

San José State University
Department of Linguistics & Language Development
LING 24-02: Language Variation in Space, Time & Culture
Fall 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Chris Donlay
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Office Hours:	M/W 10:30a-12n, T/R 4p-4:30p; and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	T/R 12p-1:15p
Classroom:	Hugh Gillis Hall (HGH) 217
Prerequisites:	None required. Completion of English 1A highly recommended.
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	Area A3: Critical Thinking and Writing Area D1: Human Behavior.

Course Description

One of the defining characteristics of human language is its variability. Languages spoken across the globe look very different from one another; each language, in turn, has regional and social variation, and the form of each language and each variety changes constantly over time. This course focuses on varieties of English based on factors such as region, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and gender, and examines how the media of communication play a role in the social functions of language variation. The course will also explore how the English language has undergone structural changes over time. Throughout the course we will ask questions such as: What is the range of variation within the English language used in the US and elsewhere today? What are the attitudes towards these varieties? How does language change over time? How do policies reflect changing attitudes towards language over time? How do new technologies affect language use and structure? In order to answer these questions effectively, students in this course will be introduced to basic concepts in critical thinking, such as deductive and inductive reasoning, as well as a variety of rhetorical tools.

Required Readings

Textbook

Bassham, Gregory, William Irwin, Henry Nardone and James M. Wallace (eds.) 2011. *Critical Thinking: A Student's Introduction*, 4th. ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Other Readings

Additional readings will be made available via Canvas.

Course Website

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, assignments, announcements, etc. can be found on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking Canvas to find instructions and learn of updates.

Contact Information

My office number is only useful during office hours. All other times, the best way to reach me is via SJSU email. I make every effort to respond quickly during the day, less frequently during the evening. I have a mailbox in the Linguistics and Language Development office in Clark Hall 473, but again email is the best way to reach me outside of class.

Library Liaison

Toby Matoush is the SJSU library liaison for Linguistics. You can reach her by email (toby.matoush@sjsu.edu) for any questions you may have regarding library sources.

Learning Outcomes

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Through the coursework students will be able to identify and analyze elements of the structure of the English language across time and space in its own unique social contexts. Students will gain a set of perspectives and develop skills necessary to perform analytical investigation on complex themes that are typical in the field of social sciences but also in real life situations. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. A3-GELO 1: *Locate and evaluate sources, through library research, and integrate research through appropriate citation and quotation.*
2. A3-GELO 2: *Present effective arguments that use a full range of legitimate rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view.*
3. A3-GELO 3: *Effectively locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way in support of one's ideas.*
4. A3-GELO 4: *Identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the context of an argument.*
5. A3-GELO 5: *Effectively distinguish and convey inductive and deductive patterns as appropriate, sequencing arguments and evidence logically to draw valid conclusions and articulate related outcomes (implications and consequences).*
6. D1-GELO 1: *Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.*
7. D1-GELO 2: *Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them.*
8. D1-GELO 3: *Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.*
9. D1-GELO 4: *Recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals.*

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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

1. CLO 1: Identify the range of variation in American English and the social function of language variation.
2. CLO 2: Analyze how various social factors (region, ethnic identity, socio-economic class, gender, age, etc.) and communication environments correlate with linguistic forms.
3. CLO 3: Critically evaluate opposing arguments on language use that have social and political significance.

ASSIGNMENT		SLOs		
Contents	Volume	CLO	A3-GELO	D1-GELO
Problems Sets 1-5	1000 words	1	5	
Reflection Paper -Video: <i>In search of the first language</i>	600 words	1, 2		1
Reflection Paper -Video: <i>Do you speak American?</i>	600 words	1, 2, 3		2
Reflection Paper -Video: <i>Pidgin</i>	600 words	1, 2		2
Argumentative Essay: An Evidence-Based Argument on Standard American English	1500 words	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3, 5	3
Research Paper: Language Variation	1750 words	1, 2	1	
TOTAL	6050 words			

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed so that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>

- **An Evidence-Based Argumentative Essay on Standard American English:** Detailed description will be uploaded on Canvas
- **Research Project on Language Variation in the USA:** Detailed description will be uploaded on Canvas
- **Reflective Response Paper 1:** Students will write a reflective response paper based on the documentary *In Search of the First Language*, which demonstrates how language change and development are closely connected to the cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts of language contact. The paper will confirm students' understanding of key concepts related to this topic.
- **Reflective Response Paper 2:** After viewing the documentary *Do You Speak American?*, students will write a reflective response paper. This video provides illustrations of differences in regional and social dialects of American English that have arisen in the United States.
- **Reflective Response 3:** In the video *Pidgins*, students will observe how the structural variations manifested as different words, pronunciations, and accent interact with the speakers in social contexts, being associated with attitudes and stereotypes towards these varieties and the speakers. Students will write a reflective response paper on these issues.
- **Homework Assignments:** Five problem sets will develop students' ability to recognize arguments and types of arguments and detect any unstated assumptions in arguments.

- **Midterm Exam:** A midterm examination on critical thinking and argumentation will be given in class as listed in the course schedule.
- **Final Exam:** A cumulative final exam will be given during Finals Week according to the schedule provided by the university.
- **Participation:** Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions, group work, occasional quizzes, and any other activities assigned by the instructor. Note that participation points are non-retrievable, that is, other activities cannot substitute for participation in any given event.

Grading Information

- Assignments are due on or before the due dates.
- All work must be typed and submitted directly to the instructor via email, unless otherwise specified.
- Each assignment and exam is scored on a basis that allows for easy conversion to a percentage. These scores are then weighted as part of your final grade. For example, if you scored 100% on the first assignment, this would be weighted as 5 out of 5 points in the course’s final 100-point total; if you got a 90, this would count as 90% of 5 (or $0.9 \times 5 = 4.5$ points towards the final 100).
- Scores will be made visible via Canvas as they are recorded. Students may check their cumulative scores with the instructor via email at any time.
- Late policy: Except in the case of a documented medical crisis, assignments submitted after the assigned due date/time but within 24 hours of the due date/time will be assessed a 10% penalty. Those submitted after the first 24-hour period will be penalized an additional 10% for each late day.
- Exams may not be taken at times other than their scheduled dates and times. Exceptions must be negotiated with the instructor well in advance of the stated exam time.
- This course must be passed with a C or better as a CSU graduation requirement.
- The table below provides the weighting of course tasks in the final grade:

Assignment	Percentage of Total Grade
Argumentative Essay: Standard American English	10%
Research Project: Language Variation in the USA Essay (15%) + Presentation (5%)	20%
Reflective Response Paper 1	10%
Reflective Response Paper 2	10%
Reflective Response Paper 3	10%
Homework Assignments (5 @ 2% each)	10%
Midterm Exam	10%
Final Exam	15%
Participation	5%
TOTAL	100%

- Your final grade is based on the percentage of total points earned in the class. The table below gives the approximate expected point-values of each grade. Possible grades are A through F.

A+	98-100	B+	87-89.9	C+	77-79.9	D+	64-66.9
A	94-97.9	B	84-86.9	C	74-76.9	D	60-63.9
A-	90-93.9	B-	80-83.9	C-	70-73.9	F	< 60

Classroom Protocol

- It is important to arrive to class on time, as late arrivals are disruptive to everyone.
- Put your cell phone on silent or vibrate and don't text or take calls in class.
- Personal computers may be used in class only to support activity directly related to the course, for example, to take class notes or follow a link suggested by the instructor.
- Absolutely no access to electronic devices (phones, ipads, laptops, iwatches, et al.) will be allowed during the exams.
- Each assignment must be the original work of the student who turns it in. Students may discuss homework assignments with classmates, but everything you turn in must be your own original work.
- If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact me or a fellow student to find out what you've missed.
- No late-add petitions can be signed or approved by the instructor, chair or Dean of H & A.
- The instructor reserves the right to reschedule assignments and exams with adequate advance notice.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity (plagiarism), accommodations, student rights and responsibilities, adding/dropping, student services and other important topics is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>. Students are strongly urged to read this information at the beginning of the semester.

**LING 24-02: LANGUAGE VARIATION IN SPACE, TIME & CULTURE
(FALL 2018)
COURSE SCHEDULE**

The schedule is subject to change with fair warning; changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.

Week	Date	Topics	Reading	Assignments
1	8/21 T	Course introduction		
	8/23 R	Critical thinking: standards & barriers	Bassham, Ch. 1	
2	8/28 T	Critical thinking: premises & conclusions, arguments & non-arguments	Bassham, Ch. 2	H1 due
	8/30 R	Critical thinking: deductive arguments	Bassham, Ch. 3	H2 due
LABOR DAY HOLIDAY				
3	9/04 T	Critical thinking: inductive arguments	Bassham, Ch. 3	
	9/06 R	Critical thinking: evaluating deductive/inductive arguments	Bassham, Ch. 3	H3 due
4	9/11 T	Critical thinking: fallacies of relevance	Bassham, Ch. 5	
	9/13 R	Critical thinking: fallacies of insufficient evidence	Bassham, Ch. 6	H4 due
5	9/18 T	Critical thinking: fallacies		
	9/20 R	Argumentative essays & Toulmin Model	Toulmin Method	H5 due
6	9/25 T	Grammar, language authority, standardization; Discussion of Essay 1	Tamasi & Antieau, Ch. 2, 8	AE assigned
	9/27 R	Standard English and accent	Trudgill 2011; Kumaravadivelu 2004	
7	10/02 T	Video: <i>Do You Speak American?</i>		RRP1 assigned
	10/04 R	Review for Midterm Exam		RRP1 due
8	10/09 T	MIDTERM EXAM		
	10/11 R	Evolution of language	Pinker Ch. 11	
9	10/16 T	LIBRARY SESSION		
	10/18 R	Video: <i>In Search of the First Language</i>		RRP2 assigned
10	10/23 T	Dialects of American English	Tottie (2002) Ch. 9	RRP2 due
	10/25 R	Pidgins and creoles; Discussion of Essay 2	Crystal (1998)	AE due <i>Research Project assigned</i>

Week	Date	Topics	Reading	Assignments
11	10/30 T	Video: <i>Pidgin</i>		<i>RRP3 assigned</i> <i>Presentation lottery</i>
	11/01 R	Historical context of English	Payne (2011) Beal (2012)	<i>RRP3 due</i>
12	11/06 T	Social variation of American English	Wolfram (2004)	
	11/08 R	AAE & Ebonics controversy	Baugh (2004); Green (2004)	
13	11/13 T	Code switching/bilingualism	Holmes (1992)	
	11/15 R	Language policy and bilingual education	Tottie (2002) Ch. 10	
14	11/20 T	Language myths		
	11/22 R	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY		
15	11/27 T	Student presentations		
	11/29 R	Student presentations		
16	12/04 T	Student presentations		
	12/06 R	Review for Final Exam		<i>Research Paper due</i>
		FINAL EXAM: TBC		