Carnegie Mellon University

From the SelectedWorks of Adam Hodges

January 2012

Language, Race and Ethnicity (Prospective Syllabus)

Contact Author

Start Your Own SelectedWorks

Notify Me of New Work

Available at: http://works.bepress.com/adamhodges/42

LANGUAGE, RACE & ETHNICITY

Adam Hodges

(Prospective syllabus for an undergraduate/graduate seminar)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is race? What is ethnicity? How is racial identity assigned, assumed, constructed and performed? How does race explicitly as well as implicitly order social life? How does racism manifest itself in our discourse—not just overtly but covertly? What is a "color blind" society? What is a "post-racial" society? A focus on language is central to answering these and many related questions. In this course, we will explore the work done by sociocultural linguists within the American context on the way language intersects with issues pertaining to race and ethnicity. Primary emphasis will be placed on the way ethnoracial identities are constructed through language use and the way racial and racist ideologies manifest themselves in discourse. The course will be divided into three parts. We will begin by defining "race" and "ethnicity," and examining theoretical ideas from the sociology of race. Next, we will examine the linguistic construction of ethnoracial identities—grounding our exploration in an extended ethnographic case study of language practices. Finally, we will investigate the way we talk about race and racism in an attempt to better understand the (re)production of racialized and racist discourses. The goals of the course are (1) to explore theoretical concepts related to race and ethnicity through a consideration of ideas from social theory, (2) to interrogate the socio-historically contingent nature of ethnoracial identities and the linguistic practices used to construct those identities, (3) to consider the ways gender, class and relations of power intersect with racial and ethnic categories, and (4) to bring students to a critical awareness of the way racism operates through discourse.

BOOKS (required)

Bailey, Benjamin. 2002. *Language, Race, and Negotiation of Identity: A Study of Dominican Americans*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing.

Fought, Carmen. 2006. *Language and Ethnicity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hill, Jane H. 2008. *The Everyday Language of White Racism.* Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 1994. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to 1990s (Second Edition).* New York: Routledge.

ARTICLES (posted on Blackboard)

Barrett, Rusty. 2006. "Language ideology and racial inequality: Competing functions of Spanish in an Anglo-owned Mexican restaurant." *Language in Society* 35: 163-204.

Bonilla-Silva and Tyrone Forman. 2000. "'I am not a racist but...': Mapping white college students' racial ideology in the USA." *Discourse & Society* 11(1): 50-85.

Bucholtz, Mary. 2001. "The whiteness of nerds: Superstandard English and racial markedness." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 84-100.

Kiesling, Scott. 2001. "Stances of whiteness and hegemony in fraternity men's discourse." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 105-115.

McElhinny, Bonnie. 2001. "See no evil, speak no evil: White police officers' talk about race and affirmative action." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 65-78.

Meek, Barbara. 2006. "And the Injun goes 'how!': Representations of American Indian English in white public space." *Language in Society* 35: 93-128.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS (by week)

Race and ethnicity—definitions and theoretical foundations

1. "What is ethnicity?," Fought (chap 1)
2. "Paradigms of race: Ethnicity, class and nation," Omi and Winant (chaps 1-3)
3. "Racial formation," Omi and Winant (chap 4)
   "The racial state," Omi and Winant (chap 5)

Linguistic construction of ethnoracial identities

4. "Language and the construction of ethnic identity," Fought (chap 2)
   "Introduction," Bailey (chap 1)
   "Community, field site, methods, and principal subjects," Bailey (chap 2)
5. "Linguistic features and ethnicity in…African-American groups," Fought (chap 3)
   "Linguistic features and ethnicity in…Latino groups," Fought (chap 4)
   "Linguistic resources of Dominican Americans," Bailey (chap 3)
6. "Second generation identities and language in a racialized America," Bailey (chap 4)
   "Dominican American understandings of race and social identity," Bailey (chap 5)
7. "The interactional negotiation of race by an African-descent Dominican American," Bailey (chap 6)
   "Individual patterns of language use and implications for ethnic/racial identities," Bailey (chap 7)
   "Concluding remarks," Bailey (chap 8)
8. "Linguistic variation in other multiethnic settings," Fought (chap 5)
   "Dialect contact, ethnicity and language change," Fought (chap 7)

Discourse, race and racism

9. "Are white people ethnic? Whiteness, dominance and ethnicity," Fought (chap 6)
   "The whiteness of nerds: Superstandard English and racial markedness," Bucholtz (2001)
   "Stances of whiteness and hegemony in fraternity men's discourse," Kiesling (2001)
10. "The persistence of white racism," Hill (chap 1)
    "Language in white racism: An overview," Hill (chap 2)
11. "The social life of slurs," Hill (chap 3)
    "See no evil, speak no evil: White police officers' talk about race and affirmative action," McElhinny (2001)
12. "Gaffes: Racist talk without racists," Hill (chap 4)
    "'I am not a racist but...': Mapping white college students' racial ideology in the USA," Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000)
13. "Covert racist discourse: Metaphors, mocking and the racialization of historically Spanish-speaking populations in the United States," Hill (chap 5)
    "And the Injun goes 'how!': Representations of American Indian English in white public space," Meek (2006)
14. "Linguistic appropriation," Hill (chap 6)
    "Language ideology and racial inequality: Competing functions of Spanish in an Anglo-owned Mexican restaurant," Barrett (2006)
15. "Everyday language, white racist culture, respect and civility," Hill (chap 7)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Class/discussion board participation (20%) –** Students are expected to (1) come to class fully prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that day; and (2) post a response to the readings prior to class on the course discussion board set up on Blackboard.

2. **Organizing/facilitating discussions (20%)** – Each student is required to choose one day before mid-semester and one day after mid-semester to take the lead in organizing and facilitating discussion of the readings for that day. Discussion facilitators should consult the posts to the discussion board and compile a handout to organize topics/questions in an effort to structure and instigate class discussion.

3. **Final Paper (60%)** – For the final paper, seminar participants should choose some aspect of the course material to explore in more detail. Please consult with me on your topic by the end of week 12 (earlier is encouraged). The paper may take the form of (1) an analysis of discourse data using concepts from the course, (2) a theoretical discussion of a particular issue discussed during the course, or (3) an extended literature review of a topic from the course. Consider which option might benefit you the most at this stage of your academic career. Advanced graduate students are also encouraged to consider how the paper could form the starting point for a future publication. Regardless of what option you choose, you need to engage directly with ideas/authors covered in the course. The recommended paper length is 10-20 double-spaced pages. Please use in-text citations and gather your references at the end. On the last day of class, you are expected to provide an informal summary of your paper-in-progress to the class.

ADDITIONAL SAMPLE READINGS (for variations of the course)

BOOKS

Alim, H. Samy. 2004. *You Know My Steez: An Ethnographic and Sociolinguistic Study of Styleshifting in a Black American Speech Community.* American Dialect Society / Duke University Press.

Bucholtz, Mary. 2011. *White Kids: Language, Race and Styles of Youth Identity.* Cambridge University Press.

Mendoza-Denton, Norma. 2008. *Homegirls: Language and Cultural Practice among Latina Youth Gangs.* Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Reyes, Angela. 2007. *Language, Identity and Stereotype among Southeast Asian American Youth: The Other Asian.* Mahwah, NJ & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.

ARTICLES

Alim, H. Samy, Jooyoung Lee and Lauren Mason Carris. 2011. "Moving the Crowd, 'Crowding' the Emcee: The Coproduction and Contestation of Black Normativity in Freestyle Rap Battles." *Discourse & Society* 22(4): 422-439.

Alim, H. Samy, Jooyoung Lee and Lauren Mason Carris. 2010. "'Short' fried-rice-eating Chinese MCs and good-hair-havin Uncle Tom niggas: Performing race and ethnicity in freestyle rap battles." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20(1): 116-133.

Bailey, Benjamin. 2000. "Language and negotiation of ethnic/racial identity among Dominican Americans." *Language in Society* 29(4): 555-582.

Baugh, John. 1991. "The Politicization of Changing Terms of Self-reference among American Slave Descendants." *American Speech* 66(2): 133-146.

Bucholtz, Mary. 2011. "'It's different for guys': Gendered Narratives of Racial Conflict among White California Youth." *Discourse & Society* 22(4): 385-402.

Buttny, Richard. 1997. "Reported Speech in Talking Race on Campus." *Human Communication Research* 23(4): 477-506.

Buttny, Richard. 1998. "Putting Prior Talk into Context: Reported Speech and the Reporting Context." *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 31(1): 45-58.

Buttny, Richard and Williams, Princess L. 2000. "Demanding Respect: The Uses of Reported Speech in Discursive Constructions of Interracial Contact." *Discourse & Society* 11(1): 109-133.

Chun, Elaine W. 2001. "The Construction of White, Black and Korean American Identities through African American Vernacular English. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 52-64.

Chun, Elaine. 2011. "Reading Race Beyond Black and White." *Discourse & Society* 22(4): 403-421.

Gaudio, Rodolf P. 2001. "White Men Do it Too: Racialized (Homo)sexualities in Postcolonial Hausaland. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 36-51.

Goodwin, Marjorie and H. S. Alim. 2010. " 'Whatever (neck roll, eye roll, teeth suck)': The situated coproduction of social categories and identities through stancetaking and transmodal stylization." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20(1): 179-194.

Hill, Jane. 1993. "'Hasta la vista, baby': Anglo Spanish in the US Southwest." *Critique of Anthropology* 13: 145-176.

Hill, Jane. 1998. "Language, Race, and White Public Space." *American Anthropologist* 100: 680-689.

Lo, Adrienne and Jenna Kim. 2011. "Manufacturing Citizenship: Metapragmatic Framings of Language Competencies in Media Images of Mixed Race Men in South Korea." *Discourse & Society* 22(4): 440-457.

Mason Carris, Lauren. 2011. "*La voz gringa*: Latino Stylization of Linguistic (In)authenticity as Social Critique." *Discourse & Society* 22(4): 474-490.

Modan, Gabriella. 2001. "White, Whole Wheat, Rye: Jews and Ethnic Categorization in Washington, DC." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 116-130.

Puckett, Anita. 2001. "The Melungeon Identity Movement and the Construction of Appalachian Whiteness." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 131-146.

Reyes, Angela. 2011. "'Racist!': Metapragmatic Regimentation of Racist Discourse by Asian American Youth." *Discourse & Society* 22(4): 458-473.

Teo, Peter. 2000. "Racism in the News: A Critical Discourse Analysis of News Reporting in Two Australian Newspapers." *Discourse & Society* 11(1): 7-49.

Trechter, Sara. 2001. "White Between the Lines: Ethnic Positioning in Lakhota Discourse." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(1): 22-35.