Sociolinguistic Variation in the Use of Second Person Singular Pronouns in Florianópolis, Brazil

A Thesis Presentation by Mark Balderston '15.5 (Independent Scholar in Linguistics)

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The alternation of second person singular pronouns tu and você in the Brazilian Portuguese of Florianópolis is a highly variable linguistic phenomenon conditioned by sociohistorical and geographic factors. This variation is not simply a case of lexical alternation nor is it tied to situational formality (like Spanish tú/usted). Rather, it is a case of complex morphosyntactic variation conditioned by a variety of sociogeographic factors, ranging from the initial colonization patterns of Southern Brazil to contemporary population dynamics. In a sociolinguistic study of the speech of 12 Florianopolitans, we examine the relationship between tu and você in contemporary Southern Brazilian speech and tackle the challenging question: Is this language undergoing change?

Refreshments will be served!