

## ANTH 458 – DISCOURSE, NATIONHOOD AND RACISM

Professor: Valentina Pagliai  
Oberlin College  
W 5:00pm to 6:30pm  
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### Course Description:

Discursive practices have received increasing attention from scholars engaged in the study of language. This seminar will look at the relation between discourse and the construction of hegemonic power. The students will follow the invention of standard languages as part of the shaping of national identities, explore the role of linguistic ideologies in the colonialist enterprise, and examine the connection between language, racism and nation-making. The course will cover topics such as language planning, language revitalization movements, and literacy. We will address questions such as: how does language map onto social groups organized around notions of race, ethnicity, and peoplehood? How do languages operate as an index of allegiance, distance, solidarity, and power among social groups within the nation? How do various social actors use language to craft notions of collective “selves” and “others” within the nation?

### Texts:

- 1) **RL** = Kroskrity, Paul (Ed.) 2000. *Regimes of Language: ideologies Politics and Identities*. SAR Press.
- 2) **LER** = Harris, Roxy and Rampton, Ben (Eds.) 2003. *The Language, Ethnicity and Race Reader*. Routledge.
- 3) Bonnie Urciuoli, 1996. *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

**Other Readings:** All the required readings will be available in Blackboard.

**Week 1- Introduction** – Review of the basic concepts in the study of language.

**Week 2 – Understanding Discourse. Discourse in Foucault and in Discourse Analysis.**

#### Readings:

- “Foucault for Beginners” by Fillingham, pp. 2-18, 78-110.
- Optional: Foucault, “The Formation of Objects”, in “The Archaeology of Knowledge” pp. 40-49.
- Cameron “What is Discourse and Why Analyze It?” pp. 7-17.

**Week 3 – Understanding nationalism, original definitions and basic theories.**

#### Readings:

- 1) Excerpts from the book “Nationalism”, Ed. By Hutchinson and Smith, pp. 17-21, 63-70 & 76-82:
  - Renan, Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?
  - Stalin, The Nation
  - Gellner, Nationalism and High Cultures
  - Hobsbawn, The Nation as Invented Tradition
- 2) Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, PP. 1-46.

**Week 4 – Language and Nationalism, Linguistic Ideologies.**

#### Readings:

- 1) In RL: Kroskrity, Regimenting Languages: Language Ideological Perspectives, pp. 1-34 (skim over description of chapters).
- 2) In RL: Bauman & Briggs, Language Philosophy as Language Ideology, pp. 139- 204.

## **Week 5 – Language and Nationalism, continued: looking outside the West.**

### Readings:

- 1) In RL: Errington, Indonesian('s) Authority, pp. 205-227
- 2) In RL: Philips, Constructing a Tongan Nation-State through Language Ideology in the Courtroom, pp. 229-257.
- 3) In LER: Bokhorst-Heng, Singapore's Speak Mandarin Campaign, pp. 168-187.

## **Week 6 – Understanding Race and Racism (and the racialization of culture and ethnicity)**

### Readings:

- 1) Karen Brodtkin Sacks, How Did Jews Become White Folks?, pp. 43-64.
  - 2) Rathzel, Developments in Theories of Racism, pp. 3-24.
  - 3) Gerd Baumann, Contesting Cultures, Ch. 2: The Argument: Identifying a Dominant Discourse, pp. 9-31.
- Optional reading) Robert Miles, The articulation of racism and nationalism, pp. 35 to 52.

## **Week 7 – Language, Race and Nationalism: The colonialist connection**

### Readings:

- 1) In LER: Ashcroft, Language and Race, pp. 37-51.
- 2) In LER: Thiong'o, The Language of African Literature, pp. 69-83.
- 3) In LER: Mazrui, The World Bank, the language question and the future of African education, pp. 85-95.
- 4) In RL: Irvine and Gal, Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation, pp. 35-83, skip the part on "The Motivation of Linguistic change" (39-47).

## **Week 8 - Spring Break**

## **Week 9 – Nation states and minorities:**

### Readings:

- 1) In LER: Fishman, The impact of nationalism on language planning, pp. 117-125
- 2) In LER: Billig, Banal nationalism, pp. 127-143.
- 3) In LER: Urla, Outlaw language, pp. 211-223.

## **Week 10 – Racism and Discrimination against minority languages**

### Readings:

Bonnie Urciuoli, 1996. *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class*. Read pp. 15-40, 41-53, 107-173.

## **Week 11 – The racism of the “standard.”**

- 1) In LER: Rampton, Displacing the 'Native speaker,' pp. 107-111.
- 2) In LER: Honeyford, The language Issue in multi-ethnic English schools, pp. 145-159.
- 3) Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. How to Tame a Wild Tongue, in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books Company. Pp. 203-211.
- 4) Giroux, Henry A. 2001. English Only and the Crisis of Memory, Culture, and Democracy, in *Language Ideologies: Critical Perspectives on the Official English Movement, Volume 2*, ed. By Roseann Dueñas González with Ildikó Melis. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. ix-xvii.
- 5) Ronkin, Maggie and Helen E. Karn. 1999. Mock Ebonics: Linguistic Racism in Parodies of Ebonics on the Internet. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3/3: 360-380.

## **Week 12 – Language and everyday racism**

### Readings:

- 1) van Dijk, T. A. 1987. *Communicating Racism: Ethnic Prejudice in Thought and Talk*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications. Pp. 30-118.
- 2) van Dijk, Denying racism: elite discourse and racism, pp. 179-193.

**Week 13 – The Construction of race and racism in everyday interactions**

Readings:

- 1) In LER: Clark, Abstract Inquiry and the Patrolling of black/white borders through linguistic stylization, pp. 303-311.
- 2) In LER: Cutler, Yorkville crossing: white teens, hip hop and African American English, pp. 314-326.
- 2) Essed, The politics of marginal inclusion: racism in an organizational context, pp. 143-156.

**Week 14 – Bringing it all together.**

**Final Paper Due: Friday May 20<sup>th</sup>, by 11am.**

**Course Policies:**

**Code of honor**

The Oberlin College Students' Code of Honor applies to the course, please familiarize yourself with it: [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student\\_pages/honor\\_code.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html)

**Readings** should be completed by the day they are listed on the syllabus; this will help you follow lectures and prepare for lectures and section.

**Reaction papers** are due at the beginning of the class session. They must touch on all the readings done. They must be typed. They will be graded down 1 point for each day that they are late. Each summary is graded on a scale of 1 to 10 and it is worth 5% of the final grade.

**Final Paper** On a topic of your choice among those included in the course.

**Participation to class Discussions** is fundamental. Everybody is expected to participate actively to class discussion every time the class meets and as time allows. “Active participation,” means speaking during discussions (at least most of the time), having questions prepared for potential discussion for every class, and getting to know your fellow classmates. Merely attending class does not constitute active in class participation.

**Presence in class** is expected, and I will take the roll at the beginning of each class. Students present at the roll will receive 1 point. Students who are late may not be recorded and will receive half point.

**Grades:**

Reaction papers	35% of the grade
Final paper	30 %
Presence in class and Participation	40 %
	100 %

A+ = 96% of grade; A = 93%; A- = 90%, B+ = 86%; B = 82%; B- = 78%; C+ = 74%; C = 70%; C- = 60%; NE = Less than 60%; D = 55%; F = Less than 55%.

**Final Note:** Although the syllabus will be followed as much as possible, it is intended as a guideline and circumstances may require a change to the schedule. Students are responsible for any changes announced in class.