



# An Introduction to Sociolinguistics (3rd Edition) (Learning About Language)

By Janet Holmes

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First published in 1992, Janet Holmes' An Introduction to Sociolinguistics has established itself as the key introductory textbook in the field.

It is divided into three sections. In the first, Janet Holmes shows how language is used in multilingual speech communities and explains the varying patterns of language use. She examines how and why languages change within society and highlights the factors that lead to the displacement of one language by another, and sometimes even the death of a language.

The central section gives a comprehensive and well-illustrated exploration of social reasons for language change, exploring language change in monolingual communities and the features of a variety of dialects. She shows how and why differing social and racial groups develop and maintain speech variations.

In the final section, Janet Holmes assesses how attitudes to language affect speech, and shows that linguistic responses depend upon a variety of contextual factors.

Written in an accessible way, this essential introductory text is and illustrated throughout with numerous examples.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

'.. "Introduction to Sociolinguistics" is..deliberately aimed at the sociolinguistic novice, offering a welcome second edition of a work which many students have already found to be a reliable and consistently readable introduction to the subject...the work remains an excellent guide to the diversity of ways in which the social can impact on language use and structure. "Notes and Queries, Vol 50, No 1, March 2003."

#### From the Back Cover

*' A perfect book for an introductory undergraduate class: accessibly written, dense with examples, and comprehensive, both in terms of topic and geographic focus. '*

Scott Kiesling, University of Pittsburgh

*'Those who, like me, use Janet Holmes' inspirational Introduction to Sociolinguistics... will be delighted with this thoroughly revised and updated new edition. It is just as much fun to read as the previous editions, has the same clear, lively writing style and contains an even more comprehensive survey than before of the different topics that excite sociolinguists. The brand new chapter...broadens its appeal still further.'*

Professor Jenny Cheshire, Queen Mary, University of London

### Learning about Language

**General Editors:** Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short, Lancaster University

### What is sociolinguistics?

Sociolinguistics is the study of the interaction between language and society. In this classic introductory work, Janet Holmes examines the role of language in a variety of social contexts and considers both how language works and how it can be used to signal and interpret various aspects of social identity. Written with Holmes' customary enthusiasm, the book is divided into three sections which explain basic sociolinguistic concepts in the light of both classic approaches and the most recent research.

**Section A** examines the varying patterns of language use within multilingual speech communities and considers the ways in which languages change within society, highlighting the factors that can lead to language displacement and, sometimes, to language death.

**Section B** explores some of the social reasons behind language variation in monolingual communities and looks at the ways in which different ethnic, gender and social groups develop and maintain speech variations. The relationship between language variation and language change is also described.

**Section C** assesses how attitudes to language affect speech behaviour and shows that appropriate linguistic responses take account of a variety of contextual factors – for example, the relative status of addresser and

addressee.

This third edition has been updated thoroughly and new examples have been added to enhance understanding. A major addition to this edition is an extended chapter on discourse analysis which outlines a number of different approaches to analysing spoken language in its social context. Supported throughout by a range of exercises and suggestions for further reading, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* is an essential introductory text for all students of sociolinguistics and a splendid point of reference for students of applied linguistics. It is also an accessible guide for those who are simply interested in language and the uses we put it to.

**Janet Holmes** holds a personal Chair in Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington where she teaches a range of sociolinguistics courses.

#### About the Author

Janet Holmes holds a personal Chair in Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, where she teaches a variety of sociolinguistics courses.

#### Users Review

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##### **Nancy Baumgardner:**

The experience that you get from *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics (3rd Edition) (Learning About Language)* may be the more deep you excavating the information that hide inside the words the more you get interested in reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to be aware of but *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics (3rd Edition) (Learning About Language)* giving you joy feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in selected way that can be understood by simply anyone who read the idea because the author of this publication is well-known enough. That book also makes your current vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go along, both in printed or e-book style are available. We advise you for having this kind of *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics (3rd Edition) (Learning About Language)* instantly.

##### **Gilbert Kimmel:**

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**Daniel England:**

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