



Workshop in Sociolinguistics 2012 GUEST LECTURE

Transmission, incrementation, and the progression of change: It's all about the peak

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Linguistic change of any kind presupposes linguistic variation, since no change occurs instantaneously (i.e. abruptly). In this talk I explore the consequences of this from the perspective of the community. The discussion hinges on the transmission of a unidirectional change across successive generations, and the continuous advancement of that change by subsequent generations. I argue that language is inherently heterogeneous and that linguistic and social factors are closely interrelated in the development of a change. The focus here is the role of men and women in the progression of change, and the evidence comes from a range of ongoing morphosyntactic and discourse-pragmatic changes. Although I apply the logistic model adopted by Labov (2001), in contrast to his original formulation I suggest that the differences in the participation of men and women are primarily quantitative rather than qualitative, an argument buttressed by the stubborn and recurrent nature of the (adolescent) peak in apparent time.

Date: April 13, 2012, 10:30-11:45

Location: University of Basel – Department of English
Cave, Nadelberg 8

Interested M.A. students, PhD students and staff members are most welcome.

This is part of a workshop of the HPSL Basel-Freiburg,
organized by *Marie-Thérèse Rudolf von Rohr* and *Nicole Höhn*.