381: Topics in Sociolinguistics and Computer-Mediated Communication (this version accurate to: June 24, 2019)

LSA Linguistic Institute, Summer 2019 – University of California, Davis

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We encourage you to email both of us when you have questions. :)

Description
This course examines core concepts from sociolinguistic theory and investigates how they manifest across different forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC). Dialectology, communities of practice, register/style, language change, data collection, and fieldwork ethics are examined through the lens of text messaging, forums, social media, email, and even video/streaming platforms (YouTube, Twitch) to answer questions such as: are there ‘dialects’ associated with different social networks? To what extent does a group that gathers online to play World of Warcraft act like a conventional community of practice? How do we compare Twitter data – where users’ demographic information is not always available – to conventional sociolinguistic studies? The course assumes at least some background in sociolinguistics and is structured around lectures, open-ended discussion, and small course projects.

Class information
Mondays and Thursdays, 1:05 PM – 2:30 PM, Olson Hall 267
NOTE: July 4 classes are cancelled and will be held on July 3 instead.

Territorial acknowledgment
For thousands of years, this land has been the home of Patwin people, including the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation today. The Patwin people have remained committed to the stewardship of this land over many centuries. It has been cherished and protected, as elders have instructed the young through generations. We are honored and grateful to be gathered here today on their traditional lands (https://lsa2019.ucdavis.edu iyil/).

Grading breakdown
20% attendance and participation; 10% discussion questions; 45% assignments (i.e. 15% each); 20% final project proposal; and 5% student presentation (in the final class). Please note that we expect you to attend every class and to have completed the required readings and discussion questions in advance. (Those sitting in on the class are encouraged to do the readings and come ready to talk.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading(s)</th>
<th>Homework due</th>
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</table>
| Monday, June 24    | 1  | Introduction                 | Androustopoulos (2006)  
Herring (2007)                                                            | Online survey        |
| Thursday, June 27  | 2  | Ethics and methodology      | D’Arcy and Young (2012)  
Bolander and Locher (2014)                                                 | DQ, Homework 1       |
| Monday, July 1     | 3  | Networks and communities    | Bergs (2006)  
King (2014)                                                                | DQ                   |
| Wednesday, July 3  | 4  | Identity, gender, and power | Bamman et al. (2014)  
Collister (2016)  
Joiner et al. (2016)                                                        | DQ, Homework 2       |
| Monday, July 8     | 5  | Style, register, and genre  | Frobenius (2011)  
Pavalanathan and Eisenstein (2015)  
Tagliamonte (2016)                                                        | DQ                   |
| Thursday, July 11  | 6  | Language variation and      | Peterson (2014)  
Eisenstein (2015)  
Garley and Slade (2016)                                                    | DQ, Homework 3       |
| Monday, July 15    | 7  | DISCOURSE-PRAGMATICS 😞      | Collister (2012)  
McCulloch (2015)  
Tolins and Samermit (2016)                                                 | DQ                   |
| Thursday, July 18  | 8  | Student presentations       | Herring (2015)                                                           | Final project proposal & presentation |
Inclusivity/Accessibility

We intend our classroom to be welcoming to students of all backgrounds; there will likely be a mix of ages, gender identities, majors, nationalities, ethnic/cultural/racial backgrounds, neurological profiles, class years, physical abilities/disabilities, sexual orientations, religions (or lack thereof), native languages, and so on. If you have any concerns about the teaching and/or the classroom, or if you feel that it is failing to be inclusive, please feel free to get in touch with us. You can also let us know if you have any special learning needs, scheduling issues, or circumstances that you would like us to know about in advance. We are receptive to potential small changes to the lectures that would make the class a much better experience for you; please let us know if any come to mind.

We will abide by the LSA Sexual Harassment Guidelines: (https://www.linguisticsociety.org/sites/default/files/lsa-stmt-sexual-harassment.pdf) and the LSA Ethics Statement: (https://www.linguisticsociety.org/content/revised-ethics-statement). Please read or reread these. Violations are not acceptable.

Electronics policy

Particularly since this is a class about CMC, electronic devices are welcome. Some students will need these for accessibility-related reasons, and the Internet offers a wealth of data and resources. There may also be opportunities to engage in interactive online activities.

Intellectual property

Please be aware that lecture slides, assignments, tests, and exams are the intellectual property of course instructors. Please ask the instructors if you need to audio- or video-record lectures. Additionally, posting course materials online or distributing them to people not enrolled in this course is prohibited without the advance written permission of the course instructors as well as that of all people contained within recordings.

Readings


Collister, Lauren B. (2016). ’At least I’m not Chinese, gay, or female’: Marginalized voices in *World of Warcraft*. In Lauren Squires (ed.), *English in computer-mediated communication: Variation, representation, and change*. 351–376.

Joiner, Richard; Caroline Stewart; Chelsey Beaney; Amy Moonc; Pam Maras; Jane Guiller; Helen Gregory; Jeff Gavin; John Cromby; and Mark Brosnan (2016). Publicly different, privately the same: Gender differences and similarities in response to Facebook status updates. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 39, 165-169.


