

# 7. Literature reviews and field methods

Ling 380/Soc 427 (Fall 2024)

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Answer any two questions.

## Quiz 6

Do not answer all three.

1. Llamas mentions that language change can be studied using 'real time' or 'apparent time' methods. Which of these is most often used, and why?
2. Llamas explains that, for sociolinguistic studies, judgement sampling is preferred to random sampling. Why?
3. Researchers try to structure sociolinguistic interviews to be as informal as possible. Why?

# Field Methods

- Llamas breaks down his chapter into three parts:
- The Type of Study
- The Type of Speaker
- The Type of Data

# Type of Study

- There are tons of different types of studies. A useful set of terms is *synchronic* and *diachronic*.
- Synchronic: At a given time
- Diachronic: Across time
- For diachronic studies, you can use ‘real time’ or ‘apparent time’ study. How do these differ?

Real time: Collect data over the course of years.

Apparent time: Collect data from people of different ages.

# Type of Speaker

- Random sampling – done using a ‘sample frame,’ e.g. an electoral register, where every *n*th person is selected
- Judgement sampling – researcher is choosing participants based on a particular **social variable** they’re interested in. What’s a social variable?
- Let’s say you wanted to conduct a study. Which of these methods would be best?

Do more Americans say *orange* with an initial /ɔ/ or /ɑ/?

Is the way New Yorkers say *merry*, *marry*, *Mary* changing across generations?

Does pronunciation in AAE differ between NYC and Atlanta?

Do more Americans say *banana* with an [æ] or [eə]?

# Type of Data

- Elicitation – what is this?

“since the work of Labov in the 1960s, interest has been, first and foremost, in accessing a style of speech which is as casual, natural and spontaneous as can be obtained” (Llamas, 15)

- What is the observer’s paradox?
- We behave differently when we know we’re being observed.
- What are some methods to try to reduce the observer’s paradox?
- Why not just hide recording devices?
- What is the sociolinguistic interview?

“Useful data for a phonetic/phonological analysis can be obtained from around thirty minutes of speech, for example, whereas considerably more are needed for grammatical or discursal analyses as the relevant structures are unlikely to occur as frequently or as predictably as phonological features.” (Llamas, 16)

- In a sociolinguistic interview, your goal is to **elicit** the linguistic data you are most interested in.
- You are **not** relying on the informant to be an expert on their own dialect/language. People are usually totally unaware of a lot of their own speech.

What is the past tense of ‘am’?

What’s the third-person singular conjugation of ‘walk’?

What’s the past participle of ‘eat’?

What’s the voicing rule for plural ‘s’?

Are ‘gonna’ and ‘going to’ interchangeable?

Do you make the ‘n’ sound in words like ‘sitting,’ ‘hoping’, and ‘dreaming’?

What’s the past tense of ‘go’?

# Asynchronous Assignment

- I want you to keep all of this in mind as you work on your final projects. We'll learn more about sociolinguistic interviews and how best to conduct them in the coming weeks. For now, consider what kind of linguistic data you are most interested in **eliciting**.
- For this week's asynchronous work, each group will put together a literature review for their page on the class website. We'll go over how to do these now.



# Literature Reviews

- What is a literature review?
- In academia, “the literature” is a term used to refer collectively to the published writings – usually secondary sources – about a particular topic.
- Literature reviews should balance foundational works with recent research.
- Generally, you should use peer-reviewed publications whenever possible.

# Literature Reviews: Peer review

- What is peer review? What do you know about it?
- Any decent journal will have a peer review process.
- How does it work?
- Why is it anonymous?

# Literature Reviews: Types of Publications

- Journals
- Books
- Dictionaries

Some examples: *Language, Language Documentation and Description*, *Language Documentation and Conservation*

- Articles (including review articles and original research), book reviews, short communications
- Journals are often accessible through online archives, such as those offered through CSI's library or the NYPL.
- **Beware** of predatory, non-peer reviewed journals.

# Literature Reviews: Types of Publications

- Journals
- Books
- Dictionaries

- Often published as part of a series by academic publishers, but also published by commercial publishers.
- Some compile chapters by various authors, others are written by a single author.
- Don't usually introduce brand new information.
- Lower reputation than journal articles.

# Literature Reviews: Types of Publications

- Journals
- Books
- Dictionaries

Some examples: *Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online*,  
*Wiktionary*

- Web-based dictionaries are often updated fairly frequently, and are somewhat interactive.
- May require a login.

# Literature Reviews: Finding sources

- NYPL
- CSI's Library
- Google Scholar

You should:

- Know your CSI library login credentials.
- Have & know your NYPL login credentials.



# Literature Reviews: Finding sources

- NYPL
- CSI's Library
- Google Scholar

New York Public library has tons more than just books.

- Need a library card to access. These are free and available to anyone in NY state.
- Must have library barcode & password.
- Go to <https://www.nypl.org/> and click “Research.” From there, click “Articles & Databases” or “Academic E-Books.”

You should:

- Know your CSI library login credentials.
- Have & know your NYPL login credentials.



# Literature Reviews: Finding sources

- NYPL
- CSI's Library
- Google Scholar

A really good, often-overlooked resource.

- Access the list of databases here (<https://library.csi.cuny.edu/az.php>)
- Log in with your CUNYFirst credentials.

You should:

- Know your CSI library login credentials.
- Have & know your NYPL login credentials.





# Literature Reviews: Finding sources

- NYPL
- CSI's Library
- Google Scholar

Find lots of sources this way, but make sure they're trustworthy by seeing if they've been cited a lot.

- Access at <https://scholar.google.com/>
- Who did this work cite?
- Who is this work cited by?
- Allows you to visualize a network of research.

No login necessary!

# Literature Reviews: Writing Them

- After you've found sources, put them in a list following the Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics formatting.
- Then, read the sources well enough to distill their main findings. Put together a basic summary of these findings, about 500–800 words, making sure to cite each source.
- You can model this on my Language Snapshot for Kanien'kéha. "Section 1: Overview" is a lit review.

# Midterm

- Next week
- 10 questions/10 points
- Mix of short answer and multiple choice
- Covering everything from start of semester up to and including this week's class
- Open book, but no electronic devices