# Sociolinguistics

## Prof. Maria Cristina Gatti

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to explore the relationship between language and society by introducing students to the discipline of sociolinguistics, with a particular focus on its most recent developments. By observing language in its various contexts, the course will examine the phenomenon of linguistic variation at its various levels (diatopic, diastratic, diaphasic and diamesic), before addressing linguistic repertoire, with a focus on bilingualism, diglossia and *dilalia*. The course will then examine verbal interaction from a socio-linguistic perspective, focusing on the role of discourse markers in conversational turn-taking. The next focus will be multilingual interactions and the communicative functions of code switching and mixed-language enunciation processes. Finally, the course will examine the main outcomes of language contact, examining pidgin, Creole and interlingual languages.

By the end of the course, students will:

have a firm grasp of the main theoretical reference points in the discipline;

be able to use theoretical tools for analysing empirical data from various languages from a socio-linguistic perspective.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

apply the acquired knowledge to the description of texts and conversational exchanges for the purpose of highlighting the social position and regional provenance of speakers and the type of register used;

identify the distinctive diatopic, diastratic, diaphasic, ad diamesic traits of texts and conversational exchanges in different language varieties;

recognise the various way of managing conversational turn-taking and the role of discourse markers;

identify the communicative functions associated with phenomena of code commutation and mixed-language enunciation.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Sociolinguistics and its scope.

Language varieties and aspects of variation: diatopia, diastratia, diaphasia and diamesia.

Linguistic repertoire and its typology: bilingualism, diglossia and *dilalia.*

Verbal interaction from a sociolinguistic perspective: turn-taking and the role of discourse markers.

Multilingual interactions: code-switching, code-mixing and communication functions.

Multilingualism and European cultural cohesion.

Language contact and its outcomes: pidgin, creole and interlinguistic languages.

Contemporary Italian and its variations. Italian outside of Italy.

***READING LIST***

G. Berruto-M. Cerruti, *Manuale di sociolinguistica*, UTET, Novara 2015 (any two chapters).

G. Berruto, *Prima lezione di sociolinguistica*, Laterza, Bari 2017 (chapter 1. I fatti sociolinguistici, pp. 3-42).

E. Rigotti, *Plurilinguismo e unità culturale in Europa*, in B. Cambiaghi, C. Milani-P. Pontani (ed.), Europa plurilingue, Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2004, pp. 307-319.

The reading list will be expanded during the course and made available via the lecturer’s virtual classroom.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The teaching method alternates between frontal classroom lectures and practical sessions when the theoretical tools acquired will be applied to characterise texts and verbal interactions on a sociolinguistic level.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

There will be a final oral exam designed to assess students’ knowledge of the texts on the reading list and of the additional learning material made available on Blackboard. Not only must students demonstrate that they have learned the core content of the discipline (60% of the final mark), but also that they can apply it, along with the methods learned, to the sociolinguistic analysis of empirical data relating to the main language varieties (40% of the final mark).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The course will take prior knowledge of general linguistics into account. The lecturer will pay constant attention to clarifying the meanings of the words used to ensure that all students understand the concepts to be used in classwork.

This semester-long course will take place in Semester 1.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board.