

LT5435: EXPERIMENTAL SOCIOLOGICAL LINGUISTICS

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Experimental Sociolinguistics

Subject Code

LT - Linguistics and Translation

Course Number

5435

Academic Unit

Linguistics and Translation (LT)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

LT5408 Sociolinguistics

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course combines the theoretical study of sociolinguistics with hands-on training in experimental design. Students will examine how experimental methods can be used to investigate key questions in sociolinguistic cognition, such as how listeners socially evaluate language, what aspects of speech carry social meaning, how sociolinguistic knowledge impacts speech perception, and how variation and change is perceived and produced in real-time language processing. Through an analysis of primary research articles and methodological commentaries, we will evaluate best practices and the role of experiments in furthering sociolinguistic theory. The course emphasizes practical application; through weekly workshops, students will master essential research tools. The semester culminates in the development of an original research question and an experimental design, refined through peer feedback.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Understand how experimental methods can be used to answer key theoretical questions in sociolinguistics and identify these areas of inquiry.		x	x	x
2	Demonstrate knowledge of issues in experimental design and apply this knowledge to critically examine methods used in both published experimental research papers and your own research.		x	x	x
3	Utilize practical tools for experimental design (e.g., Ibex, PsychoPy, Cognition, and Qualtrics) and stimuli creation (e.g., audio resynthesis in Praat).		x	x	x
4	Design an experiment to answer a specific question related to sociolinguistic cognition.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Reading	Students will read academic books and articles.	1, 2, 3, 4	3 hours
2	Lead discussion	Students will present the assigned papers or an experimental method or design tool.	1, 2, 3, 4	3 hours
3	Final project	Students will work in groups to write a research proposal based on what they have learned. The final project should focus on a topic in sociolinguistic cognition.	1, 2, 3, 4	3 hours

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Lead discussion	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	No
2	Final project: One final project on topics related to experimental sociolinguistics and sociolinguistic cognition	1, 2, 3, 4	60	Students may use AI to generate some project ideas, identify key literature, and refine their English writing, the final output must be their own original work.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Lead discussion

Criterion

Demonstrate understanding of the basic principles of experimental design and how they can be used in analyzing sociolinguistic cognition.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrate strong evidence of capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of basic concepts of linguistics; and evidence of excellent understanding of key issues involved in sociolinguistic cognition.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrate good evidence of capacity to analyze and synthesize; grasp of basic concepts of linguistics, and evidence of good understanding of key issues involved in sociolinguistic cognition.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstrate some evidence of ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the study; adequate understanding of basic concepts of linguistics and key issues involved in sociolinguistic cognition.

Marginal (D)

Demonstrate limited evidence of ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the study; adequate understanding of basic concepts of linguistics and key issues involved in sociolinguistic cognition.

Failure (F)

Demonstrate no understanding of basic concepts of linguistics and key issues involved in sociolinguistic cognition.

Assessment Task

Final project:
One final project on topics related to experimental sociolinguistics and sociolinguistic cognition

Criterion

Demonstrate through writing the ability to critically discuss and appreciate fundamental issues in sociolinguistic cognition.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrate strong evidence of excellent ability through writing to critically discuss and appreciate fundamental issues in sociolinguistic cognition.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrate evidence of good ability through writing to critically discuss and appreciate fundamental issues in sociolinguistic cognition.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstrate adequate ability through writing to discuss fundamental issues in sociolinguistic cognition.

Marginal (D)

Demonstrate limited ability through writing to discuss fundamental issues in sociolinguistic cognition.

Failure (F)

Demonstrate no ability through writing to discuss fundamental issues in sociolinguistic cognition.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, language acquisition, psycholinguistics neurolinguistics, sociolinguistics computational linguistics applied linguistics.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Lecture notes/slides/readings for the course.
2	Drager, Katie. 2018. Experimental Research Methods in Sociolinguistics. Bloomsbury Academic “Research Methods in Linguistics” Series. London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Campbell-Kibler, K. (2010). The sociolinguistic variant as a carrier of social meaning. <i>Language Variation and Change</i> , 22(3), 423-441.
2	Pharao, N., & Maegaard, M. (2017). On the influence of coronal sibilants and stops on the perception of social meanings in Copenhagen Danish. <i>Linguistics</i> , 55(5), 1141-1167.
3	Levon, E., & Buchstaller, I. (2015). Perception, cognition, and linguistic structure: The effect of linguistic modularity and cognitive style on sociolinguistic processing. <i>Language Variation and Change</i> , 27(3), 319-348.
4	Campbell-Kibler, K. (2016). Towards a cognitively realistic model of meaningful sociolinguistic variation. <i>Awareness and control in sociolinguistic research</i> , 123-151.
5	McGowan, K. B., & Babel, A. M. (2020). Perceiving isn't believing: Divergence in levels of sociolinguistic awareness. <i>Language in Society</i> , 49(2), 231-256.