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**title**: About the predictability of syntactic variants as a sociolinguistic marker: one speech community considered

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Abstract

About the predictability of syntactic variants as a sociolinguistic marker: one speech community considered

In this paper I discuss that a structure’s eligibility to serve as a sociolinguistic marker within a speech community is restricted and even predictable. It appears that frequency is not able to predict whether a structure will have a social meaning in a speech community. In addition, also the status of a variable as a low or high level variant is not very helpful either in predicting which kind of variation may reveal social correlations in the speech community. In contrast, it is argued that structures (i) constituting a lexical choice or (ii) requiring the mapping of the syntax module with semantic, pragmatic conditioning are potential sociolinguistic markers. In contrast, variables that concern only syntactic (optional) operations such as the verbal clusters in the right periphery of the clause are not successful candidates to serve as a marker.