

Sociolinguistics

April 3–5, 2025

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English Linguistics PhD Programme &

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course begins with a brief discussion of the differences between generative linguistics and sociolinguistics. After a review of data gathering and fieldwork methods, several English variables will be discussed in some detail, including a few on-going changes in English. Further topics include American English–Hungarian language contact, the spread of English globally, and Linguistic Human Rights.

important notes:

registration

The course is open to anyone interested (including non-students). Please send an email to Erzsébet Balogh (balogh.erszebet@arts.unideb.hu) by 28 February if you wish to attend.

If you need a grade, please also register in Neptun.

We will make the *reading materials* available for those who have registered in the beginning of March.

time

Thursday afternoon, all Friday, and Saturday morning. The exact time slots will be announced later.

venue:

TBA (at the university)

REQUIRED TEXTS, MATERIALS

A good deal of the texts will be downloadable. Those without a link will be provided in the course pack.

N.B. Always use the Glossary of Terms in the Appendix of Wolfram & Schilling 2016.

SCHEDULE

Thursday (April 3)

Session #1 (90 minutes) – Topic 1

Session #2 – Topic 2

Friday (April 4)

Session #3 – Topic 3

Session #4 – Topic 4

Session #5 – Topic 5

Session #6 – Topic 6

Saturday (April 5)

Session #7 – Topic 7

Session #8 – Summary

REQUIREMENTS

- Students should carefully read all the **Core readings**, and some **recommended readings** before the beginning of the course.
- They should actively participate in the discussion of issues, using examples also from their own native languages.

EVALUATION

Take-home essay to be announced on Saturday.

TOPIC #	TOPIC DESCRIPTION	READINGS
1	Categorical linguistics and variationist linguistics	Trudgill 2000, Chambers 2009: 1–37. Cseresnyési & Kontra 2024
2	Linguistic data, fieldwork	Labov 1984; Principles of linguistic methodology as stated by William Labov; Kontra 1994
3	English variables # 1	Wolfram & Schilling = W&S Final consonant cluster reduction [W&S 2016: 170–173]; <i>th</i> sounds [W&S 2016: 37, 42, 51, etc, Fig. 10.1 on p. 288]; <i>-ing</i> (<i>g</i> -dropping) [W&S 2016: 163–168, 173–175, etc all the way to p. 401]; dialect acquisition [Chambers 2009: 172–174]
4	English variables # 2	Wolfram & Schilling = W&S The northern cities vowel shift [W&S 2016: 72, 112, 136-7, 139, 143, 146, 152, 248-9, 254-5, 266, 300, 301, 371-2, 405]; quotative <i>be like</i> and <i>go</i> [W&S 2016: 166, 193, 380]; subject–verb agreement [W&S 2016: 13, 45, 47, 83-5, 174-5, 177, 381]; the car <i>needs fixing</i> or <i>fixed</i> [W&S 2016: 82]
5	On-going changes in English # 1	Nesbitt 2021
6	On-going changes in English # 2	Needle & Tagliamonte 2024
7	Language contact, the spread of English, and Linguistic Human Rights	Kontra 2023, Phillipson 2009, Kontra 2025, Csernicskó & Kontra 2023
8	Summary	

Core readings

- Chambers, J. K. 2009. *Sociolinguistic Theory: Linguistic Variation and its Social Significance*. Revised Edition. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. Pp. 1 – 37; 172–174. [pdf](#)
- Cseresnyési, László & Kontra, Miklós 2024. Empirical Linguistics: A cautious obituary. https://argumentum.unideb.hu/2024_anyagok/kulonkotet/04_cseresnyesi_kontra.pdf
- Csernicskó, István & Kontra, Miklós 2023. The Linguistic Human Rights Plight of Hungarians in Ukraine. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369198148_The_Linguistic_Human_Rights_Pligh_of_Hungarians_in_Ukraine
- Kontra, Miklós 1994. Do not people say such things? In: Valerie Becker Makkai (ed.), *The Twentieth LACUS Forum 1993*, 333–344. Chapel Hill, N.C.: LACUS. [pdf](#)
- Kontra, Miklós 2023. Personal Notes on Hungarian American Bilingualism Research. *Hungarian Cultural Studies* (Journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association) Volume 16 (2023) <https://ahea.pitt.edu/ojs/ahea/article/view/488>
- Kontra, Miklós 2025. English in Hungary. Forthcoming in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of World Englishes*, edited by Kinglsey Bolton. [pdf](#)
- Labov, William 1984. Field methods of the Project on Linguistic Change and Variation. In: John Baugh & Joel Sherzer (eds.) *Language in Use: Readings in Sociolinguistics*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Pp. 28–53. [pdf](#)
- Needle, Jeremy M. & Tagliamonte, Sali A. 2024. Orderly obsolescence: The decline of /hw/ in Ontario. *American Speech* 99/3: 300–329. [pdf](#)
- Nesbitt, Monica 2021. From an indicator to a marker: Urban dialect loss in Michigan. In: Arne Ziegler et al (eds.), *Urban Matters: current approaches in variationist sociolinguistics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. Pp. 159–178. <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1075/silv.27.07nes/html?srsltid=AfmBOorGFUJsN1kjteVbspzzBfFh-cbxR4uKYSQ5vIKJxH4MAzqkzr9C>
- Phillipson, Robert 2009. *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*. New York/London: Routledge. Pp. 1–25. [pdf](#)
- Principles of linguistic methodology as stated by William Labov. [pdf](#)
- Trudgill, Peter 2000. If women are being discriminated against, you don't say "You should become a man". An interview with Peter Trudgill on sociolinguistics and Standard English conducted by Kontra Miklós. *novELTy* [A Journal of English Language Teaching and Cultural Studies in Hungary], Volume 7 Number 2 (2000): 17–30.

<http://deal.elte.hu/pages/novelty/index.htm>

[articles: May 2000, Kontra, If women are discriminated against...]

Wolfram, Walt & Schilling, Natalie 2016. *American English: Dialects and Variation*. Third Edition. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. pdf

Visit this, especially the Appendix: <http://www.americanenglishwiley.com/>

ENGLISH TERMINOLOGY

Glossary in Wolfram & Schilling 2016. Pp. 391–413.

Further recommended readings, videos

American vowels. pdf

Interview with Sali Tagliamonte (2017): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tapgQNcKuFo>

Kontra, Miklós 2010. Harold B. Allen in Debrecen. *Eger Journal of American Studies*, XII/1–2: 359–365. pdf

Kontra, Miklós 2022. Hungarian Sociolinguistics in the Carpathian Basin, 1985–2022. <https://sciendo.com/it/article/10.2478/hsy-2022-0003>

William Labov's lecture: Justice as a Linguistic Matter (2020)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cr5tyw8_gT0

Labov, William. How I got into linguistics, and what I got out of it.

<https://www.ling.upenn.edu/~wlabov/HowIgot.html>

Maxwell, Alexander 2025. Vladimir Putin, Normative Isomorphism, and the Language/Dialect Dichotomy. *Nationalities Papers* (2025), 1–13.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/nationalities-papers/article/vladimir-putin-normative-isomorphism-and-the-languagedialect-dichotomy/1ADA35A41BC09472B1104282E3160298>

Meyerhoff, Miriam 2016. Methods, innovations and extensions: Reflections on half a century of methodology in social dialectology. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 20(4):431–452.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308532083_Methods_innovations_and_extensions_Reflections_on_half_a_century_of_methodology_in_social_dialectology

Risen, Clay 2024. Labov Obituary New York Times. LABOV OBITUARY NEW YORK TIMES 24 pdf

Trudgill, Peter. 2011. Standard English: what it isn't.

<https://lagb-education.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/SEtrudgill2011.pdf>

Do You Speak American?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOTzkejL7ks>

<https://www.pbs.org/speak/about/guide/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEzbyaaivoo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PR34EJOZFs>

Journal of Arabic Sociolinguistics

<https://www.eupublishing.com/loi/arabic>

Chinese sociolinguistics

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315625157-44/chinese-sociolinguistics-daming-xu-jingwei-zhang>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363697175_Sociolinguistics_in_China

Ball, Martin J., Rajend Mesthrie, Chiara Meluzzi (eds.), 2024. *The Routledge Handbook of Sociolinguistics Around the World*, Second edition. London: Routledge. pdf

In this handbook:

Chapter 6: Zhou, Minglang: Sociolinguistic research in China, pp. 67–80.

Chapter 22: Miller, Catherine and Dominique Caubet: Arabic sociolinguistics in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), pp. 238–256.

Chapter 30: Kontra, Miklós, Marián Sloboda, Jiří Nekvapil, Agnieszka Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak: Sociolinguistics in East Central Europe, pp. 576–597.

Journals

Language in Society <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language-in-society/information/about-this-journal>

Language Variation and Change

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language-variation-and-change>

Journal of Linguistic Geography

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-linguistic-geography>

Journal of Sociolinguistics <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/14679841>

American Speech <https://read.dukeupress.edu/american-speech>

Language <https://www.lsadc.org/language>

Language Problems and Language Planning

https://benjamins.com/catalog/lplp?srsltid=AfmBOoq-J_ny-gZ4hBEnOdDH33h6pPyj2ZOef85o9VIDhbhqQ9Jl_wGo

Sociolinguistica: European Journal of Sociolinguistics
<https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/soci/html>

További írások, viedók magyarul

Borbély Alexandra: Milyen lehet csak egyvalamilyennek lenni
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnHHQdjGPs>

Élőnyelvi Konferenciák

https://hu.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=%C3%89%C5%91nyelvi_konferenci%C3%A1k&stable=0&redirect=no

Imrényi András 2009. Generatív nyelvészet és szociolingvisztika. *Magyar Nyelv* 105: 50–62.
<https://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00032/00040/pdf/imrenyia.pdf>

Interjú Susan Gallal (University of Chicago)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hHCObfRSNA>

Kontra Miklós 2012. Mai magyar nyelvi változások (látszólagos- és valóságosidő-vizsgálatok). *108(2012): 357–380.*
https://archive.nytud.hu/nyk/108/16_kontra.pdf

Kontra Miklós 2018. A 90 éves William Labov, a társadalmilag reális nyelvészet megalkotója.
<https://real.mtak.hu/80466/>

Kontra és Zsádon a Kultúrházban (2010) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnHHQdjGPs>

Kontra Miklós – Molnár Mária 2018. Hogyan ö-zött Bálint Sándor?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnHHQdjGPs>

Kontra Miklós – Borbély Anna (szerk.), 2021. Tanulmányok a budapesti beszédről a Budapesti Szociolingvisztikai Interjú alapján. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó.
<https://nytud.hu/en/kiadvany/tanulmanyok-a-budapesti-beszedrol-a-budapesti-szociolingvisztikai-interju-alapjan>

Labov, William 1988. „A nyelvi változás és változatok”: Egy kutatási program terepmunka-módszerei. *Szociológiai Figyelő* 1988/4: 22–48. Fordította: Galántai Vera. – Csak egy jó könyvtárban elérhető.

Sándor Klára 2014. Határtalan nyelv. Bicske: SZAK Kiadó. <http://real.mtak.hu/22155/>

Sándor Klára 2016. Új hullám a nyelvészetben. BUKSZ 28/1–2: 44–52.
<http://buksz.c3.hu/160102/03.2problsador.pdf>

MAGYAR TERMINOLÓGIA

Trudgill, Peter 1997. *Bevezetés a nyelv és társadalom tanulmányozásába*. Szeged: JGYTF Kiadó. Fordította és az utószót írta Sándor Klára.

Cseresnyési László 2004. *Nyelvek és stratégiák avagy a nyelv antropológiája*. Budapest: Tinta Könyvkiadó. Ebben: Szociolingvisztikai fogalomtár, pp. 251–277.

Ladányi Mária – Hrenek Éva (szerk.) 2019. *Alkalmazott nyelvészeti kishótár*. Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó. <https://mek.oszk.hu/24900/24920/24920.pdf>