

Sociolinguistics

LING 550 Section I Fall 2021
JKB 1106 MWF 9:00–9:50am

Last updated: August 18, 2021

Instructor: Dr. Joey Stanley

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Office: 4059 JFSB

Office hours: 2:00–4:00 Wednesday and Thursday

(What are office hours? See below for details!)

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Prerequisites

Officially: LING 201 (Introduction to Linguistics) or ELANG 223 (Intro English Language)

Unofficially, and in my opinion, some exposure to phonetics, phonology, morphology, and syntax will be helpful, though this is neither required nor enforced. Because the final project will involve original data collection and analysis, completion of or concurrent enrollment in LING 604 would be helpful as well.

Also, I'm not sure why an undergrad course is the prerequisite for a grad-level class. If you still need to sign up, let me know.

Materials

Bell, Allan. 2013. *The guidebook to sociolinguistics*. John Wiley & Sons. This book is available online through the library. I have spare copy of this book too so if you would like to use it for the semester, let me know.

Additional readings will be made available on Learning Suite.

Course Purpose

By the end of this course, successful students will understand the research and theory of how language functions in culture and society by focusing on the development, typology, and description of the relationship between language and society.

Learning Outcomes

- Research** Conduct research into a wide range of sociolinguistic variation.
- Knowledge** Understand the relationship between language use and society with respect to regional, social, ethnic and contextual variation.
- Profess** Impart knowledge of sociolinguistics and related research in presentations and papers.

You will be assessed on whether you can successfully complete each of these outcomes.

Classroom Procedures

For the first time in over a decade (and perhaps ever!), LING 550 will meet independently of the undergrad version of the course, LING 452. This is very exciting! Previously, grad students enrolled in this course got largely the same experience as undergraduates, only they had to turn in a longer final paper at the end or something superficial like that. This time, we have the flexibility to treat it as a truly graduate-level course!

(To be clear, the class is still designed to be an *introduction* to sociolinguistics, not a continuation of LING 452. So don't worry if you've never taken a sociolinguistics class before; this'll just be an introduction at the graduate level.)

The class is organized into discrete topics, one for each week. Mondays and Wednesdays will be normal lectures. There will be some lecture, some small group work, and discussion, just as would be expected during a normal class of this size. The material that will be covered in these two lectures will be the equivalent of what I would cover in three lectures in LING 452, so we'll move a little more quickly through them.

Fridays will be less structured and more focused around readings of primary research articles in sociolinguistics. Most of these days will start off with a student doing an in-class presentation of an article related to that week's topic. We will then spend the rest of the time discussing one or more additional readings. With only half a dozen or so students in the room, we will be able to have a good discussion and will be able to dig deeper into the theory and methods of some important linguistics articles. The expectation is that you will have read the article thoroughly before class starts.

Assignments and Grades

Your grade will be determined based on the following four types of assignments.

- Quizzes (10%)** Each week there will be a quiz associated with the assigned reading and the lecture. They are all open-book, open-note, open-everything, except open-classmate. The lowest will be dropped.
- Homework (20%)** There will be a homework assignment each week. Some of them are mini-projects where you go out and collect original data. The lowest score will be dropped.
- Article Presentations (20%)** Fridays will start off with one student presenting a summary of a journal article relevant to that week's topic. This presentation should be approximately 10–15 minutes and should provide a brief overview of the background, methods, findings, and take-home message of the article, as well as your own thoughts and reactions to the article. We have enough students for you to each do two presentations during the semester. I will present on days that students are not presenting, so you can use my presentations as a guide for what yours should look like.
- Exams (25%)** There will be one midterm and one final. The midterm will cover the first two units of the course. The final will cover the last three units and will be available during finals week.
- Final Project (25%)** In a nutshell, you will need to do a complete sociolinguistic analysis. The paper should be 3000–4500 words, which is approximately 10–15 pages. This paper will be due by the end of finals week.

In addition to these, watch out for extra credit opportunities sprinkled throughout the course. Usually if I see that some online conference is happening during the course of the semester, I'll give extra credit for attending at least one talk during that conference. More details will be provided when relevant.

Your assignments will be weighted accordingly and your final grade will be determined using the following table:

Grade	Minimum Percent	Grade	Minimum Percent
A	93	C	73
A-	90	C-	70
B+	87	D+	67
B	83	D	63
B-	80	D-	60
C+	77	E	0

Communication

We will be using LearningSuite for official course-related materials. All the readings, quizzes, assignments, and grades will be available on LearningSuite.

You may communicate with me by sending an email at any time. However, be aware that I do try to treat my job as a 9–5 gig, so I may not answer it until I get in the next day. That means if you email me late Friday night, I might not get to it until Monday morning and don't expect an immediate response if you email me at midnight before an assignment is due.

Office Hours

My office hours are 2:00–4:00 Wednesday and Thursday. I am happy to meet in-person at 4059 JFSB or via Zoom at <https://byu.zoom.us/my/joeystan>. For in-person meetings, you are more than welcome to drop by without making an appointment. If my door is closed, please don't hesitate to knock. If you plan on meeting over Zoom, it's helpful to shoot me a quick email at least a few minutes beforehand to let me know to expect you.

What are office hours for, you ask? Well, they're for YOU! This is time that I have set aside each week to dedicate to helping students. Do not feel like you are taking my time by coming by—that is what that time is for! Don't feel like you need to stop by exactly at the start time—any time during the entire window is fair game. And don't feel pressured into making it quick: if you want to spend the whole block of time hashing out some things or getting help for whatever reason, that's okay!

You may think that office hours are only for help with homework or if you didn't understand the lecture. Not true! I mean, if you'd like to meet for those reasons, that's certainly fine. But, you can come into office hours to talk about whatever—other things related to the class, other linguistics classes, some fun project idea you're thinking about, guidance on picking a research topic, talking about your future after graduation, shooting the breeze about breadmaking, etc, etc, etc. This is your chance to have dedicated one-on-one time with me to talk shop, regardless of whether it has to do with the class (or any class). I love it when students come by and you should definitely feel comfortable doing so, for whatever reason. (Plus, I have a big basket full of food...)

They're also good ways for me to get to know you. If you end up applying to a future job, a PhD program, law school, or med school and need letters of recommendations, I can't really write a good one if you were “just” another student in my class. But if you've come into office

hours and given me a chance to get to know you a little bit better, I can definitely write a better letter for you, if needed.

Schedule

This is tentative outline. Expect deviations as the semester progresses. For details on the reading, quizzes, and assignments, see Learning Suite.

Dates	Topic	Textbook	HW
Aug 30–Sep 3	Introduction	Ch 1	Introductory Surveys
Unit 1: The Life Cycle of a Language			
Sep 6–10*	Language Coexistence	Ch 2 & 3	Interview a bilingual
Sep 13–17	Pidgins and Creoles	Ch 4	Analysis of <i>Da Jesus Book</i>
Sep 20–24	Language Death	Ch 3	Language shift in your family
Unit 2: Interactions			
Sep 27–Oct 1	Language Ethnography	Ch 6	Forms of Address
Oct 4–8	Style	Ch 11	Analysis of Sacramento Talk–ese
Oct 11–15	Networks	none	No HW because of the midterm
Unit 3: Language Variation			
Oct 18–22	Dialectology	Ch 9	Simple online survey
Oct 25–29	Social Variation	Ch 7	Rapid-and-Anonymous Survey
Nov 1–5	More Social Variation	Alim (2016)	Analysis of BYU-ese
Nov 8–12	Language Change	Ch 8	Lifespan Change s
Unit 4: Language Regard			
Nov 15–19	Folk Linguistics	Ch 10	Language Ideology Interview
Nov 22–23*	Perception	Eckert (2012)	Matched-Guise Experiment
Unit 5: Applied Sociolinguistics			
Nov 29–Dec 3	Linguistic Discrimination	none	Mock Letter-to-the-Editor
Dec 6–8*	Language and Education	none	No HW because of the final

* This is a shortened week so we'll lose a lecture or the article reading.

University Policies

Honor Code

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and every instructor's expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing & Responding to Sexual Misconduct

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Brigham Young University prohibits unlawful sex discrimination against any participant in its education programs or activities. The university also prohibits sexual harassment-including sexual violence-committed by or against students, university employees, and visitors to campus. As outlined in university policy, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are considered forms of "Sexual Misconduct" prohibited by the university.

University policy requires all university employees in a teaching, managerial, or supervisory role to report all incidents of Sexual Misconduct that come to their attention in any way, including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Incidents of Sexual Misconduct should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at t9coordinator@byu.edu or (801) 422-8692. Reports may also be submitted through EthicsPoint at <https://titleix.byu.edu/report> or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours a day).

BYU offers confidential resources for those affected by Sexual Misconduct, including the university's Victim Advocate, as well as a number of non-confidential resources and services that may be helpful. Additional information about Title IX, the university's Sexual Misconduct Policy, reporting requirements, and resources can be found at <http://titleix.byu.edu> or by contacting the university's Title IX Coordinator.

Student Disability

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Whether an impairment is substantially limiting depends on its nature and severity, its duration or expected duration, and its permanent or expected permanent or long-term impact. Examples include vision or hearing impairments, physical disabilities, chronic illnesses, emotional

disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety), learning disorders, and attention disorders (e.g., ADHD). If you have a disability which impairs your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (UAC), 2170 WSC or 801-422-2767 to request a reasonable accommodation. The UAC can also assess students for learning, attention, and emotional concerns. If you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, please contact the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895, D-285 ASB for help.

Inappropriate Use of Course Materials

All course materials (e.g., outlines, handouts, syllabi, exams, quizzes, PowerPoint presentations, lectures, audio and video recordings, etc.) are proprietary. Students are prohibited from posting or selling any such course materials without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course. To do so is a violation of the Brigham Young University Honor Code.

Academic Honesty

The first injunction of the Honor Code is the call to “be honest.” Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life’s work, but also to build character. “President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education” (The Aims of a BYU Education, p.6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim. BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.

Plagiarism

Intentional Plagiarism Intentional plagiarism is the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one’s own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, or footnote. Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the university Honor Code Office, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by an instructor. Inadvertent plagiarism, which may not be a violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable in the academic community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education where all members of the university are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in their own work. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright law.

Inadvertent Plagiarism Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but non-deliberate, use of another’s words, ideas, or data without proper attribution. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from an ignorant failure to follow established rules for

documenting sources or from simply not being sufficiently careful in research and writing. Although not a violation of the Honor Code, inadvertent plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct for which an instructor can impose appropriate academic sanctions.

Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper attribution have the responsibility to consult with their instructor and obtain guidance. Examples of plagiarism include:

- *Direct Plagiarism*: The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source.
- *Paraphrased Plagiarism*: The paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for the author's own.
- *Plagiarism Mosaic*: The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one's own without acknowledging the source.
- *Insufficient Acknowledgement*: The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source.

Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

Respectful Environment

“Sadly, from time to time, we do hear reports of those who are at best insensitive and at worst insulting in their comments to and about others. . . We hear derogatory and sometimes even defamatory comments about those with different political, athletic, or ethnic views or experiences. Such behavior is completely out of place at BYU, and I enlist the aid of all to monitor carefully and, if necessary, correct any such that might occur here, however inadvertent or unintentional. I worry particularly about demeaning comments made about the career or major choices of women or men either directly or about members of the BYU community generally. We must remember that personal agency is a fundamental principle and that none of us has the right or option to criticize the lawful choices of another.”
President Cecil O. Samuelson, Annual University Conference, August 24, 2010.

“Occasionally, we . . . hear reports that our female faculty feel disrespected, especially by students, for choosing to work at BYU, even though each one has been approved by the BYU Board of Trustees. Brothers and sisters, these things ought not to be. Not here. Not at a university that shares a constitution with the School of the Prophets.” Vice President John S. Tanner, Annual University Conference, August 24, 2010.

Deliberation Guidelines

To facilitate productive and open discussions about sensitive topics about which there are differing opinions, members of the BYU community should:

1. Remember that we are each responsible for enabling a productive, respectful dialogue.
2. To enable time for everyone to speak, strive to be concise with your thoughts.
3. Respect all speakers by listening actively.
4. Treat others with the respect that you would like them to treat you with, regardless of your differences.
5. Do not interrupt others.
6. Always try to understand what is being said before you respond.
7. Ask for clarification instead of making assumptions.
8. When countering an idea, or making one initially, demonstrate that you are listening to what is being said by others. Try to validate other positions as you assert your own, which aids in dialogue, versus attack.
9. Under no circumstances should an argument continue out of the classroom when someone does not want it to. Extending these conversations beyond class can be productive, but we must agree to do so respectfully, ethically, and with attention to individuals' requests for confidentiality and discretion.
10. Remember that exposing yourself to different perspectives helps you to evaluate your own beliefs more clearly and learn new information.
11. Remember that just because you do not agree with a person's statements, it does not mean that you cannot get along with that person.
12. Speak with your professor privately if you feel that the classroom environment has become hostile, biased, or intimidating.

Adapted from the Deliberation Guidelines published by The Center for Democratic Deliberation.

Mental Health

Mental health concerns and stressful life events can affect students' academic performance and quality of life. BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS, 1500 WSC, 801-422-3035, caps.byu.edu) provides individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as stress management services. These services are confidential and are provided by the university at no cost for full-time students. For general information please visit <https://caps.byu.edu>; for more immediate concerns please visit <http://help.byu.edu>.

BYU College of Humanities Statement on Inclusion

We strive to cultivate mutual respect and empathy for all people, no matter their ethnic, racial, or cultural background, or sexual orientation. Elder Ballard said at a BYU devotional in Feb. 2020: "Through discrimination, racism, sexism, and other social ills, we will often impose

false identities on others that keep them and us from progressing. This can stop when we see all people as children of God. We consider every person divine in origin, nature, and potential. Each possesses seeds of divinity. And ‘each is a beloved spirit [child] of heavenly parents.’ ”

We invite all to participate in open and honest inquiry in our classrooms where we deal with complicated social and moral issues. In these conversations we seek to

- Respect and value the contributions of people from backgrounds, religions, and cultures other than our own
- Be aware of hurtful words and phrases
- Learn about and understand different cultural traditions
- Acknowledge discomfort when participating in class discussions about difficult topics
- Speak up on behalf of those who may be hurt by harmful speech
- Show willingness to work in groups with people of diverse backgrounds
- Respond with humility and teachability when our words offend
- Approach these issues with sincerity, respect, and compassion
- Express tolerance, love, and understanding

We fall short of our ideals when we

- Behave as if one is morally superior for treating someone of another race with kindness or not recognizing that benevolent stereotypes can be condescending or paternalistic
- Use words without understanding social context or the full range of a term’s meanings
- Expect that everyone in the Church shares similar cultural or political values
- Tacitly accept derogatory, racist, or sexist language without calling it into question
- Excuse or minimize the damage done by others—including leaders—who discriminate or who are biased
- Make assumptions about someone’s abilities or attributes based on the color of their skin or national origin
- Assume on the basis of a person’s appearance or accent that they come from another country or have a certain immigration status
- Presume that those who suffer from famine, poverty, crime, environmental disasters, or war brought these conditions upon themselves

The College of Humanities is attuned to the reality of an increasingly diverse Church membership. We aspire to better understand our own language and history, and to remain aware that some groups benefit from immunity from discrimination and implicit biases. We invite students, staff, and faculty to use their time in our college to strive toward conduct worthy of Christian discipleship, where we are “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19).