

Carnegie Mellon University

From the SelectedWorks of Adam Hodges

October 2006

Language in US Society (Fall 2006 Syllabus)

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Language in U.S. Society

Linguistics 1000, Section 020 – Fall 2006

Instructor: Adam Hodges

Please log on to WebCT for the full syllabus and additional class information.

LING 1000 is a survey course that provides a non-technical exploration of the ways that language is used in America. It emphasizes language as a social institution and how values and goals of both public institutions and private groups shape, and are shaped by language and its use. Course objectives are:

- To gain a grounding in linguistics as a field of study
- To recognize the role of language in sociocultural interaction
- To critically engage with language issues in US society

Approved for Arts and Sciences core curriculum: United States context, or contemporary societies.

Instructor: Adam Hodges

Email: adam.hodges@colorado.edu

Office Hours: Mon and Wed 2:00-2:50 (*plus* 4:00-5:00 with appointment) in Hellems 297

WebCT: The full syllabus is posted on WebCT (log on at <https://webct.colorado.edu/>.) Also on WebCT, you will be able to find complete information on assignments, download additional readings, and check your grades.

Textbooks:

- *Language in the USA: Themes for the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Edward Finegan and John R. Rickford (2004, Cambridge; ISBN: 0 521 77747 X).
- *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction (second edition)*, by Thomas, Wareing, Singh, Stilwell Peccei, Thornborrow and Jones (2004, Routledge; ISBN: 0 415 30394 X).

GRADE REQUIREMENTS: *There are four components to the final grade. The individual assignments/requirements within each component are averaged at the end of the semester so that each component contributes 25% towards the course grade.*

I. Weekly Reading Outlines – Due weekly in recitation; must be present to receive credit.

Recitation attendance—and more importantly, participation—is an integral part of the learning process. Recitations allow you to discuss weekly topics and readings with your classmates in a more intimate, interactive atmosphere. This gives you a chance to hear what others are thinking and reflect more thoroughly on your own understanding and ideas. Attendance, therefore, is necessary, but is not in itself sufficient without participation. The Weekly Reading Outlines are to help you prepare each week for recitation and give you credit for your attendance/participation. You need to choose **one** required reading **per week** to outline; then turn this in when you go to recitation on Friday. See the Reading Outline sheet on WebCT for complete information on the format to use and what to include. *NB you must actually attend recitation to receive credit for these; Reading Outlines cannot be accepted in absentia!* The only exceptions are absences due to documented illness, death in the family or travel to official university functions accompanied *by proper documentation*. Proper documentation (e.g. letter from a doctor, team coach, etc.) must be provided in such cases if you wish to have your Reading Outline accepted in absentia. Please note, absences for official university functions must be documented and cleared *in advance*.

II. Recitation Presentation / Discussion Facilitation – Sign up for date at first recitation.

As noted above, recitation is a place to discuss and debate ideas that come up each week in lectures and readings. Once during the semester, you (with a partner or two) will be responsible for presenting and facilitating discussion of the week's topic. You will need to give a 10-20 minute overview of the key points

from the week's readings/lectures as an introduction; then engage the class with questions. Your job is to facilitate discussion and actively involve the class in talking about the topic. Creativity is definitely encouraged! On the week that you present, your group will turn in a Presentation Outline in lieu of a Reading Outline. Please see the Presentation Outline sheet on WebCT for more information.

III. Assignments – Due throughout the semester as indicated (9 total.)

- #1 Due Sept 15: Library Hunt
- #2 Due Sept 22: Media Language and Rhetoric
- #3 Due Oct 6: Short Essay
- #4 Due Oct 13: Short Essay
- #5 Due Oct 27: Language Variety and Social Identity
- #6 Due Nov 3: American Word Etymologies
- #7 Due Nov 17: Short Essay
- #8 Due Dec 1: Annotated Bibliography
- #9 Due Dec 15: Language Issues in the Media

Details for each assignment are posted on the Assignments page on WebCT. These assignments need to be typed and are due in (or before) recitation on the dates due. *Late assignments will not be accepted.*

IV. Final Exam (or Research Paper) – Choose one of the following two options:

- **Final Exam Option:** *Final Exam is Sat, Dec 16 1:30-4:00pm in lecture room.*
This is the standard, default option. If you choose this option (or do not pursue approval for the Paper Option), then you need to take the final exam on Saturday, December 16 from 1:30-4:00pm. *Please make travel arrangements around this final exam date; no alternative times are possible except in the case of extreme emergencies accompanied by proper documentation. If you have three final exams on the same day, university policy allows you to reschedule your last one.*
- **Final Paper Option:** *Paper is due in lecture on Mon, Dec 11.*
This option requires completion of a proposal midway through the semester and (upon approval) outside research that culminates in a paper. If you are interested in this option, look over the Paper Proposal information sheet and begin thinking through your ideas. You may choose any topic covered in the course textbooks to research further. Using at least one textbook chapter as a starting point, you then need to find five outside sources (for a total of at least six sources) for use in your research paper. The Paper Proposal is due in lecture on **Monday, October 16**. If approved, the Paper is then due in lecture on **Monday, December 11**. *Please type, staple and thoroughly proofread. Hard copies only; no email attachments. Late papers will not be accepted.*

SCHEDULE OF COURSE TOPICS, READINGS and ASSIGNMENTS

(LUSA indicates *Language in the USA*; LSP indicates *Language, Society and Power*)

WEEK 1: Introduction to Language and Linguistics

Mon, Aug 28

Read course syllabus on WebCT

Wed, Aug 30

LSP Chap 1: What is language and what does it do?

Optional: "Linguistics: An Overview" by Nunberg; "Sociolinguistics" by Wolfram; "Meaning" by Ladusaw; "Grammar" by Chung and Pullum; "The History of Linguistics" by Newmeyer

Recitation

Syllabus Quiz

Sign up for group led presentation/discussion date

WEEK 2: Language, Culture and Cognition

Mon, Sep 4 – Labor Day / No Class

Wed, Sep 6

LSP Chap 2: Language, thought and representation

Optional: "Does the language I speak influence the way I think?"; "Language and Thought" by Slobin; "Language and Culture" by Salzman

Recitation

TA led presentation/discussion

WEEK 3: Language, Politics and the Media

Mon, Sep 11

LSP Chap 3: Language and politics

Wed, Sep 13 Drop Deadline

LSP Chap 4: Language and the media

Two handouts on rhetorical fallacies found on WebCT

Recitation

Assignment #1 Due: Library Hunt

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

Group #1 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 4: Language Learning

Mon, Sep 18

“Child language learning” by Hudson (download from WebCT)

Wed, Sep 20

“Adult language learning” by Hudson (download from WebCT)

Recitation

Assignment #2 Due: Media Language and Rhetoric

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

Group #2 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 5: Multilingualism and Education

Mon, Sep 25

LUSA Chap 14: Linguistic diversity and English language acquisition

Optional: "Why bilingual education?" by Krashen

Wed, Sep 27

LUSA Chap 18: Language in education

Optional: LUSA Chap 7: Multilingualism and non-English mother tongues ; "The political paradox of bilingual education" by Crawford

Recitation

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

Group #3 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 6: American Sign Language and Deaf Culture

Mon, Oct 2

LUSA Chap 12: American Sign Language

Wed, Oct 4

Optional: "Sign language" by Emmorey; "What is Sign Language?" by Perlmutter

Recitation

Assignment #3 Due: Short Essay

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

Group #4 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 7: History of (American) English

Mon, Oct 9

LUSA Chap 1: American English, its origins and history

Optional: "The first thousand years" by Bryson

Wed, Oct 11

LUSA Chap 2: American English and its distinctiveness

Optional: "Old World, New World" by Bryson

Recitation

Assignment #4 Due: Short Essay

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

Group #5 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 8: Regional Dialects and Social Varieties

Mon, Oct 16

LUSA Chap 3: Regional dialects

LUSA Chap 26: Language attitudes to speech

Paper Proposal due in lecture for students applying for Paper Option

Wed, Oct 18

LUSA Chap 4: Social varieties of American English

Optional: LSP Chap 9: Language and identity; LUSA Chap 19: Adolescent language ; LUSA Chap 20:

Slang

Recitation

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

Group #6 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 9: Language and Gender

Mon, Oct 23

LUSA Chap 22: Language, gender and sexuality

Optional: "Language and Gender" by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet

Wed, Oct 25

LSP Chap 5: Language and gender

Optional: "Fashioning Selves" by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet

Recitation

Assignment #5 Due: Language Variety and Social Identity

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*
Group #7 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 10: Pidgins, Creoles and Language Change

Mon, Oct 30

LUSA Chap 8: Creole languages, forging new identities
Optional: "Language Variation and Change" by Thomason

Wed, Nov 1

LUSA Chap 15: Language ideology and language prejudice
Optional: LSP Chap 11: Attitudes to language

Recitation

Assignment #6 Due: American Word Etymologies
Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*
Group #8 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 11: African American English

Mon, Nov 6

LUSA Chap 5: African American English
Optional: "What is Ebonics?" by Rickford ; "Suite for Ebony and Phonics" by Rickford; "Using the Vernacular to Teach the Standard" by Rickford

Wed, Nov 8

LUSA Chap 16: Ebonics and its controversy
Optional: LUSA Chap 21: Hip Hop Nation

Recitation

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*
Group #9 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 12: Language Policy

Mon, Nov 13

LSP Chap 10: The standard English debate

Wed, Nov 15

Recitation

Assignment #7: Short Essay
Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*
Group #10 led presentation/discussion

FALL / THANKSGIVING BREAK: Nov 20-24

WEEK 13: The English Only Debate

Mon, Nov 27

LUSA Chap 17: Language planning, language policy and the English only movement

Wed, Nov 29

"A nation divided by one language" by Crawford

Recitation

Assignment #8 Due: Annotated Bibliography

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

Group #11 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 14: Endangered Languages

Mon, Dec 4

"From threatened languages to threatened lives" by Everett

Wed, Dec 6

LUSA Chap 9: Native American languages

Optional: "Endangered American languages: What is to be done?" by Crawford

Recitation

Turn in a Weekly Reading Outline – *Must be present in recitation to receive credit!*

TA or group #12 led presentation/discussion

WEEK 15: Native American Languages

Mon, Dec 11

Papers due in lecture for students approved for the Paper Option

Wed, Dec 13

Review for final exam - bring questions

Recitation

Assignment #9 Due: Language Issues in the Media

Class discussion on findings from Assignment #8

FINAL EXAM: Sat, Dec 16 1:30-4:00pm in lecture room *for students doing the Exam Option*

GENERAL POLICIES

Attendance and Academic Success

Attendance at lectures and recitations is essential. Discussing class topics and readings with your classmates is an integral part of the learning process. The main purpose of recitations is to provide a forum for discussing the readings in a more intimate, interactive atmosphere. This gives you a chance to hear what others are thinking about, hash out your own ideas and synthesize topics in the readings with information discussed in lectures. While attendance is *necessary*, it is not in itself *sufficient* for academic success. In essence, attendance is a means to an end -- i.e. a tool for gaining knowledge. You receive grades based on your ability to demonstrate that knowledge, but attendance acts as a crucial vehicle for navigating through the material to reach the end goal. It is up to you to make a personal commitment to your learning and make the most of all aspects of the class, including recitation participation, lecture attendance, readings and assignments. This will inevitably pay off in the knowledge you take away from the class at the end of the semester -- and of course, it's no secret that class attendance positively correlates with higher grades.

Class Ambience and Academic Respect

Academic courses are a place for intellectual challenges and interactive discussions. Everyone benefits from an atmosphere of creativity, diversity, and expressive freedom as we negotiate new understandings of concepts, and explore ideas from different angles. Practice the art of thoughtfully challenging a person's ideas while respecting the person, so we can create a supportive atmosphere where everyone can build on each other's knowledge and experience, and learn from each other.

Special Accommodations

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

Religious Observances and Absences

The University of Colorado at Boulder has a legal and moral obligation to accommodate all students who must be absent from classes or miss scheduled exams in order to observe religious holidays. You will not be penalized for missing class due to a religious observance; but you are responsible for notifying me of any conflicts *prior* to the missed class. Please make arrangements for alternate exams/assignments *at least two weeks prior* to a missed absence for a religious observance (www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html).

Academic Integrity

Cheating and/or plagiarism on any assignment/exam will result in an automatic grade of 0 and could also result in an automatic F for the course. Each student is expected to know and adhere to the CU Student Honor Code and follow the policy laid out therein. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). More information on the CU Honor Code can be found at www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. See the university policies on these matters at www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Sexual Harassment

The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises or create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender and between any combination of members in the campus community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Harassment can occur anywhere on campus, including the classroom, the workplace, or a residence hall. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment (OSH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the OSH and the campus resources available to assist individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed can be obtained at www.colorado.edu/sexualharassment.