

LING 0600: Introduction to Sociolinguistics

Summer Session II, 2023

COURSE TIME:	5:15pm – 9.05pm Mon. & Wed. (online)
ZOOM LOCATION:	Available on Canvas
SESSION:	June 29 – August 4, 2023
INSTRUCTOR:	Aini Li
CONTACT:	liaini@sas.upenn.edu
OFFICE HOURS:	<u>Virtual</u> : Tuesdays 10am – 11 am or by appointment Zoom Link available on Canvas
TEXTBOOK:	No textbook: Readings posted on Perusall

COURSE OVERVIEW

This class is about how we use language in our everyday lives. You will learn about how social context and our social identities shape our language use, and how the way we use language in turn influences how others perceive us and what kinds of experiences we have in life. You'll also learn about how sociolinguists do practical research on these topics.

The course is a SAIL course, which stands for *Structured, Active, In-class Learning*. Instead of listening to lectures and taking tests, you will learn by engaging in the same kinds of activities that working sociolinguists do every day: reading papers, discussing case studies, analyzing data, and writing reports about what you have learned. Just like a working sociolinguist, you will do a lot of these activities collaboratively with others.

We believe strongly that sociolinguistics as a field is ideally suited to active learning. We all have experience with language in social context, and the data we need to study it more carefully is all around us!

By the end of the course you should feel comfortable:

- Talking and writing about language variation and its social determinants
- Reading and discussing academic research articles
- Analyzing and interpreting quantitative sociolinguistic data
- Presenting and explaining sociolinguistic research to your peers

This syllabus lays out the course topics, grading scheme and relevant course policies. Please refer to the course schedule on Canvas for day-by-day lecture topics, assignments, and deadlines.

COURSE TOPICS

Unit 1: Language Diversity

We encounter the existence of many different sources of variability in language and begin to consider the scientific study of this variability. We discuss how linguistic features like words, sentence structures, and sounds vary across social dimensions like regional background, age, race/ethnicity, and group affiliation.

Unit 2: Language Changes & Shifts

We ask how languages change over time and what makes people talk differently in different situations. Topics include stylistic practice, communication accommodation, and code-switching.

Unit 3: Language Matters

We consider the real-world consequences of variability, motivating the study of sociolinguistics. Topics include linguistic discrimination, forensic linguistics, and human-computer interactions.

Unit 4: Sociolinguistic Cognition

We look at ways in which sociolinguists tackle the question of how social information and language processing are intertwined in the human mind.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Your final grade is out of 100 points, broken down as follows:

Projects (x2) - 40 points total

In-class work/Participation - 36 points (4 points per day)

Readings – 12 points total

Sociolinguistic Reflections (x4) - 12 points total (3 points each)

COURSE POLICIES

Contact:

- Feel free to ask questions by email, but allow 24 hours for a response.
- Check this syllabus and the Canvas site before emailing questions.
- Please contact the instructor by email instead of Canvas messaging.
- Announcements will be made through Canvas, so make sure you are getting Canvas updates regularly.

Class Preparation

- We will be discussing several readings during class. These will be posted on Canvas and should be read and annotated in Perusall before the class in which they will be discussed.

Standards for submission:

- Assignments are due at 11:59 pm on the date of the deadline unless otherwise specified.
- All coursework should normally be submitted through Canvas.
- ONLY in case of technical problems with Canvas, coursework may be emailed.
- All submitted coursework should be in PDF format, using standard fonts/type size/color, with your last name(s) and the group number in the file name and at the top of the page.

Late and missed assessments:

- The late penalty for assignments is 10% if submitted within 24 hours of the deadline and 20% if submitted within 48 hours of the deadline. Later submissions will not be accepted without well-documented extenuating circumstances.
- Assignments or deadlines that are missed for travel, illness, or unexpected obligations may be made up by advance arrangement with the instructor, or with documentation from SDS or your academic advisor.

Attendance

- Because of the collaborative nature of the course, in-class attendance is crucial and expected.
- Since in-class work makes up a significant portion of your grade, missing a class may require additional out-of-class work or may result in lost points. It is your responsibility to make up any content you miss by getting in touch with me as soon as possible.

Accommodations and nondiscrimination:

- I am of course happy to arrange any necessary accommodations with appropriate documentation from Student Disability Services.
- If you require disability accommodation, please notify me as soon as possible.
- I am committed to providing a learning environment free of discrimination and harassment. I expect your similar commitment.

Academic Integrity:

- Please refer to Penn's academic integrity guide here:
<http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/>

- Violations of academic integrity will be handled on a case-by-case basis, with possible consequences including zero credit for an assignment, failure in the class, and/or reporting to the Office of Student Conduct for university-level sanctions.

THESE ARE NOT OFFICIAL DATES. This is a tentative plan for the course that is being provided for your information. Canvas assignment deadlines are the only official source of information on due dates. Homework assignments are to be completed **before** the listed class date.

In addition to the assignments listed here, don't forget to do a Sociolinguistic Reflection after each class. You must complete 8 reflections.

Unit 1: Language diversity

Wednesday July 5th: Regional diversity in language

Homework: Reading Comprehension: Van Herk Ch. 3

Monday July 10th: Social diversity in language

Homework: Reading Comprehension: Meyerhoff Ch. 2
Vocab for Variables activity

Unit 2: Intraspeaker variation

Wednesday July 12th: Style and social identity

Homework: Reading Comprehension: Schilling-Estes Ch 15

Monday July 17th: Code switching

Homework: Read:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2013/04/13/177126294/five-reasons-why-people-code-switch>

Unit 3: Language matters

Wednesday July 19th: Language attitudes

Homework: Reading Comprehension: Van Herk Ch. 12
Read Creaky Voice readings

Deadline: Project 1 report

Monday July 24th: Linguistic discrimination

Homework: Watch *Talking Black in America* documentary
Read Project 2 paper

Wednesday July 26th: Applications

Unit 4: Sociolinguistic Cognition / Experimental Sociolinguistics

Monday July 31st: Sociolinguistic Cognition

Homework: Read & annotate Project 2 paper
Make Project 2 slides

Wednesday August 2nd: Class Mini-Conference

Homework: Prepare Project 2 presentations

Deadline: Project 2 presentations