



Sharif University of Technology
Languages and Linguistics Center
Second Semester, 2025

Course: *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*

Number of Credits: *2 Credits*

Instructor: *Saeed Rezaei*

Location: *Languages and Linguistics Center, Audio-Visual Room*

Office Hours: *Every day! (By appointment please)*

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1. Course Description

This is an introductory course to sociolinguistics for M.A. students of TEFL at Sharif University of Technology. As an interdisciplinary/cross-disciplinary field, *Sociolinguistics* derives its theoretical and methodological approaches from several fields including Linguistics, Sociology, and Anthropology. The focus of this course will be on exploring (English) language in its social context; however, several issues with regard to other languages in Iran will be raised. Students native in languages/dialects other than standard Persian will be encouraged to deliver lectures on their languages/dialects, their attitudes towards them, and other sociolinguistic factors therein.

2. Course Goals

By the end of this term, students are expected to:

- learn about the history, origin, and later developments in the field of sociolinguistics;
- have a firm understanding of the main areas of research introduced in the syllabus;
- learn the research methods and data collection approaches in sociolinguistic studies;
- know about the place of language in society and its sociopolitical power;
- explore the attitudes of Iranians towards English, Persian, Turkish, and Kurdish;
- learn to respect and value language diversity and variation;

3. Scoring Criteria

a) Active Participation 2 points

Active participation is essential for a meaningful learning experience in this course. Students are expected to:

- Attend all sessions **regularly and punctually**, having completed assigned readings.
- Engage **thoughtfully in discussions** by asking questions, sharing insights, and responding to peers.
- Demonstrate **critical reflection** through in-class activities.

Note on Attendance:

- More than **two unexcused absences** may negatively impact your final grade.
- Frequent tardiness or lack of participation will result in a lower **participation score**.

b) Presentation 2 points

As part of this course, each student will deliver a **15-minute seminar presentation** on an assigned topic from the syllabus. The presentation aims to deepen your understanding of discourse analysis while developing critical academic and communicative skills.

Guidelines:

- Research papers will be **assigned by the instructor** for presentation or chosen in consultation with the course instructor.
- Prepare **PowerPoint slides** and a **brief written synopsis** of the paper.
- Go beyond superficial summary: engage critically with the paper's arguments, methodology, and relevance to TEFL/discourse studies.
- Presenters should demonstrate **in-depth reading** of their assigned paper, while all students are expected to read the assigned paper for discussion.
- This exercise will help you **refine research skills** and may serve as a foundation for your final project or future proposals.
- Presentations are integral to the learning process; approach them as both a scholarly obligation and an opportunity to explore your academic interests.

- c) **Midterm Exam** **4 points**
 d) **Final Exam** **12 Points**

This exam will:

- Assess your understanding of key concepts, theories, and applications covered throughout the term;
- Include a variety of question formats (short answer, case analysis, and essay questions)
- Require you to synthesize course material and demonstrate critical thinking skills

- e) **Term Paper (Optional)** **2 Points**

The topic for the term paper will be confirmed based on the consultations with the course instructor. Students are expected to arrange some appointments with the instructor so that the term paper will emerge *during the term* based on the topics discussed. Students who do not finalize their topics with the instructor and merely submit a paper at the end will receive NO POINTS for their work however good it might be. The paper should be 5000 to 6000 words in length with at least 15 references including books, academic articles, and book chapters.

Topic Development

- Topics must be approved through consultation with the instructor
- Schedule at least two advising meetings during the term
- Bring draft materials to each consultation for feedback

Submission Requirements

- Formal academic structure (introduction, literature review, methodology, etc.)
- Minimum 10-15 scholarly sources (peer-reviewed articles, academic books/chapters)
- Proper citations using APA 7th

Important Notes

- Final paper submission without instructor consultations will not be graded

4. Required Texts and Articles

- Abouelhassan, R. S. M., & Meyer, L. M. (2016). Economy, modernity, Islam, and English in Egypt. *World Englishes*, 35(1), 147-159.
- Amouzadeh, M., & Tavangar, M. (2008). Sociolinguistic aspects of Persian advertising in post-revolutionary Iran. In M. Semati (Ed.), *Media, culture, and society in Iran: Living with globalization and the Islamic state* (pp. 130-151). London: Routledge.
- Ates, B., Eslami, Z. R., & Wright, K. L. (2015). Incorporating world Englishes into undergraduate ESL education courses. *World Englishes*, 34(3), 485-501.
- Atoofi, S. (2013). Linguistic markers of affect in Heritage Persian: A linguistic anthropological study among Persian heritage language students and their teachers. *Iranian Studies*, 46(6), 877-901.
- Blommaert, J. (2015). Bourdieu and language in society. *Tilburg papers in culture studies*. Retrieved from https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/upload/adc80ed2-01a6-48f2-996e-be527ba84092_TPCS_126_Blommaert.pdf
- Borjian, M. (2016). Issues and challenges in constructing identity in an adopted home: Being an Iranian professor in America. In A. Komisarof & H. Zhu (Eds.), *Crossing Boundaries: Weaving Work, Life, and Scholarship* (pp. 105-117). London: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Edwards, J. (2010). *Minority languages and group identity: Cases and categories*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Foroutan, Y. (2012). Gender representation in school textbooks in Iran: The place of languages. *Current Sociology*, 60(6), 771-787.
- Ghajarieh, A., & Salami, A. (2016). Gendered representations of male and female social actors in Iranian educational materials. *Gender Issues*, 1-13.
- Gorter, D. (2013). Linguistic landscapes in a multilingual world. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33, 190-212.
- Hasrati, M., Street, B., & Habibi, S. (2016). Vehicle writings in an Iranian context: The interplay of habitus and field. *Iranian Studies*, 49(1), 1-27.
- Hoffman, D. M. (1989). Language and culture acquisition among Iranians in the United States. *Anthropology & education quarterly*, 20(2), 118-132.
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. London: Routledge.
- Holmes, J., & Hazen, K. (Eds.) (2014). *Research methods in sociolinguistics: A practical guide*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Hosseini Fatemi, A., Khajavy, G. H., & Choi, C. W. (2016). Testing a Model of Intercultural Willingness to Communicate based on Ethnocentrism, Ambiguity Tolerance and Sensation Seeking: The Role of Learning English in Iran. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 1-15.
- Karimzad, F. (2016). Life here beyond now: Chronotopes of the ideal life among Iranian transnationals. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 20(5), 607-630.
- Kelly-Holmes, H. (2006). Multilingualism and commercial language practices on the Internet. *Journal of sociolinguistics*, 10(4), 507-519.
- Keshavarz, M. H., & Astaneh, H. (2004). The impact of bilinguality on the learning of English vocabulary as a foreign language (L3). *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 7(4), 295-302.
- Lawless, K. (2014). Constructing the 'other': Construction of Russian identity in the discourse of James Bond films. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 9(2), 79-97.
- Meyerhoff, M., et al., (2015). *Doing sociolinguistics: A practical guide to data collection and analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Mirhosseini, S. A., & Khodakarami, S. (2016). Aspects of 'English language education' policies in Iran: 'Our own beliefs' or 'out of who you are'?. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 11(3), 283-299.
- Mirshahidi, S. (2016). I find you attractive but I don't trust you: the case of language attitudes in Iran. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1-14.
- Mirvahedi, S. H. (2017). Exploring family language policies among Azerbaijani-speaking families in the city of Tabriz in Iran. In J. Macalister & S. H. Mirvahedi (Eds.), *Family language policies in a multilingual world: Opportunities, challenges, and consequences*. London: Routledge.
- Modirkhamene, S. (2006). The reading achievement of third language versus second language learners of English in relation to the interdependence hypothesis. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 3(4), 280-295.
- Mokhtarnia, S., & Ghafar-Samar, R. (2015). An analysis of the relationship between the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners to native English speakers and their reported identity change. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1-12.
- Rahman, O., Fung, B., & Yeo, A. (2016). Exploring the meanings of Hijab through online comments in Canada. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 45(3), 214-232.
- Rezaei, S. (2017). Researching identity in language and education. In S. May (Series Editor), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education: Vol. 10. Research methods in language and education*. Dordrecht: Springer Publication.

- Rezaei, S., Khatib, M., & Baleghizadeh, S. (2014). Language identity among Iranian English language learners: a nationwide survey. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 35(5), 527-536.
- Sheyholislami, J., & Sharifi, A. (2016). "It is the hardest to keep": Kurdish as a heritage language in the United States. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 237, 75-98.
- Spolsky, B. (2011). Ferguson and Fishman: Sociolinguistics and the sociology of language. In R. Wodak, B. Johnstone and P. E. Kerswill (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of sociolinguistics* (pp. 3-15). London: Sage.
- Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J.M. (2015). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). New York: Blackwell.

5. Recommendations for Further Readings

- Ball, M. J. (Ed.). (2010). *The Routledge handbook of sociolinguistics around the world*. London: Routledge.
- Coulmas, F. (Ed.). (1997). *The handbook of sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Coupland, N. (Ed.). (2011). *The handbook of language and globalization*. New York: Blackwell.
- Coupland, N., & Jaworski, A. (Eds.) (2009). *Sociolinguistics: A reader*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Duranti, A., Ochs, E., & Schieffelin, B. B. (Eds.). (2011). *The handbook of language socialization*. New York: Blackwell.
- Kachru, B., Kachru, Y., & Nelson, C. (Eds.). (2009). *The handbook of world Englishes*. New York: Blackwell.
- Llamas, C., Mullany, L., & Stockwell, P. (Eds.) (2007). *The Routledge companion to sociolinguistics*. Oxford, New York: Routledge.
- McKay, S. L., & Hornberger, N. H. (Eds.). (1996). *Sociolinguistics and language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mesthrie, R. (Ed.). (2011). *The Cambridge handbook of sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meyerhoff, M. (2011). *Introducing sociolinguistics*. New York: Routledge.
- Wodak, R., Johnstone, B., & Kerswill, P.E. (Eds.). (2011). *The SAGE handbook of sociolinguistics*. London: Sage Publications.

Journals

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| • <i>Anthropological Linguistics</i> | • <i>Research on Language and Social Interaction</i> |
| • <i>International Journal of the Sociology of Language</i> | • <i>Language Problems and Language Planning</i> |
| • <i>Journal of Linguistic Anthropology</i> | • <i>Current Issues in Language and Society</i> |
| • <i>Journal of Multicultural Discourse</i> | • <i>Current Issues in Language Planning</i> |
| • <i>Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development</i> | • <i>Language and Gender</i> |
| • <i>Journal of Sociolinguistics</i> | • <i>International Journal of Bilingualism</i> |
| • <i>Language Variation and Change</i> | • <i>Journal of Language and Social Psychology</i> |
| • <i>Language Policy</i> | • <i>World Englishes</i> |
| • <i>Language in Society</i> | |
| • <i>Multilingua</i> | |

6. Course Schedule

Session	Topics	Sources
1	Introducing the syllabus History of Sociolinguistics	Holmes (2013), Ch. 1 Wardhaugh (2015), Ch. 1 Spolsky (2011)
2	Bilingualism Multilingualism Diglossia code-switching/mixing	Holmes (2013), Ch. 2 Keshavarz & Astaneh (2004) Modirkhamene (2006)
3	Language maintenance, shift & revival PLUS Esperanto	Holmes (2013), Ch. 3 Ch. 10 from Edwards (2010) Sheyholislami & Sharifi (2016)
4	Lingua franca Pidgin Creole World Englishes	Holmes (2013), Ch. 4 Ates et al. (2015) Abouelhassan et al. (2016)
5	Language policies and planning	Holmes (2013), Ch. 5 Mirvahedi (2017) Mirhosseini & Khodakarami (2016)
6	Research Methods in Sociolinguistics	Holmes & Hazen (2013) Meyerhoff et al. (2015) Rezaei (2017)
7	Gender and Language	Holmes (2013), Ch. 7 Ghajarieh, & Salami (2016) Foroutan (2012)
8	Bourdieu in Sociolinguistic Studies	Bourdieu (1991) Blommaert (2015)
9	Seminar on sociolinguistic issues in Iran	Students' seminars
10	Language in social networks and media	Holmes (2013), Ch. 8 Lawless (2014) Kelly-Holmes (2006)
11	Intercultural Communication	Hosseini Fatemi et al. (2016) Rahman et al., (2016)
12	Linguistic landscape	Gorter (2013) Amouzadeh & Tavangar (2008) Hasrati et al., (2016)
13	Language Attitudes	Holmes (2013), Ch. 15 Rezaei et al. (2014) Mirshahidi (2016)
14	Language and Migration	Borjian (2016) Karimzad (2016)
15	Anthropological Linguistics	Atoofi (2013) Hoffman (1989)