Language as Power

Welcome to Language as Power! I hope you find this a rewarding and exciting class.

Details

Instructor: Prof. Jill Jepson  [Office: Whitby 207  Phone: 8717 Mailbox: 4033]
Time: Sat. 1:00 - 4:30
Place: Check registrar online schedule.

Six Premises

1. Language is one of the most powerful forces in human culture.
2. Language supports structures of power and privilege-it helps those in power remain in power, and it prevents others from challenging them.
3. Language shapes our assumptions and beliefs.
4. Language can bring some issues and questions to the forefront of our thinking, and make others appear insignificant-or render them invisible.
5. Language motivates us to act-or keeps us from acting.
6. Understanding the power of language can be profoundly empowering.

Course Goals

In this course, we will explore:

- How people are judged and treated because of the way they speak.
- The ways language influences our thinking about race, gender, sexual orientation, and species.
- The persuasive use of language in advertising and politics.
- The use of language in education and the workplace.
- Language as a human rights issue.
- The cultural devastation that is currently wiping out at least half of the world’s languages-and why we should care.
Readings:

- *The Skin that We Speak*, edited by Lisa Delpit
- Course pack
- Additional readings online (web addresses provided in syllabus)
  
  □ In order to save students money on course pack fees, I have left readings out of the course pack if they are available online (either on separate websites or on the library’s periodical database Academic Search Premier).
  
  □ For articles on Academic Search Premier, go to the library website, click “articles” and click “Academic Search Premier.” It is best to go to “advanced search” and search for the author and title.
  
  □ At the time I am posting this syllabus, all of the online materials are available. If the links in this syllabus don’t work, please cut and paste the url into your browser.
  
  □ If online materials have become unavailable by the time they are due, they will be replaced, eliminated, or made available on D2L.

Assignments:

Journals:

Each F2F week, you will have a journal entry to complete. The questions for each session’s entry will be posted under the Content tab on D2L.

Weekly journals should be completed by class time the day they are assigned.

- Bring a hard copy to class each F2F meeting. They will serve as the basis for in-class discussion and writing, and you will be asked to share them.

- Submit them on D2L in two packets:
  
  □ The first packet is due at the end of Part 1 of the class.
  □ The second is due at the end of the term.
  □ See course schedule for details.

Mini-quizzes
Each F2F class session will include a short mini-quiz on the reading. The quizzes will be closed book, but open note. You may use any notes you have taken on the reading, but you can’t have the actual article or book open. The quizzes will be fairly basic and cover just the major points of the reading.

**Research Paper**

A major part of your grade will be the 8 - 10-page research paper. Additional information on the research paper can be found on the "Research Paper" handout under "Content" tab on D2L.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly journals: (10 points each)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class miniquizzes (5 points each)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class contribution</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In-class miniquizzes will be figured on the precentage of total points earned as follows:

A = 93 - 100%; A- = 90 - 93%; B+ = 88 - 89%; B = 83 - 87%; B- = 80 - 82%; C+ = 78 - 79%; C = 73 - 77%; C- = 70 - 72%; D+ = 68 - 69%; D = 63 - 67%; D- = 60 - 62%; F = 0 - 59%.

**Class Contribution**

- **Attendance.** Regular attendance is mandatory. Please see the separate handout on attendance (under "Content" on D2L).

- **Participation.** Contributing to class discussion is essential. Please be willing to share your ideas, questions, and reflections with the class. Respectful disagreement is the cornerstone of the class: Courteous but spirited debate is encouraged. Please come to class prepared to:
  - State your opinion about the subject matter of the day’s class.
  - Read sections of your journal entry aloud.
  - Discuss your reactions to the readings.
  - Ask questions.
  - Disagree with anyone in the class (this includes disagreeing with me, of course!)
  - Share your ideas and experiences with respect to the subject matter.
**Online Classes**

The online class meetings will be available on the D2L Discussion Board shortly after each F2F meeting and will remain open until the following F2F meeting.

**Writing-Intensive Component**

This is a writing-intensive class. That means:

- A significant portion of your grade is based on your performance on writing assignments.
- You will have a variety of writing assignments, both informal (such as your journals) and formal (your research paper).
- Your formal writing assignment will include a significant amount of research and analysis.
- We will be doing multiple drafts of the research paper.
- Drafts of the paper will be peer reviewed.
- We are expected to use a standard citation format for the research paper. For this class, we will be using M.L.A. format.
- We will be spending a certain amount of time within the class meetings working on writing issues, such as paragraphing, organization, style, citing, etc.
- We will be discussing plagiarism in depth.

**Plagiarism and Academic Honesty**

Students are responsible for knowing the college policy on academic honesty and plagiarism. We will spend a portion of our first or second class meeting discussing what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. A handout on plagiarism is also available on D2L under the "Content" tab. Please familiarize yourself with it.

**Submitting Work:**

All assignments should be submitted through St. Kate's classroom management system Desire2Learn (D2L). It is the student's responsibility to make sure she knows how to submit assignments, access course material, and perform other tasks on D2L.
• Login to Kateway and click on D2L OR go to stkate.desire2learn.com and use your St. Kate's login.

• The syllabus and other course information can be found under "Content."

• You can both view and submit assignments in "Dropbox."

• You can see your grades, including your overall grade in the class at any point in time, under "Grades."

• Discussion board (under the "Discussions" tab) is where we will be conducting most of our online work.

• If you have difficulties with D2L, contact the Help Desk at 6402. I cannot help you with most technical issues.

**Deadlines:** Please pay attention to the deadlines for assignments. The D2L slot for each assignment is set to shut down after the deadline.

**Late Assignments:** If you cannot submit an assignment by the deadline for any reason, you may submit it to the Late Assignment Bucket in Dropbox. One or two assignments that are a little late will not be counted against you. However, if there are more than two late assignments or they are late by more than a couple days, points will be deducted from your final grade.

**Problems and Resolutions**

Please be aware that with a class of 15 - 20 students, we are dealing with a variety of issues, needs, learning styles, and personalities. Do not expect everything in the class to be perfectly suited for your interests and skills.

This class has been developed over a 10-year period based on what the majority of previous students have told me is useful, clear, interesting, stimulating, and challenging. Hopefully, a majority of the assignments, readings, and activities will be useful to you, but there will always be some aspects of the class that don't fit your expectations or interests.

**Course Schedule**

*Note: at the time of posting, all of the links in this syllabus are working. If a link does not work for you, please cut and past the url into your browser. If the item is no longer available online, it will be replaced, eliminated, or made available on D2L.*

**Part 1**

Three Approaches to Language as Power
In this section, we will examine three ways to analyze language as a form of power:

- Language Attitudes
- Critical Discourse Analysis
- Linguistic Human Rights

Feb. 9: Language Attitudes 1: Introduction (F2F)

Reading:

- Robin Tolmach Lakoff, "Language Bosses" (CP).
- Michael Stubbs, "Some Basic Sociolinguistic Concepts" (TSTWS).
- Joanne Kilgour Dowdy, "Ovuh Dyuuh" (TSTWS).
- Joanne Wynn, "We Don't Talk Right: You Ask Him" (TSTWS).

Assignment:

- Journal Entry # 1

Feb. 16 Language Attitudes 2: Many Englishes (online)

Readings:

- Amy Tan, "Mother Tongue" (access at http://teachers.sduhsd.k12.ca.us/mcunningham/grapes/mother%20tounge.pdf)
- Lisa Delpit, "No Kinda Sense" (TSTWS)
- Judith Baker, "Trilingualism" (TSTWS)
- Selection from Changing English by David Graddol (on D2L under "Content")

Off-Campus Activity

- Log into Discussion Board for online discussion
- Upload possible topic(s) for research paper to Discussion Board.

Assignment:

Feb. 23 Critical Discourse Analysis 1: Introduction (F2F)
Readings:
- Norman Fairclough, "Discourse and Power" from Language and Power (CP)

Assignment:
- Journal # 2

Mar. 2 Critical Discourse Analysis 2: Language and Advertising (online)

Reading:
- Handout on Language in Advertising (on D2L)

Off-Campus Activity
- Log into Discussion Board for online discussion
- Upload Exploratory Draft of research paper to Discussion Board for online peer review (you will have been randomly assigned to a peer review group; please upload your paper to the group to which you have been assigned).

Assignment:
- Research Paper: Exploratory Draft (upload to D2L: Note deadline in Dropbox.)

Mar. 9 Critical Discourse Analysis 3: Language and Politics (F2F)

Readings:
- Vicki Lens, "Public Voices and Public Policy" from Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, March 2002 Volume XXIX, Number 1 (On Academic Search Premier)
- William L. Benoit, "Image Repair in President Bush's April 2004 News Conference" (On Academic Search Premier)

Assignment:
- Journal # 3
Mar. 16 Linguistic Human Rights 1: Introduction (online)

Reading:


Off-Campus Activity:

- Log into Discussion Board for online discussion

Mar. 23 Linguistic Human Rights 2: Language Extinction (F2F)

Reading:

- K. David Harrison, "A World of Many (Fewer) Voices" from *When Languages Die* (CP)

Assignments:

- Research Paper: Revised Draft

  IMPORTANT: bring 2 - 3 hard copies for in-class peer review

  Also submit on D2L by deadline

Journal # 4

Apr. 6 Linguistic Human Rights 3: Language Policy in the United States (F2F)

Readings:


Assignment:

- Journal # 5

Apr. 13 Review of Three Approaches (online)

Readings:

- Review your notes for all readings and from class to make sure you understand the concepts.
• Catch up on any readings you may have missed.

Off-Campus Activity:

• Review and discussion on Discussion Board

Assignment:

• Upload Journals 1 - 5 in a single document to D2L by deadline.

Part 2

Applying the Three Approaches

In this section, we will apply the three approaches to specific social issues.

Apr. 20 Language, Gender, and Gender Orientation (F2F)

Reading:

• Deborah Tannen, "Women and Men Talking on the Job" from Talking Nine to Five. (CP)

• Nancy M. Henley, "This New Species that Seeks a New Language: On Sexism in Language and Language Change" (CP)

• James D. Armstrong, "Homophobic Slang as Coercive Discourse among College Students" (CP)


Assignments:

• Journal # 6

• Research Paper Semi-Final Draft

    IMPORTANT: Bring 2 -3 hard copies to class for peer review.

    Upload to D2L by deadline.

Apr. 27 Language, Disability, and Aging (online)

Readings:
• Avery, Dona M. "Talking Tragedy': Identity Issues in the Parental Story of Disability. Disability Discourse Marian Corker and Sally French (CP).


Off-Campus Activity
• Watch the video "Talk," parts 1 and 2 on Youtube. The links are below. If the links don’t work, cut and past the url’s into your browser.
  
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSG6LGutkHo&NR=1
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZpdylYEmrs8&NR=1

• Go onto Discussion Board for online Discussion

May 4 Language, Nonhuman Animals, and Nature (F2F)

Readings:
• Language, Power and the Social Construction of Animals by Aaron Stibbe (available at) http://animalsandsociety.org/assets/library/434_s923.pdf

  • Joan Dunayer, "Sexist Words, Speciesist Roots" from Animals and Women (CP)

  • Marti Kheel, "License to Kill: An Ecofeminist Critique of Hunters’ Discourse" (CP)

Assignment:
• Journal # 7

May 11 Language and Education (online)

• Suzanne Romaine, "Linguistic Problems as Societal Problems" (CP)

• Jennifer Tuten, "There's Two Sides to Every Story': How Parents Negotiate Report Card Discourse' (On Academic Search Premier’)

• Victoria Purcell-Gates, "‘As Soon as She Opened Her Mouth: Issues of Language, Literacy, and Power’" (TSTWS)

Off-Campus Activity
• Log into Discussion Board for online discussion

IMPORTANT: Final Version of Research Paper Due May 11 at 9:00 p.m.
May 18 Language and Race (F2F)

Readings:

- Richard Rodgriguez, "Public and Private Language" (available on [www.pasadena.edu/files/syllabi/tfkeeler_23847.doc](http://www.pasadena.edu/files/syllabi/tfkeeler_23847.doc))
- Ernie Smith, “Ebionics: A Case History’ (TSTWS)

Assignment:

- Journal # 8

May 24 (no class meeting)

SUBMIT JOURNALS 6 - 8 ON D2L IN A SINGLE PACKET by deadline