Language in Society
Anthropology 0815 Section 700
Spring 2014
Online

Instructor Information
Instructor: Nicole Nathan
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Office Hours: T 3:30-5:30
and by appointment

Course Overview
How did language come about? How many languages are there in the world? How do people co-exist in countries where there are two or more languages? How do babies develop language? Should all immigrants take a language test when applying for citizenship? Should English become an official language of the United States? In this course we will address these and many other questions, taking linguistic facts as a point of departure and considering their implications for our society. Through online discussions and reflexive projects, students will learn how to collect, analyze, and interpret language data and how to make informed decisions about language and education policies as voters and community members.

There are no prerequisites for this course. This course fulfills Human Behavior (GB) requirement for students under GenEd and Individual & Society (IN) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for this course if they have successfully completed any of the following: Asian Studies 0815, Chinese 0815, EDUC 0815, English 0815, Italian 0815, PYSCH 0815, Russian 0815, Spanish 0815, or CSC+DIS 0815.

Course Objectives/Desired Learning Outcomes
Building on class material and discussion boards, in your assignments should be able to:

- Understand the anthropological theories concerning the role of language in the expression and constitution of human experience, including world views, identity, and inequality
- Analyze everyday communication or media representations of language in your own lives, making connections between course material to your own field of study and society
- Interpret language data and effectively express your arguments in critical writing assignments

Required Texts

These books are readily available at the Temple Bookstore and from online vendors. (For reference purposes, the ISBNs are provided.) They are also on reserve at the Paley Library checkout desk for in-library use and as eBooks through the Paley Library website. All other required readings will be available through Blackboard as pdf documents.
Course Requirements

- Weekly Participation  30%
- 3 Short Papers (2-4 pages)  45%
- 1 Final Project  25%

Weekly Participation via Blackboard Assignments: 30%

This class will be participatory, involving class discussion and group exercises via Blackboard discussion boards. Although this is an online class, we will follow a M/W/F schedule. Every Monday I will post on Blackboard lecture material and a homework assignment, group assignment and/or a mini quiz based on the reading and lecture material. The quizzes will be a few basic questions covering the content of the material. The assignments will ask you in various ways to be reflexive and apply what you have read to your own culture and language practices. Specific instructions will be provided with each assignment. Your quiz answers and discussion assignments will be due on Wednesdays at 10:00 pm. You are then expected to post a brief response or question to one of your peer’s discussion boards by Friday at 10:00 pm.

3 Short Papers: 15% each

There are 3 short papers (2-4 pages) assigned throughout the semester. These papers will be based on short interactive case studies of real-life contexts. These case studies will be announced and discussed in class the week before the assignment is due (dates noted in Course Calendar below). Drawing from course readings and class discussion, these assignments are designed to help you develop a habit of critically engaging with linguistic anthropology in the analysis of your own life. More information on specific paper topics, requirements, and evaluation will be given later.

1 Final Project: 25%

The final project will be due during finals week on May 12th at 10:00 pm. This project will build on your weekly language reflections, and similar to your short paper assignments, you will use theories and topics discussed in class to analyze the social context of a linguistic event. Further details about this assignment will be supplied later in the semester.

Late Work

Assignments are always due on the day and time listed. The time is determined by the Server Time (Philadelphia, PA Eastern Time Zone). If I do not have a copy of your assignment turned into me, the assignment will be considered late. All late work will be penalized one fraction of a letter grade for each day it is late; i.e. one day late moved what would have been an A to an A-.

I do not grant extensions except in emergency situations. Notify me as soon as possible by email (before the assignment is due) if you will not be able to submit your work on time so that I can consider the circumstances and decide whether an extension is appropriate.
Class Atmosphere and Etiquette
This is a course based on the discussion of ideas and the connection of those ideas to aspects of the world around us. In order to provide an online environment conducive to the open sharing of ideas, I ask that you show respect for me and for your fellow classmates. Discussion boards are to be forums for respectful academic interaction. Furthermore, discussion boards are to be used strictly for posting comments directly related to the designated discussion topic. You are asked to be tolerant of others’ opinions and show thoughtful consideration in your posts. This is particularly an important endeavor in an online environment because our words are not accompanied by body language, tone of voice, or any other non-verbal communication. Therefore we must take extra care that we are not misunderstood.

Academic Honesty
Plagiarism or “cheating” in any form is absolutely unacceptable. Plagiarized assignments will receive no credit and students who plagiarize may fail the course and be subject to Temple University sanctions as defined by the “Temple University Student Code of Conduct.” See http://policies.temple.edu (policy number 03.70.12) for further reference.

Disability Statement
This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities Statement
Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has a policy on Student and Faculty and Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy #03.70.02). See: http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02

NOTE: The syllabus is subject to minor changes given the developing interests and pace of the group. Changes in date and assignment will be announced one week before the due date.
Course Calendar

Unit I: Language, Culture, and Thought

Week 1: 1/21-1/24
Language Basics: Human and Animal Languages
- Curtiss, S. “What happens if you are raised without language?” In 5 Minute Linguist, Chapter 22. 2006.

Week 2: 1/27-1/31
Language in Society: Universal and Culturally Specific
- Living Language, Chapter 1 “The Socially Charged Life of Language”

Week 3: 2/3-2/7
Language Acquisition and Socialization
- Living Language, Chapter 3: “Language Acquisition and Socialization”
  o 1ST SHORT PAPER ASSIGNED

Week 4: 2/10-2/14
Linguistic Relativity
- Living Language, Chapter 4: “Language, Thought, and Culture”
  o 1ST SHORT PAPER DUE via Blackboard 2/14 at 10:00 pm.
Week 5: 2/17-2/21
Modes of Communication and Thought: Literacy and Digital Literacy Practices

Week 6: 2/24-2/28
Language and Thought: The Case for Dying Languages
- *Living Language*, Chapter 11: Language Death and Revitalization

Spring Break 3/2-3/9

Unit II: Language, Identity, and Power

Week 7: 3/10-3/14
Language Ideology
- Lippi-Green, R. “Teaching Children How to Discriminate: What We Learn from the Big Bad Wolf” in *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the US*. 2ND SHORT PAPER ASSIGNED

Week 8: 3/17-3/21
Language, Race, and Ethnicity

Week 9: 3/24-3/28
Speech Community and Multilingualism
- *Living Language*, Chapter 5: “Communities of Language Users”
- *Living Language*, Chapter 6: “Multilingualism”

Week 10: 3/31-4/4
Gender and Performance
- *Living Language*, Chapter 8: “Performance”
- *Living Language*, Chapter 9: “Language and Gender”
  o 3RD SHORT PAPER ASSIGNED

Week 11: 4/7-4/11
Language and Power
• Living Language. Conclusion: “Language and Power”
  o 3RD SHORT PAPER DUE via Blackboard 4/11 at 10:00 pm.

Unit III: Case Study

Week 12: 4/14-4/18
• Homegirls: Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

Week 13: 4/21-4/25
• Homegirls: Chapter 3 and Chapter 4

Week 14: 4/28-5/2
• Homegirls: Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7

Final Project Due: 5/12 via Blackboard at 10:00 pm.