TESL 560-001 Accents and Dialects
Dr. Robin C. Barr
Spring, 2012

Office: McKinley 156
Office hours: After class or by appointment.

DESCRIPTION:
This is a one-credit mini-course in seminar form, serving as an introduction to language variation in English. Which of these sound alike to you? Wales/whales, marry/merry/Mary, mourning/morning, pin/pen, cot/caught? Was that sandwich a grinder or sub, hero or hoagie? As soon as you open your mouth, your speech marks you as an insider or outsider by geography, class, ethnicity, occupation, generation, and other cultural divisions. Learn about the origins of dialect differences and metalinguistic attitudes from the Norman Conquest to OMG IM, liek woah!!11!, and gangsta-speak, yo. Become a dialect detective like 'Enry 'Iggins and trace the sources of your own speech.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Two problem sets (graded SAT/UNSAT), presentation and discussion of assignments, one 7-page research project or paper.

GRADING:  Two problem sets @ 20%  40%
            Class presentations and participation  20%
            Final paper  40%

COURSE POLICIES:
All course work is subject to the standards and procedures of the University Academic Integrity Code. All work must be one's own and for this course only, unless appropriate collaboration has been approved in advance. Collaboration on problem sets and presentations is encouraged.

FINAL PAPER:
This is a short (7+ pp.) research project or paper on a language variation topic of your choice, due as soon after our last class as possible. You will have 15 or so minutes to present your topic to the class at our last meeting. You could do an experiment or gather data from informants, along the models you will be seeing in class, or you could do a paper based on library and web research and your own language knowledge. Possible topic areas include:

1) An in-depth study of your own dialect. This may require you to administer questionnaires to your family and friends to try to track down the sources of your idiolect.

2) Closer examination of a particular dialect feature. This could be a phonetic feature such as r-less-ness, broad a, breaking, etc. or a lexical item (e.g. soda vs. pop, sub vs. grinder vs. hoagie, etc.) Discuss the geographical and social distribution of this feature, its origin, and its social consequences.

3) Applications of dialectology. Discuss ways of using language variation in the classroom. Which dialect or accent do you teach? How can you help your students understand a larger variety of spoken English dialects?

4) Dialects of other languages: Parisian French vs. Quebecois, Iberian vs. Brazilian Portuguese, the famous Rhenish Fan continuum between Low and High German dialects.

5) Argots or jargons: examine the exclusive dialect of a specific community or occupation.
READING:
The following textbooks are appropriate resources that you may already have. Additional readings will be assigned as needed.

Trudgill. Sociolinguistics. [I recommend this for everyone -- it is short and clear, and mostly correct. And cheap -- on sale at amazon.com right now for $11.20, and together with Bauer & Trudgill for $22.40 total.]


Crystal, ed. Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language.
Crystal, ed. Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language (Sections 20-21)
Look through these encyclopedias for interesting articles and pretty maps.

In particular, Myth No. 17 (I think): Dennis Preston, "They Speak Really Bad English...." Also available on the "Do You Speak American?" Website as http://www.pbs.org/speak/speech/prejudice/attitudes/

Labov, Sociolinguistic Patterns. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972,

If you want to delve deeper into the phonetics, I will be taking a lot of our example material from this book:

USEFUL WEBSITES:
First, check out our Blackboard site for the most up-to-date and clickable links!

Other links:
http://www.pbs.org/speak/
Website for the PBS series "Do You Speak American?" Take some of the tests! Click on and read the articles!

http://www.ling.upenn.edu/phono_atlas/home.html
Home page of the Phonological Atlas of North America (project at U. Penn headed by William Labov). Some maps are available through this website.

http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dare/dare.html
This is the homepage for DARE: Dictionary of American Regional English -- a marvelous American dialect resource (for words beginning with A - Sk, anyway). Try the quizzes and listen to the famous "Arthur the Rat" text at
http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dare/Audio.html

http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/americanvarieties/DARE/profiling/
Roger Shuy's discussion of forensic dialectology, or "linguistic profiling."

http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/americanvarieties/DARE/#
Listen to dialect samples from the DARE corpus. My current favorite is the oysterman from Smith Island, MD.

http://accent.gmu.edu/
The George Mason University Speech Accent Archive. A marvelous resource for TESOL as well as dialectology. Includes 494 samples from native and non-native speakers of English, most with a rough phonetic transcription and some with additional discussion of special features. (The (in)famous "Please call Stella" text.)

http://www.collectbritain.co.uk/collections/dialects/
English Accents and Dialects Collection. 700 20th-century U.K. samples, mostly from elderly rural informants.

http://bbc.co.uk/voices/
BBC Voices website. Lots of clips of interviews from all over the UK.

http://www.ku.edu/~idea/
International Dialects of English Archive -- University of Kansas website for use by actors. Downloadable.

http://cfprod01.imt.uwm.edu/Dept/FLL/linguistics/dialect/
The new homepage for the Bert Vaux’s Harvard Survey of North American Dialects. The survey is finished, but you can still look at the maps. You can find some more surveys at his homepage:
http://www.uwm.edu/~vaux/
TESL 560-003 Accents and Dialects  
Dr. Robin C. Barr 
Spring  2012 SYLLABUS  
Accents and Dialects meets on Saturdays 1/28, 2/25, and 3/24, from 10 a.m.- 1 p.m., and on 4/14 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (to allow for final presentations) 

Class I. Jan. 28  
**Introduction to Dialects.**  
Introduction of participants, phonetics review.  

**Language Variation**  
Dialect questionnaires, isoglosses, regional and social variation  
Video: *American Tongues*  

Class II. Feb. 25  
**More Favorite Dialects; Dialect Geography**  
Presentation and discussion of problem set 1  

**Problem Set 1 due:**  
*Pick a Dialect and What’s my Accent?*  
Readings: Shuy, Trudgill  

Class III. March 24  
**Dialects in Culture and Society, Dialect History**  
Presentation and discussion of problem set 2.  
Preliminary discussion of paper topics.  

**Problem Set 2 due:**  
*Drawing Isoglosses,.Social Dialects, Do you D.A.R.E?*  
Readings: Labov, Crystal, Clark –Eschholz – Rosa excerpts.  

Class IV. April 14  
**Final paper presentations.**  

**Readings:**  
Clark, Eschholz, and Rosa. *Language Readings (aka Readings in Language and Culture).* Skim for relevant articles in Parts 5, 6, 8, 11. Includes articles by Markwardt & Dillard, Shuy. Your edition may have different chapter numbers, but there will be a section on sociolinguistics.  
Readings:
1) Trudgill, Peter. Sociolinguistics (any edition). Aim to finish the book by the next class.


To write up and hand in/present on Feb. 25:

A. What’s My Accent?
While reading the Shuy article, fill out the questionnaires and try to identify your dialect. What markers don’t seem to work for you? Are there any terms that have been superseded by “General American”? Try some of the dialect questionnaires on the internet (see our Blackboard site) and see if they agree with your conclusions. We will discuss some of these issues in class next time.

B. Pick a Dialect.
Choose an interesting regional or social dialect of English and be prepared to describe it to the class in a 15-20 minute presentation next class. This can be your own dialect or any other dialect you find interesting – perhaps one from the dialect/accent websites listed on the syllabus. You may work with other members of the class, if appropriate. Your presentation to the class should include a handout with phonetic transcriptions of the accent, not just lexical items. Also helpful for your presentation: maps, history, recordings. Let me know if you need any AV equipment.
QUESTIONNAIRE

TESL 560-001 Accents and Dialects
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Spring, 2012

NAME: _________________________________________________

PHONE:________________________ E-MAIL:________________________

Are you
___ in a certificate program
___ in the TESOL MA program
___ in the MAT:ESOL program
___ an undergraduate / Major: ______________________________
___ OTHER (please describe) _____________________________

Do you have background in languages other than English? If so, please note the language(s) and your level of proficiency.

What is your background in linguistics or other language-related courses (logic, anthropology, literature, history, psychology)?

What are you most looking forward to learning in this course? Do you think you speak a dialect, or have an accent? (Trick question!)

Describe areas or topics that you are interested in researching for your paper — be as broad or narrow as you like!