

QUEENS COLLEGE
ANTHROPOLOGY 280
LANGUAGE and SOCIAL IDENTITY
Fall 2009
Syllabus

Professor Valentina Pagliai

Class Meeting: M & W 3:05 - 4:20 PM, PH/114, Code: 2706

Office: Powdermaker Hall, 314G Sec. 3M3W

Office Hours: MW 2:00~2:30p.m and 4:20~4:50 p.m
3 hours 3 credits

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Course Description:

How we speak is an essential part of our social identities. Through language we portray ourselves to others and negotiate our relations. Social categories are maintained or trespassed through our choice of linguistic acts. This course will introduce the linguistic and social theories that are used to examine the relationship between identities and the use of language. We will use anthropological and cross-cultural perspectives to explore the relationships between language and social identities, emphasizing in particular the ways in which gender and ethnic categories are interwoven and embedded in structures of power and authority. We will explore and discover these issues through reading ethnographic accounts and conducting discourse analysis projects.

Course Materials

- 1) Mendoza-Denton, Norma 2008 Homegirls: Language and Cultural Practice among Latina Youth Gangs. Blackwell Publishing. NOTE: The best and cheapest way to get this book in paperback is by buying it online either at Amazon or similar bookstores, or on Ebay.
- 2) All additional required readings will be available on Blackboard (<http://blackboard-doorway.cuny.edu>)

Ethnography of Speech Lab, Powdermaker Hall Room 206.

Ethnography of Speech Lab is located in Powdermaker Hall 206. Some of the class meetings will be held here. Otherwise students may use this lab to work on their assignments. The lab is open 9am-5pm, Mon.-Fri. unless it is reserved for class use. Further instruction will be given in class.

Course Format and Requirements:

The class will combine lectures, film viewing, and class discussions. Some class meetings will be held in the above mentioned Lab and will be announced in advance. Attendance and participation are essential and you are expected to have completed reading and writing assignments ahead of class and be prepared to discuss them in class. There are "Speech Analysis" assignments that take you through a process of recording, transcribing, and analyzing speech data. You will then choose your own research topic relevant to the materials covered in the course to conduct a Course Project: submit a "Course Project Proposal," and write your "Course Project Paper." Based on this research project you will make an in-class presentation.

Extensions Policy:

Extensions will be granted only in cases of properly documented emergencies, which should be brought to the instructor's attention as soon as possible. Any other late assignments will have points deducted.

Ethnographic Description and Speech Analysis Assignments 30%

- A1 Description of Speech Community or Community of Practice (2 pages) [5 pts]
- A2 Recording and 2 pages Description of Speech Event [5 pts]
- A3 Transcription (min. 10 min. of tape) [10 pts]
- A4 Speech Analysis (3~4 pages) [10 pts]

Course Project 40%

Proposal (1~2 pages) [5 points]

Paper (10~12 pages) [35 points]

In-Class Participation and Presentation 30%

Total 100%

Semester Outline:

The following provides information on how the semester is broken down into topic units, and provides the schedule of required reading and other assignments for each class. The dates are subject to revision as we go along.

Week 1 - Introduction to the course

Readings

M – 8/31	Introduction to the Course: Course Syllabus distributed What is Identity? What is Language?	
W – 9/2	“I am my language”: Language Structure and Use. Assignment #1 Distributed and explained.	- Anzaldúa 1990 “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” pp.203-212. - Lippi-Green, “The Linguistic Facts of Life,” pp.7-29.

Week 2 – What does “Identity” Means?

Readings

W – 9/9	What is an “identity”?	- Brief excerpts from Laclau, Scott, West and others.
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Week 3 & 4 – The Study of the Relationship between Language Use and Social Identity.

M – 9/14	Ethnography of Communication. Assignment #2 explained. Discussion of results: Assignment #1	<u>Assignment 1 due</u> - Brief excerpt from Hymes (SPEAKING model)
W – 9/16	Ethnographer & Community	- Mendoza-Denton ch. 2, pp. 42-73. - Goodwin “Fieldwork” pp.18-24.
M – 9/21	Transcription as Theory. Assignment #3 explained	- Ochs “Transcription as Theory” pp. 43-72.

Week 4 to 6 - Linguistic Variation and Social Stratification

W – 9/23	Language Attitudes: Dialect, Accent, & Standard Language	Mendoza-Denton ch. 1, pp. 10-40.
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T – 9/29	Language as Social Marker <u>Classes Follow a Monday Schedule</u> Discussion of results: Assignment #2	<u>Assignment 2 due 9/29</u> Mendoza-Denton, ch. 7, pp.207-226.
W – 9/30	Social Stratification of English	Mendoza-Denton, ch. 8, pp.230-261.
M – 10/5	Codeswitching, bilingualism and identity	- Zentella “Returned Migration, Language, and Identity,” pp.81-98. - Heller, “Negotiations of Language Choice in Montreal,” pp. 108-118.

Week 6 to 9 – Racial and Ethnic Identities in Interaction

W – 10/7	The Performance of Ethnic and Racial Identities	- Pagliai 2003 “Lands I Came to Sing: Negotiating Identities and Places in the Tuscan <i>Contrasto</i> ” pp. 48-67.
W – 10/14	Multiple Levels of Communication Movie Shown in class: <i>In a Manner of Speaking: The Phenomenon of Conversation.</i>	
M – 10/19	Discussion of results: Assignment #3 Assignment #4 explained	<u>Assignment #3 due</u>
W – 10/21	Shifting identities and fixed IDs	Mendoza-Denton ch. 3, pp. 76-97. Ch. 4, pp. 101-145.
M – 10/26	Appropriating and globalizing identities	Cutler, “Yorkville Crossing: White Teens, hip hop ans African American English” pp. 314-326. Back, “X amount of Sat Siri Akal: Apache Indian, Reggae Music and Intermezzo Culture” pp. 328-343.

Week 9 to 12 – The Study of Gender and Sexual Identities

W – 10/28	<u>Library research workshop</u> Formulate topic ideas for your course project	
M – 11/2	Introduction to the study of Language, gender, Sexuality and interaction. Gender difference and dominance	Brief excerpts from the classic works by Lakoff (Language and Woman’s Place), Maltz & Borker (Difference Theory), Deborah Tannen (You Just Don’t Understand)
W – 11/4		Fishman, “Interaction: the Work Women Do” pp. 89-101.
M – 11/9	Course Project (Proposal and Paper), explained Discussion of results: Assignment #4	<u>Assignment #4 due</u>
W – 11/11	Performance of Gender and Sexual Identities and Conversational Style	- Cameron, “Performing gender identity: Young men’s talk and the construction of heterosexual masculinity” pp. 270-283.

		- Mendoza-Denton ch. 5, <i>Muy Macha</i> , pp. 148-172.
M – 11/16		- Brief excerpts from Barrett, “The Homo-Genious Speech Community.” - Queen, “I don’t Speak Spritch: Locating Lesbian Language” pp. 233-254.

Week 12 & 13 – Identity and Politics

W – 11/18	Identity Policing and Politics	- Bucholz, “From Mulatta to Mestiza: Passing and the Linguistic Reshaping of Ethnic Identity.” pp. 351-369.
M – 11/23	Language, Ethnicity, and Nationalism	<u>Proposal due</u> - Thiong’o, “The Language of African Literature” pp. 69-83. - Wendy Bokhorst-Heng, “Singapore’s Speak Mandarin Campaign” pp. 168-186.

Week 14 – Language and Discrimination

W – 11/25	Gender, Ethnicity, and Inequality	- Cameron, “Why is Language a feminist Issue” pp. 1-20.
M – 11/30	African American English	- Rickford, “Suite for Ebony and Phonics,” pp. 160-167. - Lippi-Green “The Real Trouble with Black English” pp. 176-201.
W – 12/2	Language and Discrimination: More than just words.	- Lippi-Green “Teaching children to discriminate” pp. 79-103. - Hill, Jane “Mock Spanish, Covert Racism and the (Leaky) Boundary between Public and Private Spheres,” 199-209.

Week 15 & Finals’ Week

M – 12/7	Project Presentations and Discussions	
W – 12/9	Conclusion	
	Final paper due at the date and time reserved for final exam. Any presentations that will not fit in the 12/7 slot will be done during the final exam’s time.	