ILearn before class time, have your description and sources with you. Be ready to talk about it.
	4	DSC: Chapter 1 Tagliamonte: Chapter 1 (On ILearn in Content)
	9	Exercise 2: You will receive a copy of one volume of *American Speech* journal, and your job will be to read through at least 3 articles in there. Decide on one that you find the most interesting. You will analyze the study presented. Write up an outline of all of the steps of the described study. As you are doing this, put questions that come up about anything said or unsaid in the setup of the study. Upload it to ILearn before class time, have your description and sources with you. Be ready to talk about it.
	11	DSC: Chapter 2, 2B, 2D
	16	Exercise 3: Option 1: Look up one of the studies described in the reading. Read the original source. Describe the variable and note down any questions may arise. Also, go online and find an example of that variable in use. Try YouTube. Option 2: If you have a variable in mind that interests you, find out which researcher(s) studied that variable. Read the original research. Describe the variable and note down any questions may arise. Also, go online and find an example of that variable in use. Try YouTube.
	18	DSC: Chapter 3A, 3C, 3D

	23	Exercise 4: Option 1. Consider the community (ies) of practice that you belong to, and the ones around you that you may not be a member of. Describe the populations of their members. How would you characterize them? Use social, linguistic, and cultural dimensions. Now, what characteristics should an "ideal" interviewer have for each of those populations, and what characteristics would a "bad" interviewer have? Describe them and list potential problems/issues that the mismatch could cause, and how the good match could avoid those pitfalls. Option 2: If you have an idea for your own research, perform the same task, but on the target population for your research.
	25	DSC : Chapter 6, 6D Sociophonetics Chapter 3 (On ILearn in Content)
March	2	Exercise 5: Step 1: Find a place in your home where you think you may want to record. Turn everything off in that room (computer, heat, fan, etc.). Close your eyes, and listen to that. Then, turn on everything one by one. Close your eyes and listen to the differences as you turn each device back on. While you are doing this, have your recorder on from the beginning till the end of the experiment. Every time you turn something on, say a phrase or two. Once you are done, listen to your recording. Describe what changes you noticed. Were there any noises that were distracting the quality of the phrase that you said? Describe what parts had the best and worst quality. Step 2: Whether you have a specific variable in mind or not, write down at least 3 questions that you think you should ask during the interview. You can focus on the "ice-breakers" or specific questions to elicit your variable. Remember that your questions are there to make people talk, so go for open-ended questions.

		Step 3: Use the questions you came up with to interview someone (make sure they sign the consent form before you record them, the form is on ILearn). You are aiming for 5-7 minutes of recording. Listen to your recording. Describe how successful it was in eliciting the purpose of the question (variable, ice-breaker). Also, describe you as an interviewer, how did it feel? What did you like about it, what could be better?
	4	Test 1
Spring Break		
	16	DSC: Chapter 8A Kretzschmar "Linguistics of Speech" Chapter 7 (On ILearn in Content)
	18	DSC: Chapter 12A, 12 Sociophonetics Chapter 5 (On ILearn in Content)
	23	Exercise 6: Option 1: Perceptual task. Use one of the maps provided on ILearn of either the US or TN, and use two informants to first fill in the maps with their perceptions. After they are done, ask them to explain their choices. Record the whole exercise (make sure they sign the consent form before you record them, the form is on ILearn). Listen to your recording, describe your findings. Bring the maps with you. What does this exercise tell you about speech perception? Option 2: Archival recordings: Perform one of the exercises from the end of the Sociophonetics Chapter 5 reading. Describe your process and observations. Use audio files from LAGS available on ILearn

	25	DSC: Chapter 13, 13B
	30	Exercise 7: Option 1: Think back to tv shows, movies, music, and such that you might have noticed a regional variation (for example Gone with the Wind, North and South, Jersey Shore, The Closer). Look them up, see which ones are available on line. Watch through portions of it and describe the features of speech variation that are noticeable. Describe the role that those linguistic choices are contributing to image and role of the character(s) using them. Option 2: If you already have a variable chosen for your final project, find a tv show, movie, music or other media that you can find instances of your variable. Describe the role that those linguistic choices are contributing to image and role of the character(s) using them. Do you think that those realizations of the variable are portrayed close to reality?
April	1	DSC: Chapter 15, 16
	6	Exercise 8: Option 1: Look up either one of the cases in chapter 16, or look up more sources on the Ebonics controversy (remember that you can also use some of the readings we did at the beginning of the semester and check out part of chapter 18 that talks about it and has a lot of references). Describe the different sides to this story and where do YOU think the issue begin? How do YOU think it was/wasn't a case of linguistic activism? Option 2: If the variable that you are working on for your final project is a case of linguistic activism, describe the situation, all sides and issues involved.
	8	DSC: Chapter 18, 18A, 18B, 18C

	13	Exercise 9: Option 1: Look up any current issues that had media coverage about language "issues". Find what you can about it (videos, websites), and describe the issue and different opinions that people have. What do YOU think about it? Why do YOU think people care enough to make it a public issue? Some possible topics could be "vocal fry" "texting" "uptalk" Option 2: If the variable that you are working for your final project is a case of public discussion, describe it, and all sides involved. . What do YOU think about it? Why do YOU think people care enough to make it a public issue?
	15	Test 2
	20	Presentations Prep/ Prezi tutorial
	22	Presentations Prep/ Prezi Tutorial
	27	Presentations
	29	Presentations