

ENGL 2371

Language in a Multicultural America

“It is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman despise him.”
-- *George Bernard Shaw*

Class time:	Tuesdays & Thursdays: 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM
Location:	ENGL/PHIL Rm 104
Instructor:	Dr. Min-Joo Kim (Office: ENGL/PHIL Bldg. Rm 480; 4 th floor, University Library side)
E-mail:	min-joo.kim@ttu.edu (best way to contact)
Website:	http://webpages.acs.ttu.edu/minjkim/
Office hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30-2:00 PM (or by appointment)

This course examines language in the United States as it relates to race, gender, class, religion, and ethnicity. In particular, it raises students' awareness of how language impacts their social realities or how they may create their own social realities by using language. This course fulfills a multicultural requirement, so the assessments will be done largely in accordance with the requirements set out by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). In particular, students will need to demonstrate critical thinking abilities, effective communicative skills, civic awareness, and open-mindedness and sensitivity to other cultures and speakers of other languages or English language varieties.

Textbook (Required):

- Wardhaugh, Ronald and Janet M. Fuller. 2015. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Wiley-Blackwell. 7th edition. Available at the university bookstore.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Articulate his/her own linguistic identity and the linguistic features of the speech community he/she belongs to.
- Demonstrate awareness and appreciation of the diverse (sub)cultures in the U.S. and the language(s) used in such communities.
- Demonstrate understanding of the basic concepts and methods used in analyzing language and its social variation.
- Conduct basic socio-linguistic research by collecting, accurately describing, and analyzing linguistic data and by utilizing the theoretical tools and concepts introduced in the course.

Criteria for Assessment

Assessment category	Proportion in the final grade
(i) Attendance & Participation	20% (Attendance 10%; Participation 10%)
(ii) Weekly journals	20% (10 entries: 2% each)
(iii) Homework assignments	30% (3; 10% each)
(iv) Final paper (1400-1500 words long)	20%
(v) Paper proposal (400-450 words long)	Not graded but required
(vi) Presentation on the final paper	10%
Total	100%

Relation between numerical scores and letter grades

(i)	95 – 100	A+
(ii)	90 – 94.99	A
(iii)	85 – 89.99	B+
(iv)	80 – 84.99	B
(v)	75 – 79.99	C+
(vi)	70 – 74.99	C
(vii)	65 – 69.99	D+
(viii)	60 – 64.99	D
(ix)	Below 60	F

Attendance (10%):

- Each absence counts as *1 point off* of the final grade.
- If you know you will be absent, *email me ahead of time*. If the absence is documented and justifiable, it may be excused at the discretion of the instructor.

Number of absences	Consequence
3	0% for “Attendance and Participation” category of final grade
6	Automatic F for the course

- University policy (OP 34.19) requires that no penalty be imposed upon students who are absent from class because of religious observances, and allows for students to make up the work missed because of such absence. To exercise this right, *students must inform the instructor in writing prior to the absence; I need at least two weeks’ notice* in such cases.

Participation (10%):

- In order to receive full credit for this portion of the course grade, you must contribute to our collective knowledge building by *actively participating* in class discussions and making *pertinent, appropriate, compelling, and/or challenging comments* on what is being discussed.
- Great questions are always encouraged and your comments need not be “right” at all times as long as you show respect and sensitivity towards your peers and instructor.

Weekly journals (20%):

- Throughout the semester, you will be writing a *single-spaced, one-paged* journal for every week, reflecting on what you are learning from the readings, lectures, or in-class discussions. In this context, you can talk about how your attitudes to different accents or speech groups are changing, or any linguistically interesting phenomena you’re observing as they relate to this course.
- Ideally, it’ll be great if you try to write something after each and every class but if you cannot, you can try to write something over the weekend and then submit it when it is due, which is *most likely* the following Tuesday.
- All journal entries are due *at the start of the class* in a ***typed and printed out*** form.
- I will not grade each journal entry; rather, I’ll give you just a pass or fail, which will translate into 2 or 0 points for the course grade, respectively.
- But at the end of the semester, you will be submitting the *entire collection* of your journal entries in a bound hard copy format, and those of you who submit *less than 7* journal entries will ***lose 5 credit points*** from the final grade regardless of the reason. In addition, at that time, only journal entries that have my *signatures* on them will be accepted.

Homework assignments (30%)

- In addition to submitting journals, you'll be submitting three homework assignments, which will be like short scholarly essays but whose lengths and contents will vary depending on the nature of the work you will be doing: in some cases, you'll be writing a response essay on an educational TV series that addresses issues related to our course objectives. In other cases, you'll be asked to conduct a brief linguistic analysis of some socio-linguistically interesting phenomenon. But I will let you know exactly what each homework assignment is about when they are given out as well as their length restrictions.
- Regardless of the content or nature of the assignment, you will be expected to share your homework answers with your peers when we discuss them in class and your performance in such tasks will also impact your grade on "Participation".
- Your homework assignments will be graded based on both form and content and the writing and style must be appropriate for academic purposes.

Term-paper (20%)

- In this course, you will be writing a longer scholarly essay in order to demonstrate your ability to conduct *independent research* on matters related to this course.
- There is no set topic you need to work on but you must have your topic *approved by me* by submitting a *well-written proposal by March 31*. More on this below.
- Your final paper should be comprised of 1400-1500 words, double-spaced, *excluding* references (i.e., list of works cited), and there must be *section headings* and *page numbers*.
- Since this will be an essay submitted for academic purposes, you must rely only on *credible* sources (i.e., *peer-reviewed* linguistic journal articles, book chapters, and books), and you must cite **at least 4 published works on the topic at hand**, whether they are available online or in print.
- For *citations*, you may adopt the MLA style or the style of any prestigious linguistics journal such as *Linguistic Inquiry* and *Language*. But whichever style is adopted, it must be done *consistently*.
- Furthermore, you can only cite works that are *listed in the "references" section*. Conversely, if you list a work under "references", then you must *cite it in the text*.
- **Evaluation criteria:** (i) organization (20%); (ii) style & clarity of exposition (20%); (iii) thoroughness & accuracy of the literature review (40%); and (iv) originality (20%).

Paper Proposal (not graded but required):

- Any good work comes from a solid planning, so in order to produce a good-quality paper, you must write a good paper proposal outlining your research plan.
- Your proposal must be 400-450 words long. And it needs to have a clear statement on: (i) what the overarching research topic is; (ii) why it is important in the broad context of sociolinguistics; (iii) which specific question(s) you will be addressing; and (iv) *how* you will be answering them, that is, what kind of research methods you will be utilizing.

Presentation on the final paper (10%):

- As a member of an intellectual community, you will be sharing the findings of your final paper by making an in-class presentation on it at the end of the term.
- Your presentation must be done in an *academically appropriate and professional manner*. In addition, it **must** be accompanied by a **1-2 paged, audience-friendly, hard-copy handout**.
- You must present *on the day you are scheduled to; failure to do so* will result in **-10** points off of your final grade. More detailed instructions on the presentation/handout will be given out later.
- **Evaluation criteria for your presentation:** (i) organization (30%); (ii) solidity of the content (50%); and (iii) effectiveness of delivery (e.g., clarity, ability to maintain the audience's interest/attention, professional demeanor) (20%).

Schedule (*Subject to change*; below, the chapters are from W&F's (2015) book and the reading should be done *in advance*.)

Week/Dates	Topic	Reading/Notes
Week 1: Jan. 15	Introduction/go over the syllabus	Ch. 1
Week 2: Jan. 20 Jan. 22	Overview on the course Languages, Dialects, and Varieties	Ch. 1 Ch. 2/Journal (J) 1 out
Week 3: Jan. 27 Jan. 29	J1 due /Languages, Dialects, and Varieties cont'd Cont'd	Ch. 2 HW (homework 1) out
Week 4: Feb. 3 Feb. 5	J2 due /Defining Groups HW1 due/review	Ch. 3
Week 5: Feb. 10 Feb. 12	J3 due /Language Variation Cont'd	Ch. 6
Week 6: Feb. 17 Feb. 19	J4 due /Three waves of Variation Studies Cont'd	Ch. 7 HW 2 out
Week 7: Feb. 24 Feb. 26	J5 due /Catching up HW 2 due/review	
Week 8: Mar. 3 Mar. 5	J6 due / Multilingual Societies and Multilingual Discourse	Ch. 4
Week 9: Mar. 10 Mar. 12	J7 due / Contact Languages: Structural Consequences of Social Factors	Ch. 5 HW 3 out
Week 10: Mar. 17 Mar. 19	Spring Break: No classes	
Week 11: Mar. 24 Mar. 26	HW3 due/review Language (Lg.) Variation & Change	Ch. 8
Week 12: Mar. 31 April 2	Language Variation & Change cont'd Pragmatics	Paper proposal due Ch. 10
Week 13: April 7 April 9	J8 due /Politeness Discourse Analysis (DA)	Ch. 10 Ch. 11
Week 14: April 14 April 16	J9 due /DA cont'd Language, Gender, & Sexuality	Ch. 11 Ch. 12
Week 15: April 21 April 23	J10 due /Sociolinguistics & Education Loose ends	Entire journals due
Week 16: April 28 April 30	Student presentations I Student presentations II	
Week 17: May 5	Last day of classes: Student presentations III	Final-paper due by 11 PM electronically

Course Policies

A. Basic Course-Related Policies

- To earn a passing grade in this course, students must successfully complete *all* course requirements stated in the syllabus.
- In the event of missing a class for an unavoidable reason, students must inform the instructor as soon as possible. See also what is stated above under *Attendance and Participation* above.
- Students must be *punctual* to respect other students' and the instructor's time. Being late for class *more than 3 times* will lead to *lowering the course grade by one level* (e.g., an A becomes a B+).
- Unless otherwise notified, all written work is due *at the start of class* and *as a hard copy*.

- *No late* submission of any written work will be accepted unless it is a dire situation that can be *justified by proper documentation* (e.g., doctor's note).
- All students must obtain access to the courses' website on *Blackboard*.
- Announcements including information about the homework assignments and lecture notes will be sent out to your TTU e-mail (via Blackboard). Therefore you must *check your TTU e-mails more than once a day* in order to receive such important information in a timely manner.
- Students are encouraged to set up appointments with the instructor when issues regarding this course come up or just to clear up any confusion about the course content.
- Constructive feedback about the course is encouraged at any time.

B. E-mail Rules

- E-mails should be limited to quick inquiries or requests; that is, students must use office hours or appointments to discuss more complex questions, issues, or concerns about the course.
- I check e-mail throughout the day from Monday through Friday, but please allow 24 hours for a response from me during business days. Between Friday evenings and Sunday nights, I cannot readily check e-mail. So if you send me an e-mail during that time, you will most likely receive a response from me the following Monday.
- To ensure that your e-mail reaches me safely, please put "ENGL 2371" or "Language in a Multicultural America" in the *subject line* of your e-mail. In addition, please provide your *full name* in the *e-mail text*, so that I will know who the sender is; non-Tech email accounts often do not provide such important information.
- Students are expected to use *professional language* and tone in *all communications* with the instructor, including e-mail correspondences. So please read your e-mail before you send it to me and make sure that it sounds *polite and respectful*, as well as *clear* and *to the point*.
- If you do not receive an e-mail response from me within the specified response times stated above, take another look at the construction of your e-mail. The tardiness or lack of a response on my part may be the result of your lack of attention to the prescribed method of professional e-mail correspondence. In that case, please *revise* your e-mail by abiding by the e-mail rules stated above and *resend* it.

C. Civility in the Classroom

- Students are expected to help maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. *Appropriate* student behavior (whether online, in person, or over the phone) creates a better environment for learning.
- Students are *not allowed to chat* with someone in class about personal matters, or to *text-message, talk on the phone, or speak rudely* to another student or the instructor.
- Such inappropriate behavior will minimally result in a *request to leave class*. In extreme cases, it may even lead to *lowering the course grade by one level* (i.e., a B becomes a C+).
- Students are encouraged to participate actively in class but *no one should dominate the class discussion*. Such behavior will be considered *inappropriate*, so will be subject to the same set of policies as stated above.

D. Academic Integrity

- This course follows the University's statement on academic integrity, namely, "It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity" (*Bulletin of Texas Tech*, p. 82).
- It also abides by the Code of Student Conduct as laid out in the Student Affairs Handbook (<http://www.studentaffairs.ttu.edu/campuslife/handbook.pdf>).
- *Failure to uphold such guidelines* may result in one or more of the following penalties, depending on the instructor's assessment of the seriousness of the violation: e.g., a *failing grade* on an

assignment or for the entire course, *reporting to the Dean of the student, referral* for disciplinary action to the Student Mediation Center, or other relevant disciplinary action.

- This class has *zero tolerance for cheating or plagiarism*: plagiarism or cheating will result in an *automatic F for the course*, regardless of the reason.
- **What counts as cheating:**
 - dishonesty on examinations, quizzes, and written assignments
 - illegal possession of examinations
 - use of unauthorized notes during an exam or quiz
 - obtaining information during an exam from an unauthorized source or from another student
 - help others to cheat
 - alteration of grade records
 - illegal entry to or unauthorized presence in the instructor's or her department's office.
- **What counts as plagiarism:**
 - Plagiarism means using someone else's work as if it were his/her own.
 - Therefore, any student will be guilty of plagiarism if he or she fails to give credit for quotations or to use essentially identical expressions of material taken from other sources including books, encyclopedias, magazines, the Internet, and the writings of other people.

E. Students with Disabilities

- Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present *appropriate verification from Student Disability Services* during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in West Hall or call 806.742.2405.