

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of English

ENGE 2630 Language and Society
Term 2, 2026-27

Course Outline (Provisional)

Lecturer: Dr. Darren Tang

Course Description

This course serves as a general introduction to the field of sociolinguistics — the study of the relationship between language and society. Students will be introduced to basic theories, research methods, and analytical tools in sociolinguistics. They will also be given opportunities to investigate the link between language practices and social factors (e.g., ethnicity, gender, and class). Topics covered in this course include code-switching, language variation and change, language in the media, styles, identity, language attitudes, as well as language policy. Examples will be drawn from a wide range of social contexts, with a focus on the English language. Sociolinguistic topics in Hong Kong are given particular consideration.

Course Learning Outcomes

Having completed this course, you should be able to:

1. Understand and articulate the relationship between language and society
2. Observe, describe, and discuss linguistic phenomena in light of sociolinguistic concepts and theories
3. Systematically analyse language use in society by conducting sociolinguistic fieldwork

Course Organisation

We will gather for a two-hour, face-to-face lecture every week. Starting from week 3 (TBC), there will be a one-hour, face-to-face tutorial. You are expected to attend **all** classes. Please note that they will not be recorded. Course materials will be posted on Blackboard. Check your CUHK email and Blackboard regularly for course-related announcements.

Assessments

The general framework for the course assessments is as follows:

Participation	10%
Tutorial presentation	20%
Final quiz	30%
Final project	40%

Course Topics

(subject to change)

Week	Topic
1	Course Introduction: What is Sociolinguistics?
2	Variation and Language
3	Synchronic and Diachronic Variation
4	Language Attitudes
5	Language and Gender
6	Code-switching and Multilingualism
7	Data Collection in Sociolinguistics
8	Language and Politeness
9	Language and Media
10	Language Policy and Planning
11	Hong Kong English
12	Data Session for Final Project
13	Final Quiz

Course Readings

Recommended Texts:

- Holmes, J., & Wilson, N. (2017). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (5th ed.). Routledge.
- Meyerhoff, M. (2019). *Introducing sociolinguistics* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Supplementary Resources:

- Coupland, N., & Jaworski, A. (1997). *Sociolinguistics: A reader and coursebook*. Macmillan Publishers.
- Llamas, C., Mullany, L., & Stockwell, P. (Eds.) (2007). *The Routledge companion to sociolinguistics*. Routledge.
- Stockwell, P. (2017). *Sociolinguistics: A resource book for students*. Routledge.
- Van Herk, G. (2017). *What is sociolinguistics?* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

Course Policies on Deadlines and AI

Late submissions will be **marked down a sub-grade** for each day that it is late. For example, an A assignment that is one day late will be an A-, two days late a B+, three days late a B, etc.

You are **not allowed** to use AI in all assessments for this course. Any assessments found to be **fully or partly** produced using AI will receive zero marks.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

- You must not at any time copy directly from sections of reference materials without acknowledging your source of materials.
- Please read carefully the information regarding academic honesty on the following website: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty>.
- Fill in the VeriGuide declaration form and attach it to your assignment. Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded.
- You can find CUHK's policy on use of artificial intelligence in coursework on this website: https://www.aqs.cuhk.edu.hk/documents/A-guide-for-students_use-of-AI-tools.pdf.

Feedback for Evaluation

At the end of the term, you will be asked to complete course evaluations for both the lectures and tutorials of ENGE2630. Comments and suggestions about the course content, teaching method, and learning tasks are also welcome at any time during the term.

General Grading Criteria

This table serves as a general description of the grading criteria for evaluating your coursework. Additional criteria may be used where appropriate, depending on individual cases.

A (Outstanding)	▪ Your work is of exceptional quality in general; ▪ Demonstrates significant originality while engaging previous academic studies; ▪ Demonstrates high level of critical thinking skills, with insights beyond common knowledge; ▪ Excellent command of academic English; ▪ Demonstrates strong links between course content and own work; ▪ Demonstrates strong connection between external resources and own work; ▪ Work is well organised and is communicated effectively to the target audience; ▪ Far exceeds basic understanding of course content; ▪ Highly motivated and makes significant effort to participate in course activities. ▪ A student receiving an A grade must complete all assessments.
A- (Excellent)	▪ Your work is of excellent quality in general; ▪ Demonstrates considerable originality, with some insights beyond common knowledge; ▪ Demonstrates good level of critical thinking skills; ▪ Excellent command of academic English; ▪ Demonstrates sufficient links between course content and own work; ▪ Demonstrates sufficient connection between external resources and own work; ▪ Work is well organised and is communicated to the target audience in appropriate style; ▪ Beyond basic understanding of course content; ▪ Makes significant effort to participate in course activities. ▪ A student receiving an A- grade must complete all assessments.
B+, B, B- (Good)	▪ Your work is of good quality in general; ▪ Demonstrates some degrees of originality; ▪ Demonstrates some to little level of critical thinking skills; ▪ Good command of academic English with occasional errors; ▪ Demonstrates some links between course content and own work; ▪ Demonstrates some connection between external resources and own work; ▪ Work is basically easy to follow, with minor organisational and stylistic problems; ▪ Demonstrates basic understanding of course content; ▪ Shows some effort in participation. ▪ A student receiving a B-range grade must complete all assessments.
C+, C, C- (Fair)	▪ Your work is of only acceptable quality in general; ▪ Demonstrates little originality; ▪ Demonstrates little sign of critical thinking; ▪ Fair command of English, with errors that may impede understanding; ▪ Demonstrates little to no links between course content and own work;

	▪ Demonstrates little to no connection between external resources and own work; ▪ Major organisational and stylistic problems; ▪ Limited understanding of course content; ▪ Shows little effort in participation. ▪ A student receiving a C-range grade must complete all assessments.
D (Bare pass)	▪ Your work is of insufficient quality in general; ▪ Demonstrates little understanding of course content; ▪ Shows almost no effort in participation; ▪ Late submission of assignments without a valid reason. ▪ You fail to complete some of the coursework assessments.
F (Fail)	▪ Your work does not meet basic standards; ▪ Fails to understand basic content; ▪ Almost no effort in participation; ▪ Late submission of assignments without a valid reason. ▪ You fail to complete most of the coursework assessments.