



English 558: 81133
Sociolinguistics
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Christian F. Hempelmann
Office Locations: DAL 2072, HL 226, Zoom
Office Hours: daily 5-6pm on Zoom by appointment
University Email Address: c.hempelmann@etamu.edu
Communication Response Time: within 24h

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook Required

Holmes, J. (2017). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. (5th edition). London, U.K., & New York, NY: Routledge.

Note: The 6th edition of the above textbook has been published, and you are welcome to obtain this newest edition if you wish (not required). The instructor will supplement the instructions with some of the updated information from the 6th edition.

Additional Text Required

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition). Those of you who are not familiar with APA style which is required in the discipline of TESOL/ applied linguistics, need to purchase a copy of this manual. You should obtain this book from booksellers of your choice.

Software Required:

- D2L
- LeoMail
- A word processing program: *Students have free access to [Office 365](#).*

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Course Description

In this course you will attain an advanced understanding of the sociocultural nature of human language. Language may be studied at several structural or functional levels (such as phonology or syntax, for example). However, your attention to this course will be directed to the components of society and culture and to the relationships between these components and language variation within and across individuals. You will also be encouraged in the class to carefully examine your beliefs about your own language and your attitudes toward the language varieties that you and others use. Doing so will help you better understand the change that language constantly undergoes in personal and social use. Examining your beliefs and attitudes will also help you become more aware of the variation in language use from one group to the next and from one individual to the next.

Learning Outcomes

A student who completes ENG 558 will:

1. recognize the constant interplay between language and society in both English speaking as well as in societies that speak other languages.
2. develop his/her attitudes to varieties of English and other languages.
3. develop an interest in a specific area of sociolinguistics research by completing a research paper.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

Each student's performance in the following areas will determine the student's grade for this course:

Online Discussions (30%)

The weekly discussions provide opportunities for you to interact with your classmates to discuss key concepts and terms targeted in the course readings and lectures. You are expected to make a minimum number of comments and replies to your classmates' comments for every discussion. There are two deadlines each week: one for posting a reply to discussion prompts (i.e., by Thursday midnight), and one for responding to at least two classmates' posts (i.e., by Sunday midnight). The specific requirements are provided in the description for each discussion assignment.

Quizzes (30%)

Each of the three quizzes covers the content of the previous instructional weeks and must be completed by the end of the week indicated on the course calendar (11:59pm, Sunday). Question forms include multiple choices, true/false, filling-in-blanks, short answers, and essay questions. The best way to get prepared is by reading the course materials, watching the weekly lectures, and participating in online discussions.

Final Research Paper & Presentation (40%)

You will pick a topic presented in the course readings/lectures, conduct your own library/field research on it, and write a 10-15 page paper on it. Before turning in the final draft

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of your paper, you will also compose a prospectus and bibliography and present the gist of your paper in a 10-15 min presentation via an online presentation tool such as VoiceThread. In addition, you will receive feedback from your classmates on a rough draft, which will be due earlier than the final draft due date. Specific assignment details will be available on D2L. (*Final research paper cannot be revised and resubmitted.)

Total Possible = 100%

("No curve" grading scale / 100 percent possible, 90-100=A 80-89=B 70-79=C and so on. . .)

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: Schedule is flexible and subject to change.

Week 1: Introduction to Sociolinguistics; Holmes Chapter 1 (What do sociolinguistics study?); Discussion

Week 2: Holmes Chapter 2 (Language choice in multilingual communities); Discussion

Week 3: Holmes Chapter 3 (Language maintenance and shift); Discussion

Week 4: Holmes Chapter 4 (Linguistic varieties and multilingual nations); Discussion

Week 5: Holmes Chapter 5 (National languages and language planning); Quiz 1

Week 6: Holmes Chapter 6 (Regional and social dialect); Discussion

Week 7: Holmes Chapter 7 (Gender and age); Discussion

Week 8: Holmes Chapter 8 (Ethnicity and social networks); Holmes Chapter 9 (Language change); Discussion

Week 9: Final Research Paper Prospectus & Bibliography

Week 10: Holmes Chapter 10 (Style, context and register); Quiz 2

Week 11: Holmes Chapter 11 (Speech functions, politeness and cross-cultural communication); Discussion

Week 12: Holmes Chapter 12 (Gender, politeness and stereotypes); Holmes Chapter 13 (Language, cognition and culture); Discussion

Week 13: Holmes Chapter 14 (Analyzing discourse); Holmes Chapter 15 (Attitudes and applications); Quiz 3

Week 14: Final Research Paper Peer Review & Presentation

Week 15: Final Research Paper

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Please check updated addresses in view of the ongoing tamuc-to-etamu renaming as East Texas A&M University transition.

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

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LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Grievance Procedure

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with **Dr. Gavin P. Johnson, the Director of Writing** (gavin.johnson@tamuc.edu). In the case when the Director of Writing is the instructor, the student should contact **Dr. Hunter Hayes, Chair of the Department of Literature and Languages** (hunter.hayes@tamuc.edu). Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 ("Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation").

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

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University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

AI Use in Courses

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

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Specific guidelines on the use of AI in this course:

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words. *In this course you are not allowed to use any such software* unless specifically approved by the instructor for a given assignment or for a specific task. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/
rulesProcedures/documents/](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/)

[13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/
GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf](http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf)

[http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/
rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/)

[13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf)

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

To measure the level of compliance with the university's Institutional Effectiveness guidelines, throughout the semester, I will collect some of the ungraded texts you produce. The texts will be part of a portfolio created on your behalf and will be measured to ensure that our program "promotes practices that result in higher student academic achievement; an enhanced student experience; aligned and transparent decisions; and readily available information for improvement, accountability, and accreditation" (see "Department of Institutional Effectiveness," <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/institutionalEffectiveness/default.aspx>). This is solely an assessment of program effectiveness and in no way affects students' course grades or GPAs.

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Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

[http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/
studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url: [http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/
rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf)

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

RESOURCES

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding

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Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Writing Center

The Writing Center offers writers free, one-on-one assistance. We welcome all writers, majors, and disciplines—undergraduate and graduate students alike. In fact, we work from the premise that all writers, no matter their ability level, benefit from the feedback of knowledgeable readers. The Writing Center staff is trained to provide writers with just this service. In short, we are here to help you help yourself. The Writing Center offers one-on-one sessions with writers—both face-to-face and online—begin on the hour and last up to 45 minutes. You cannot sign up for back-to-back appointments, but you may sign up for as many appointments as you'd like each day and week. For more information, visit <https://www.tamuc.edu/writing-center>

Library

The Velma Waters Library supports the research, learning and teaching interests of students, faculty and staff. Connect with a librarian, explore our research and course guides, and attend workshops.

- **Chat with a Librarian!** Get immediate assistance with our [chat service](#) on the main Library page: <https://www.tamuc.edu/library/>
- **Email** ask@tamuc.libanswers.com. We will respond to your email within 24 hours, often much sooner.
- **Text** your question to 903.225.2862.
- **Call** the Waters Library at 903.886.5718 or contact the librarian for your college/department to discuss your research needs.
- **Meet With Us!** Don't stay up all night searching Google. Schedule a one-on-one consultation held in-person or via Zoom with the librarian for your college/academic department.
- **Visit Us!** We'd love to meet you in-person!
 - Waters Library Research Office: Second Floor, Room 213
 - Waters Library University Archives: 4th Floor, Room 406A
 - A&M – Commerce at Mesquite Metroplex Center: Second Floor, Study Room

Student Career Preparedness Office

Meet with career advisors who can help you with the resources and tools needed to prepare you for your next phase after graduation and beyond. To schedule an appointment, you can either call 903.468.3223, emailing hirealiation@tamuc.edu or go online by clicking [schedule an appointment](#).

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Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

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