Section 3

Project Idea #1: *Like* as a filler word:

       In many varieties and idiolects of English, the preposition *like* has taken a new role as a filler word. Particularly in stereotypes of so-called 'valley girl' or 'surfer dude' speech, use of this as a filler receives a lot of criticism. Not exclusively found in these 'Californian' ways of speaking, influence from Californian media. There are many subfields that this could pertain to: we could analyze the syntax of where and when it appears relative to another filler like *uhm*; we could look at various pragmatic concerns; we could see if its use correlates to phonological phenomenon. We're probably most inclined to look at some sort of syntaxic or morphosyntactic properties of the distribution, but this is still undecided. Contrasting surface distributions of this phenomenon are in (1) and (2), with [Jackson's] intuitions about pragmatic appropriateness;

(1)   There were, <u>uhm,</u> a lot of people there.
(2)   There were, <u>like</u>, a lot of people there.

This could be possible using a corpus, such as closed captioning on a movie, since *like* is a real word in its own right and would thus be transcribed as part of the dialogue. However, if we wanted to do a comparative study to more traditional filler sounds and words, we might run into issues since they might not be transcribed alongside everything else.

Citations:

Laserna, Charlyn M., Yi-Tai Seih, and James W. Pennebaker. "Um... who like says you know: Filler word use as a function of age, gender, and personality." *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33.3 (2014): 328-338.

Duvall, Emily, et al. "Exploring filler words and their impact." *Schwa. Language & Linguistics* 11 (2014): 35-49.

Project Idea #2: Addressing an Interlocutor

       Usually while speaking with someone, we do not address them by name all the while that we talk to them. However, we may address them by name at some points for various purposes. Typically for pragmatic effects such as emphasis, using somebody's name directed at them can arise from a variety of factors where this could be appropriate. This could be expected from anyone really, and thus we're not sure if there's a specific demographic that we should be investigating. Because of this, our search would primarily focus on the pragmatics of the distribution.

(1)   How are you doing?
(2)   Johnny, how are you doing?

This would primarily be the target of corpora study, where we search for uses of names. We could describe or categorize the contexts where they occur, in contrast with more 'normal' parts of discourse.

Citations:

Dobric, Nikola. "Theory of names and cognitive linguistics-the case of the metaphor." *Filozifija i drustvo* 21.1 (2010): 31-41.

Bean, Susan S. "Ethnology and the study of proper names." *Anthropological Linguistics* 22.7 (1980): 305-316.

Project Idea #3: Comparing derogatory term usage in scripted vs. spontaneous discourse

Derogatory term usage is often replicated in scripted speech(tv, film, etc.), but to what extent this replication is accurate is rarely studied. We propose creating a program that will analyze a corpus of scripted speech for derogatory terms and their patterned usage. Then we plan on using a corpus of spontaneous discourse to compare the two. There is a sociolinguistically interesting motive for this investigation, which is how society's perception of its own usage of derogatory terms differs from their actual usage.

Examples:

(We wanted to make sure this proposal wasn't offensive before entering any specific derogatory terms due to concern for others' sensitivities)

(1) Get out of here, *****!
(2) There are way too many *******s in these parts of town.

Citations:

Risch, B. (1987). Women's derogatory terms for men: That's right, "dirty" words. *Language in Society, 16*(3), 353-358. doi:10.1017/S0047404500012434

Berškytė, Justina, and Graham Stevens. "Semantic relativism, expressives, and derogatory epithets." Inquiry (2019): 1-21.