

## **Studying syntactic change in (mostly) synchronic data: The view from 20<sup>th</sup> century Ontario, Canada**

Sali A. Tagliamonte  
Department of Linguistics  
University of Toronto, Canada

In this presentation, I will offer insights from a large scale sociolinguistic research program, the Ontario Dialects Project (ODP)<sup>1</sup>. The data comprises vernacular speech from oral histories in Ontario, Canada amounting to well over 10 millions words. The data come from individuals born from the late 1800's to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, represent different types of communities, urban/non-urban locations, dense vs. loose social networks, varying population sizes, ethnicities, founding populations etc. (e.g. Tagliamonte, 2013; 2014a).

Using a selection of case studies from recent research on variable linguistic phenomena, I demonstrate how the findings arising from these studies provide insight into the nature of syntactic change. Further, I suggest that there are useful and insightful links between the type of community-based synchronic data collected by sociolinguistic studies and theories of language change developed in the literature on syntactic change in historical written corpora.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://individual.utoronto.ca/tagliamonte/index.html>