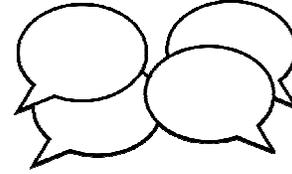




Utah State University
LING 3100: Language in Context
Syllabus-Fall 2017



Instructor: Abdulkafi Albirini
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Time: 11:30-12:20
Place: 201 Old Main
Office hours: 9:30-10:30 MW

I. Course goal and objective:

This course aims to familiarize students who have little or no background in sociolinguistics with the role of language in society, its social functions, and the impact of social context on how it is used and interpreted. The course will survey some of the main topics that are central to sociolinguistic research, such as language variation and change, language policy and planning, language contact, language choice, and language attitudes. In addition, the course will examine the interaction between language and such factors as age, gender, social status, class, race, and identity. Students will be able to explore some of the main methods used to collect and analyze data in sociolinguistic research.

In this course, students will be able to:

- understand the social nature of language and its main functions in society.
- explain the impact of social structure, norms, and traditions on language use.
- understand the intricate relationship between language use and social factors (e.g., age, gender, class, race, and social status).
- identify some of the dimensions and implications of language variation and change, language policy and planning, language contact, language choice, and language attitudes.
- understand research methods in sociolinguistics.

II. Course Materials

- Mesthrie, Rajend, Joan Swann, Andrea Deumert, and William Leap. (2009). *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Supplemental readings are available on Canvas at: <https://canvas.usu.edu/>

III. Student Responsibilities & Major Assignments:

The five major requirements of the course include:

- Classroom participation and attendance (15% of final grade): Students enrolled in this course are expected to be in class on time and not to miss classes except in cases of illness, family emergency, and things of that nature. Students should come prepared to class. Preparation includes reading the assigned materials and being ready to participate actively in discussions

regarding the theme of the week. Carefully reading the articles and book chapters will allow you to contribute meaningfully to in-class discussion/ activities, (b) allow you to think critically about the topic of the reading, and (c) better prepare you for quizzes and other assignments in this course. According to the attendance policy of this course, students are allowed three absences per semester, which they can use in cases of illness, family emergency, and things of that nature. However, after the third absence, one percentage point will be deducted from their attendance grade for every absence. Your attendance grade is 15 minus any absences.

- Short Essays (21% of final grade): Students will be asked to write three essays in which they respond critically to important theoretical questions or empirical findings in sociolinguistic research. While students are encouraged to present their own ideas in responding to these questions, they are simultaneously required to include ideas from the class discussions and the readings. You must turn in the assignment as a **Word document on Canvas. Do not send the assignment as an email.** The essays will be evaluated based on the following:
 - ✓ Content: accuracy, originality, and depth of information as well as the use of **examples**
 - ✓ Organization: cohesion and coherence of the ideas presented
 - ✓ Length: 2-3 double-spaced pages
- Two Quizzes (24% of final grade): The students will take two 30-minute quizzes, each requiring paragraph-long answers to six out of twelve questions. While answers to some of these questions can be found in the readings or in the class notes, others may not be answered without understanding class discussions. The dates of the quizzes are 20 October and 1 December.
- In-class presentation (15% of the final grade). Each student will lead the class in a 15-minute *presentation* of a selected journal article. Your presentation should be structured as follows:
 - ✓ Present the **background** of the paper (i.e., literature review: Why did the authors want to investigate this topic, what was already known to them from the literature; what are the research questions pursued in this study?)
 - ✓ Introduce the methods used (e.g., interviews, questionnaires, recordings, etc.), if any.
 - ✓ Discuss the **findings**, and their **implications** for understanding the relationship between language and society
 - ✓ Offer **your perspective** on the article (e.g., what you learned, how it is relevant to you or your community, and how it relates to your own experiences)

It is highly recommended to use PowerPoint and to include images, video, or other illustrations in your presentation. If you do not use PowerPoint, please prepare enough handouts for the whole class. The presentation will be evaluated based on the following:

- ✓ Content: accuracy of information, comprehensiveness, and use of examples
 - ✓ Organization: coherence and cohesion of the ideas presented
 - ✓ Delivery and length: smooth delivery in around 15 minutes.
- Final research project (25% of final grade): Students will work individually to produce a ten-page, double-spaced research proposal. In this proposal, students will demonstrate what they have learned in the course by drafting a research proposal on a topic relevant to

sociolinguistic research. The proposal should include an abstract, introduction, literature review, method, and implications sections. A brief (100 words) abstract of the paper will be due on 17 November. I will return these abstracts promptly with comments and my approval or suggestions for modifications. Students will prepare a 3-minute presentation of their papers to be made on 6 & 8 December. In the presentation, you need to tell us about your topic, its significance, its methodology, and implications of your potential findings. The breakdown of the Final Paper's grade is: Abstract (3 points), Presentation (2 points), and Full Paper (20 points). The final paper should be submitted as a **Word document through Canvas**. The paper is due on Monday, 11 December.

The final paper should have the following components:

- ✓ Title: should contain keywords pinpointing the main theme of the paper
- ✓ Abstract: about 150 words containing (1) the importance of the study (2) methods to be used (3) implications of your potential findings
- ✓ Introduction: 1-2 pages; establish the background and importance of the study
- ✓ Literature review: 3-4 pages; review three to five studies on the topic, relate previous studies to your study, and justify the need for your study.
- ✓ Methods: 1-2 pages; describe the setting of your study, participants, instruments, study procedures, and justify your choices in each case.
- ✓ Implications of your study (if carried out) for research on this topic or for understanding the sociolinguistic phenomenon of interest: 1-2 pages.

IV. Assignment Policy:

- All assignments should be turned in latest by 11:59 p.m. on the due day.
- All assignments should be typed in a 12-point Times Roman font.
- All assignments should be submitted as Word documents through Canvas. Please **do not send your assignment through email and do not bring a hard copy to the classroom**.
- If your assignment is between one and 24 hours late you will be penalized 20% of the assigned points. After one day of the due date, the assignment will be considered missing and zero points will be the official grade.
- Plagiarism is highly discouraged. Students are expected to acknowledge source materials. Please let me know if you have any questions about this issue.

V. Class schedule

You are expected to do the readings before class on the day they are listed.

Week/day	Topics & Assignments	Readings
Week 1		
28, 30 Aug & 1 Sept.	Speech communities & other key concepts	Chapter 1. Clearing the Ground: Basic Issues, Concepts, and Approaches. Chapter 5. Speech communities
Week 2		
4, 6 & 8 Sept.	Context, socialization and Communication	- Gumperz: 'Contextualization conventions' - Hymes: 'On communicative competence'
Week 3		
11, 13 &	Regional varieties and dialects	- Chapter 2. Regional Dialectology

15 Sept.		- Chapter 3. Social Dialectology
Week 4		
18, 20 & 22 Sept.	Language attitudes and ideologies	- Wolfram & Schilling, 'Dialects, standards, and vernaculars' - Bourdieu, 'The production and reproduction of legitimate Language'
Week 5		
25, 27 & 29 Sept.	Language variation and change Essay # 1 due (25 Sept.)	- Video: American Tongues - Chapter 4. Language Variation and Change. - Labov: 'The social motivation of sound change'
Week 6		
2, 4, & 6 Oct.	Language and social class	- Bernstein: 'Social class, language and socialization' - Labov: 'The social stratification of (r) in NYC ...'
Week 7		
9, 11 & 13 Oct.	Language and race Essay # 2 due (9 Oct.)	- Labov: 'The logic of nonstandard English' - Hill: 'Language, Race, and White Public Space' - Lippi-Green: 'The real trouble with Black English'
Week 8		
16, 18 & 20 Oct.	Language and gender	- Chapter 7. Gender and language use - Cameron: 'Performing gender identity' -Tannen: "Women and men in conversation"
Week 9		
23, 25 & 27 Oct.	Language contact and convergence Quiz 1 (23 Oct.)	- Chapter 9. Pidgins, Creoles and 'New Englishes.' - Kachru: World Englishes and Culture Wars
Week 10		
30 Oct., 1 & 3 Nov.	Language use in multilingual communities	- Romaine: 'The bilingual and multilingual community' - Ferguson: 'Diglossia'
Week 11		
6, 8 & 10 Nov.	Code choice and code-switching Essay # 3 due (6 Nov.)	- Chapter 5. Language Choice and Code-Switching. - Myers-Scotton: 'Code-switching'
Week 12		
13, 15 & 17 Nov.	Language maintenance, shift and death	- Chapter 8. Language contact 1: Maintenance, shift and death - Paulston: 'Social factors in language maintenance and language shift' -Paulston: 'Language revival: the case of Irish'
Week 13		
20 Nov.	Language and power Research Proposal Abstract due (20 Nov.)	- Chapter 10. Critical sociolinguistics: Approaches to language and power - Thompson: 'Introduction: language and symbolic power'
Week 14		
27 & 29; & 1 Dec.	Language planning and policy Quiz # 2 (1 Dec.)	- Chapter 11. Sociolinguistics and Education - Chapter 12. Language planning and policy
Week 15		
4, 6 & 8 Dec.	Review & Project Proposal Presentations	- Review - Students' presentations of their final projects

VI. Assessment:

The students' final grades will be the culmination of their grades on all class requirements. A student's final grade will be calculated as follows:

Attendance and participation	15%
In-class presentation	15%
Short essays (7 * 3 essays)	21%
Quizzes (12 * 2 quizzes)	24%
Project proposal (3 points for abstract, 2 for presentation, 20 for paper)	25%
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Total	100%

VII. Grading:

This course will be graded based on the following scale:

A= 93-100 %	A-= 90-92%	B+= 87-89%
B= 83-86%	B-= 80-82%	C+= 77-79%
C= 73-76%	C-= 70-72%	D+= 67-69%
D= 63-66%	D-= 60-62%	F= below 60

VIII. Important Dates:

Mon, 28 August	Beginning of instruction
Mon, 4 September	Labor Day (no class)
Friday, 20 October	Fall Break, class re-scheduled to 19 October
Wed-Fri, 22-24 November	Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)
Fri, 8 December	Last day of instruction
Monday, 11 December	Research Paper due by 11:59 p.m.

IX. Academic Integrity, "The Honor System"

(http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/teaching/syllabus_resources.cfm)

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to establish the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students. The Honor Pledge: To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University

X. Disability Services:

(http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/teaching/syllabus_resources.cfm)

The Americans with Disabilities Act states: "Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor..."

XI. Classroom Etiquette:

- The materials created by the instructor for this course are not for public distribution. Please do not use the class materials for any purposes outside this class because, if you do so, you violate **the instructor's copyrights**.
- Please do not engage in activities that may disrupt the instructional process, negatively influence the learning of your classmates, or convey disrespect to your colleagues or instructor. Examples of disruptive classroom activities include:
 - ✓ **Use of cellphones**
 - ✓ **Late arrival to class** (except in extenuating circumstances)
 - ✓ **Early departure from class**
 - ✓ **Side conversations**
 - ✓ **Using class time to review or read materials that are not related to this course.**
 - ✓ **Sleeping inside the classroom**
 - ✓ **Use of insulting or discriminatory language**