

LING 3357: Sociolinguistics (ONLINE)

CRN: 14413/14868

Fall 2023

Professor: Dr. Natalia Mazzaro

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Office Hours:

- Tuesday 1:30-2:30 p.m. in person (Graham Hall 301A)
- Thursday 9-10 a.m. online via Zoom (no password required)
<https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/81068884861>

TA: Natalia Minjarez Oppenheimer

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- Monday 11:30 am – 12:30 pm in person (Graham Hall 3rd floor)
- Wednesday 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm - online via Zoom (no password required)
<https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/88412976082>

Course Information: This course will cover basic aspects of the relationship between language and society. These will include 1) the sociology of language, 2) linguistic variation/change, 3) the relation between linguistic structure and socio/cultural structure, 4) the ethnography of speaking, 5) the development of salient linguistic varieties and 6) the implications of sociolinguistics for education.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Whether they know it or not, everyone is interested in sociolinguistics. Comments such as “People from that state talk funny,” “¡She is super *fresal!*” or “I don’t like to mix Spanish and English. People who do that are *pochos*” are the kind of casual remarks that come up in day-to-day conversation, but behind each of them is an implicit theory about the way language and society are connected – that a way of talking is connected with a geographical location, for example, or that there is an ‘correct’ way of talking and people who don’t do that are wrong. As participants in the social world, each of us has this kind of prejudices and does this kind of theorizing all day, everyday, but social scientists have developed methodologies that allow us to conduct more principled investigations into questions such as “What does it mean when people from a given social group use a certain pronunciation?” “Why is there a supposedly “correct” way of talking?” and “Does language change? And, how do innovations spread?”.

This course examines the dynamic interaction between language use and its social context. Topics include the impact of variables such as regional origin, ethnicity, gender, social class, and cultural norms on the way language is used. Students are also introduced to key issues surrounding language choice, code-switching, and cross-cultural communication in multilingual and multicultural societies. Finally, the course introduces students to key topics in language

attitudes and discrimination, and how sociolinguistic research can help discover and bring to light these unconscious biases.

COURSE OBJECTIVES OR EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

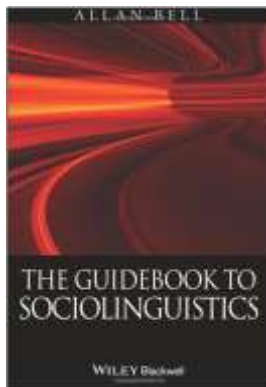
At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand major topics in sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics, the study of language use in its social context
- Have a broad understanding of linguistic diversity and mechanisms of language change, language discrimination and ideologies
- Develop critical thinking abilities and awareness of the role that language plays in mediating social relations and fostering social change
- Discover connections between linguistics and their other academic and professional interests, e.g., journalism and media studies, criminal justice, teaching languages, psychology, speech pathology, social life

LEARNING MODULES

This course is designed using a modular format. Each module covers a separate topic within sociolinguistics, but all topics converge at the end. Students are encouraged to make connections between separate, but related topics. Each module will be packaged with all the materials, lecture notes, assignments, submission areas, discussion posts related to that topic.

REQUIRED MATERIALS



Allan Bell (2014) *The Guidebook to Sociolinguistics* (Wiley/Blackwell Publishers) 1st edition. Available online at the library. ISBN-13: 978-0631228660

Additional readings can be accessed from the internet or through the library.

For term definitions, you can consult the latest edition of Crystal's *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*.

The chapters in your text summarize and synthesize important concepts and data in sociolinguistics. The readings located on-line tend to be classic primary works in the field. There will also be some informal, more popular work of sociolinguistic relevance. One of our emphases will be on close and critical reading of each

individual piece, which will require you to understand both the generalizations and the details that support them. The other will be “connecting the dots”, that is, relating different readings and relating the readings to your observations of how people use language in the world.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Grades will be earned on the basis of performance on the following tasks:

	Percent
Midterm 1 & 2	40% (20% each)
Project 1 & 2	30% (15% each)
Blogs & DB	15%
Quizzes	15%

Final grades will be calculated by adding your scores with the corresponding weights for every task. I will post an Excel spreadsheet on BlackBoard to help you make a rough calculation of your grades.

A	Excellent	A= 90-100%
B	Good	B= 80-89%
C	Average	C= 70-79%
D	Below average	D= 60-69%
F	Failure	F= 0-59%

The calendar (see last page) clearly states the dates when each of these tasks is due. Under no circumstances will late work be accepted. So, please, familiarize yourself with these dates and organize your work accordingly. If for some reason you can't turn in an assignment on the due date and time, turn it in earlier.

Midterms (40%):

By university policy, a missed exam results in a grade of 0% for that exam, unless a prior arrangement has been made with the professor. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog for details.

Midterms are designed to evaluate your understanding of the course material and the level to which the objectives set for the course are being met, as well as assess your overall progress. In every exam, students will be required to answer multiple-choice questions, and a couple of short answer questions.

This course has two online midterms in the dates shown on the calendar. The second exam will NOT be comprehensive. A study guide will be posted on Blackboard before each exam. Midterms will be available on Blackboard for 24 hours. Students have 24 hrs to complete them once started.

Make-ups for missed midterms can only be arranged if the student is unable to do it due to medical reasons. This will need to be adequately documented.

Extra Credit Opportunities Students can earn up to 2% in extra credit by participating in up to 4 credits of SONA experiments (0.5% in extra course credit per SONA credit). SONA is a Human Participant Pool System used for research conducted by faculty in the Department of Psychology and the Department of Latin-US and Linguistics. Students earn course credit by completing experiments that investigate a variety of issues in psychology and/or linguistics. Many of the studies posted in SONA are immediately relevant to linguistics because they investigate language use or depend on language use. A tutorial will be provided in class to show you how to use SONA to participate in research and earn extra credit for this class. An alternative assignment option will be provided to you should you prefer not to participate in research.

Project 1 and 2 (15% each): Detailed instructions and grading rubrics for the projects will be distributed later. The projects will involve applying the concepts and methodology learnt in the course to investigate sociolinguistic questions. They may also include reflecting on your experience and knowledge to interpret linguistics data from real life.

Projects will be due on Saturdays at midnight (11:59 PM). No late work will be accepted.

Blogs/Discussion Boards (DB) (15%): These will consist of entries that are brief observations/comments about various topics discussed in class, your research experience and/or opinions on specific readings, podcasts or videos.

All students are expected to participate in online discussion and blogs. Students will initiate posts (thread) and also respond to their peers' posts. The word count for new threads is 150, and for comments it is 50, unless instructed differently. Please, try to respond to those posts that have no comments yet.

You should complete 1 entry and 1 response to somebody else's entry on the day selected in the calendar, and you will earn 1 point per entry (10 total). Your journal/blog entries will be available on BlackBoard to everyone (for writing, for reading, and for comment).

The following are the two podcasts that will be used for this class:

- 1) **The Vocal Fries** tackles linguistic discrimination in relation to a particular group. (Transcripts are available for some episodes) <https://vocalfriespod.fireside.fm/>
- 2) **Code Switch (from NPR)** Conversations about race and identity by journalists of color. <https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510312/codeswitch>
- 3) **Accentricity Pod** (on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook) Why do we love some accents and hate others? Why do we talk differently in different situations? Does learning a new language really teach you to think differently? www.accentricity-podcast.com/

There is a total of eleven blogs/DBs and one of them (the lowest grade) will be dropped at the end of the course.

Blogs will be due on Saturdays at midnight (11:59 PM). No late work will be accepted

Quizzes (15%)

There will be at least one graded quiz per chapter. The quizzes will cover material from the current chapter. Students should complete the readings before taking the quizzes. The file/chapter that students should read will be specified on the instructions.

- The links to the quizzes will be available under the current week folder on Blackboard
- Quizzes will be posted on Blackboard and will be available for 24 hrs. You have 30 min to finish the quiz once you started.
- **There are no quiz re-takes or make-ups.**
- At the end of the semester, your lowest quiz grade will be dropped
- **Quizzes will be due on Tuesdays at midday (11:59 AM). No late work will be accepted**

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about [Microsoft Office 365](#) and follow the instructions.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

Course Communication: How we will stay in contact with each other

Because this is an online class, we won't see each other in the ways you may be accustomed to: during class time and small group meetings. However, there are a number of ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- **Office Hours:** We can meet online or in person. Please see my office hours on p.1. My office hours online will be held on Blackboard Collaborate using the links on p.1.
- **Email:** UTEP e-mail (rather than phone call) is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please specify whether you

are attending the ONLINE or IN PERSON Sociolinguistic class. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your student ID number.

- **Announcements:** Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

NETIQUETTE

As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It's possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other's ideas.
- Respect and show courtesy to classmates and the instructor. No harassment or inappropriate language will be tolerated either in class or online.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, social media, blog, or other space.
- Avoid writing in all caps (e.g., *I DO NOT AGREE WITH YOU*), as messages written like this can often be misinterpreted and come off as rude (i.e. this is sometimes seen as the online version of yelling/raising your voice at somebody).
- When writing an email to your professor or TA, please make sure to follow appropriate netiquette rules. Emails are not the same as text messages, and therefore require a more formal register. Always start with an appropriate greeting, introduce yourself, address your question/the purpose of your email, thank your professor for their time, and close with an appropriate goodbye. See an example below:

Good afternoon Dr. Mazzaro,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is _____ and I am in your LING 3357 class (CRN: _____). I am writing because I have a question about

I thank you in advance for your time. Best, (student name)

Course Policies: What you need to do to be successful in the course

ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have technical issues with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate Word document as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort.

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed more than half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution \(OSCCR\)](#) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

CLASS RECORDINGS

Class recordings are allowed with the instructor's consent. **You may not share recordings outside of this course.** Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

PLAGIARISM DETECTING SOFTWARE

Your course work and assessments are submitted through SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. SafeAssign is used to review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

Course Resources: Where you can go for assistance

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:

Technology Resources

- [Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

Academic Resources

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.

Individual Resources

- [Military Student Success Center](#): Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#): Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.

Weekly Calendar (Subject to Change)

This calendar provides an overview of the course. **The due date for quizzes is ALWAYS Tuesday at 11:59 AM (MST). The due date for blogs and projects is ALWAYS Saturday at 11:59 PM (MST). No late work will be accepted.**

	Topic	To do	Assignments Due	Notes
Week 1 8/28-9/3	Class introduction & syllabus	*Read Ch 1 *Video: 'Voices of the World' from 'Films on Demand'	* Quiz 1 due 8/31 *Blog 1 due 9/2	For BLOG 1: watch the video and answer the questions provided
Week 2 9/4-9/10	Multilingualism	*Read Ch 2 (2.1-2.7) *Read article by Phillip Carter	* Quiz 2 on Ch2 due 9/5 *Blog 2 due 9/9	For BLOG 2: listen to the episode 'E Ola Ka 'Olelo Hawai'i' (from Podcast Codeswitch on June 12, 2019). Answer the questions provided.
Week 3 9/11-9/17	Language Shift & Maintenance	*Read Ch. 3 (3.1 – all) *Read article by Hidalgo (2001)	* Quiz 3 on Ch3 due 9/12	For BLOG 3: response to the article by Hidalgo (2001)
Week 4 9/18-9/24	Language Choice	*Read Ch. 5 (5.1- all) * Read article by Fernández-Mallat et al (2023)	*Quiz 4 on Ch5 due 9/19 *Blog 4 due 9/23	For BLOG 4: response to the article by Fernández-Mallat et al (2023)
Week 5 9/25-10/1	Codeswitching	*Read chapter by Callahan (2009) *Read article by Toribio (2011)	*Quiz 5 on readings due 9/26 *Project 1 due 9/30	For Project 1 follow closely the instructions provided.
Week 6 10/2-10/8	Language Variation	* Read Ch. 7 (7.1 -- 7.4)	*Quiz 6 on Ch7 due 10/3 * Blog 5 due 10/7	For BLOG 5: listen to the episode 'Talk American' (from Podcast Codeswitch on Aug 8, 2018). Answer the questions provided
Week 7 10/9-10/15	Variation in Ethnicity	* Read Regan, B. (2022) Watch Video: Do You Speak American down in the North	* Quiz 7 due 10/10 * Blog 6 due 10/14	For BLOG 6: watch the video and answer the questions provided
Week 8 10/16-10/22	Midterm 1	Review all the material we have covered up to now. Midterm 1 will be available for 24 hrs from 10/19-10/20		

Week 9 10/23-10/29	Language in Space	*Read Ch. 9 (9.1 -- 9.8) * Read Lance (1999)	Quiz 9 on Ch9 due 10/24 * Blog 7 due 10/28	For BLOG 7: response to the article by Lance (1999)
Week 10 10/30-11/5	Language in Space	* Read Mazzaro & González de Anda (submitted)	*Blog 8 due 11/4	For BLOG 8: response to the article by Mazzaro & González de Anda (submitted)
Week 11 11/6-11/12	Language in time	*Read Ch. 8 (8.1 -- 8.4) *Read Tagliamonte (2016)	*Project 2 due 11/11 * Blog 9 due 11/11	For BLOG 9: response to the article by Tagliamonte (2016)
Week 12 11/13 -11/19	Variation in Gender	* Read Ch. 7 (7.5 -- all) *Read Yuasa (2010)	*Quiz 8 on Ch7 due 11/14 * Blog 10 due 11/18	For BLOG 10: response to the article by Yuasa (2010)
Week 13 11/20-11/26	Language Attitudes Thanksgiving - Univ. Closed	*Read Ch. 10 (10.1, 10.2, 10.5)	*Quiz 10 on Ch10 due 11/21 * Blog 11 due 11/25	For BLOG 11: watch the movie 'Pygmalion' on Youtube and answer the questions provided
Week 14 11/27-12/3	Language Attitudes	* Read article by Rangel et al (2015)	*Quiz 11 on article due 11/28	
Week 15 12/4-12/7	Midterm 2 Dec 8 Dead day (no classes)	Review all the material we have covered since week 9. Midterm 2 is NOT comprehensive. Midterm 2 will be available for 24 hrs from 12/5-12/6		

IMPORTANT NOTE: The syllabus provides a general plan for the course; **modifications are often necessary and may be implemented as a result of students' needs, course development, and classroom life in general.**