

ANSC 122: Language in Society (DEI course)

Fall 2021

TTh 2-3:20

Revelle South (outdoor classroom)

Prof. Rihan Yeh

Office hours: After class or by appointment

Office: SSB282

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Reader: Rachel Hicks

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Overview: This course explores language's role in social life: it explores, that is, communicative practice and language in use. Language in Culture is not a prerequisite, but this course does build on it conceptually. We begin with the basics of performativity and the idea of language as social action that, in general terms, informs linguistic anthropology as a field of study today. We then use performativity to launch our quarter-long consideration of language's role in both reproducing and challenging power and inequality. In keeping with the course's status as a DEI offering, our discussions will be centered on formations of race and ethnicity in the United States. In the first half of the course, we consider topics like the power of naming, the pervasiveness of ideology, and language's role in consolidating stereotypes. In the second half, we focus on the public use of language and the circulation of discourse in mass society; topics include anti-racism, capitalism, the law, and policing.

The course's aim is to hone students' attunement to linguistic practice and its political potentials and pitfalls. To this end, it includes a strong methodological component. It also relies heavily on the collaboration and trust we are able to build amongst ourselves. Please bear this in mind as you engage.

Course Requirements: Due dates are marked in the class schedule below.

1. Three ethnographic observations. Each will count for 5% of the final grade (15% total).
2. Two critical commentaries on your own or others' ethnographic observations. Each will count for 7.5% of the final grade (15% total).
3. One short essay (1300-1500 words) based on the ethnographic observations and the critical commentaries (25% total).
4. Three take-home quizzes. You will be able to choose from a set of questions to answer. Each quiz will count for 10% of the final grade (30% total).
5. One in-class presentation of a reading. Each presentation should last no more than five minutes and should cover just one of the readings for that day. The presentation will count for 3% of the final grade.

6. Class participation will count for 12% of the final grade. More consideration will be given to the quality of comments than to their quantity.

Expectations: This course is meant to be challenging. There is a substantial amount of reading, and the readings will often be difficult. Please bear in mind that, beyond the content of a course, a far more important lesson lies in your development of your ability to confront something difficult and work through it. In this sense, I consider your engagement with the readings to be a primary site of learning.

This said, the course is also meant to be flexible, and there are several plans in place to alleviate pressure. One, lectures and student presentations will give some insight for those who were not able to finish specific readings. Two, quizzes will include a choice of questions, so that you may leave out questions that address readings you are less comfortable with. Three, writing assignments will also leave open a choice of texts with which to engage.

Class Sessions: One of the university's essential functions is to give people time and space to come together and think critically. Traditionally, oral communication has been at the crux of this practice; to learn to handle such encounters is part of the educational experience. If you are someone who tends to speak often in class, try hanging back sometimes. If you tend to be quieter, do push yourself to participate.

- *Laptops:* Using a laptop in class is widely understood to be detrimental to learning. You may use yours to consult the readings (if you can't print them), but please take your notes by hand.
- *Recording:* Do not record any part of our class sessions without prior approval. Be aware that class will be podcast for class participants. Small group discussions, however, will not be recorded.
- *COVID-19:* Keep your mask on during class. If you have any symptoms at all, please stay home and avail yourself of the accommodations described below.

IF I NEED TO STAY HOME BECAUSE OF SYMPTOMS, I WILL NOTIFY YOU IN THE MORNING THAT WE WILL HAVE CLASS OVER ZOOM. I expect this to happen several times over the course of the quarter.

Remote Accommodations: You will get the most out of this class if you participate in person. Remote accommodations are very basic and are meant as a supplement in case of emergency:

- The class will be video podcast. The recordings will be available on Canvas or at podcast.ucsd.edu. Podcasting is done with a lapel mic and does not promise to capture discussion.
- Discussion board posts will count towards participation credit.

Please let me know if you anticipate having to participate remotely often or all of the time.

Attendance and Late Assignments: You are expected to attend all classes and turn in all assignments on time. Please let me know of any difficulties you foresee or are experiencing that could affect your performance, and please contact me as soon as possible if you will not be able to make a deadline for an assignment. Depending on the reason and the timeliness with which you contact me, extensions may be granted. Otherwise, I will penalize late work by one letter grade per day late. Notable absences or lateness will affect your grade.

Office Hours: I encourage you to see me individually or in small groups. I will normally be available after class, or we can set up a time to meet in person, over Zoom, or on the phone.

The Reader's Role: Rachel Hicks will read, comment on and grade some of your written work; she will not be attending class nor will she be available for office hours. She is familiar with the course thanks to having TA'ed it before. If you have questions about her comments, do feel free to engage her via Canvas. You should also feel free to discuss with me written work that she graded.

Academic Integrity: UCSD has provided me with a ready-made "Statement on Academic Integrity," of which I reproduce here the most relevant part:

"Any attempt to get, or help another get, a grade by cheating, lying or dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office and will result in sanctions. Sanctions can include an F in this class and suspension or dismissal from the University. [...] You can learn more about academic integrity at academicintegrity.ucsd.edu." (Source: Tricia Bertram Gallant, Ph.D., UCSD Academic Integrity Office, 2017)

Note how this statement is enclosed in quotation marks and its source specified in parentheses afterwards (even though it appears to be unpublished). In your writing, please avoid plagiarism by paying careful attention to academic conventions on how to cite others' work.

Disability Accommodations: If you need an accommodation because of a disability, please contact me as far in advance as possible and provide me with a copy of your UCSD-issued Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter.

Readings: All readings are available on the Library's online course reserve system, which is linked on Canvas. I STRONGLY RECOMMEND DOWNLOADING ALL THE PDFS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE QUARTER. I do not email PDFs to students individually.

Remember that to access readings from off-campus, you must have a VPN installed. Sometimes the connection goes out unexpectedly and simply has to be reestablished. On VPNs, see:

<https://blink.ucsd.edu/technology/network/connections/off-campus/VPN/index.html>

For troubleshooting, see:

<https://library.ucsd.edu/computing-and-technology/connect-from-off-campus/vpn-problems.html>

Some readings may have tags from weeks that do not correspond to the syllabus; please disregard these.

Class Schedule (subject to change)

Week 0: Introduction

Thurs, Sep 23

Week 1: Performativity

Tues, Sep 28

- J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (1962; please use the Harvard edition), chapters 1, 2, 5, 8 and 11 (pp. 1-24, 53-66, 94-108, 133-147)
- Jillian Cavanaugh, "Language as Social Action," in the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Anthropology* (2020)

Thurs, Sep 30

- Pierre Bourdieu, "Authorized Language: The Social Conditions for the Effectiveness of Ritual Discourse," in *Language and Symbolic Power* (1982)
- Keith Basso, "Speaking with Names," in *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (1996)

Week 2: Illegitimate Language

Tues, Oct 5

- Franz Fanon, "The Black Man and Language," in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952—use 2008 Grove Press edition, trans. Philcox)
- Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987)

Thurs, Oct 7

- Pierre Bourdieu, "The Production and Reproduction of Legitimate Language," in *Language and Symbolic Power* (1991)
- Mary Bucholtz, "On Being Called Out of One's Name: Indexical Bleaching as a Technique of Deracialization," in *Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race*, ed. Alim et al. (2016)

FIRST ETHNOGRAPHIC ASSIGNMENT DUE

Week 3: Language Ideology

Tues, Oct 12

- Judith Irvine and Susan Gal, "Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation," in *Regimes of Language*, ed. Kroskrity (2004)

Thurs, Oct 14

- John Haviland, Owners versus Bubu Gujin: Land Rights and Getting the Language Right in Guugu Yimithirr Country, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* (1997)
- Michael Silverstein, The Whens and Wheres – As well As Hows – of Ethnolinguistic Recognition (2003)

FIRST CRITICAL COMMENTARY DUE

Week 4: Social Indexicality

Tues, Oct 19

- Erving Goffman, "On Face-Work: An Analysis of Ritual Elements in Social Interaction," in *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior* (1967)

Thurs, Oct 21

- Alim, "Who's Afraid of the Transracial Subject?: Raciolinguistics and the Political Project of Transracialization," in *Raciolinguistics* (2016)
- Krystal Smalls, "Race, SIGNS, and the Body: Towards a Theory of Racial Semiotics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Race* (2020)

FIRST QUIZ DUE

Week 5: Register

Tues, Oct 26

- Asif Agha, Stereotypes and Registers of Honorific Language, *Language in Society* (1998)

Thurs, Oct 28

- Katrina Daly Thompson, Becoming Muslims with a "Queer Voice": Indexical Disjuncture in the Talk of LGBT Members of the Progressive Muslim Community, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* (2020)
- Julia Fine, #MagicResistance: Anti-Trump Witchcraft as Register Circulation (2019)

SECOND ETHNOGRAPHIC ASSIGNMENT DUE

Week 6: Publics and the Public

Tues, Nov 2

- Kathryn Woolard, Sentences in the Language Prison: The Rhetorical Structuring of an American Language Policy Debate (1989)
- Vicente Rafael, "Translation, American English, and the National Insecurities of Empire," in *Motherless Tongues: The Insurgency of Language amid Wars of Translation* (2016)

Thurs, Nov 4

- Alejandro Paz, The Circulation of *Chisme* and *Rumor*: Gossip, Evidentiality, and Authority in the Perspective of Latino Labor Migrants in Israel (2009)
- Krystal Smalls, "Languages of Liberation: Digital Discourses of Emphatic Blackness," in *Language and Social Justice in Practice* (2018)

SECOND CRITICAL COMMENTARY DUE

Week 7: Talking Back

Tues, Nov 9

- Elaine Chun, "The Meaning of *Ching-Chong*: Language, Racism, and Response in New Media," in *Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas about Race*, ed. Alim et al (2016)
- Jonathan Rosa, "Contesting Representations of Migrant 'Illegality' through the Drop the I-Word Campaign: Rethinking Language Change and Social Change," in *Language and Social Justice in Practice*, ed. Avineri et al (2019)

Thurs, Nov 11—NO CLASS

SECOND QUIZ DUE

Week 8: Capitalism

Tues, Nov 16

- Michael Silverstein, "Monoglot 'Standard' in America: Standardization and Metaphors of Linguistic Hegemony," in *The Matrix of Language: Contemporary Linguistic Anthropology* (1996)
- Shalini Shankar. *Creating Model Consumers: Producing Ethnicity, Race, and Class in Asian American Advertising* (2012)

Thurs, Nov 18

- Paul Manning, *Barista Rants About Stupid Customers at Starbucks: What Imaginary Conversations Can Teach Us About Real Ones* (2008)

THIRD ETHNOGRAPHIC ASSIGNMENT DUE

Week 9: The Law, Pt. 1

Tues, Nov 23

- Charles Goodwin, *Professional Vision* (1994)

Thurs, Nov 25—NO CLASS

THIRD QUIZ DUE

Week 10: The Law, Pt. 2

Tues, Nov 30

- John Haviland, Ideologies of Language: Some Reflections on Language and U.S. Law, *American Anthropologist* (2003)
- Jessica López-Espino, Off-the-Record: Linguistic Sympathy Among Interpreters in a California Child Welfare Court (unpublished manuscript)

Thurs, Dec 2

- Andrew Carruthers, *Policing Intensity* (2019)

SHORT PAPER DUE