

ENGL 324: Language and Society



FALL 2022
MW 12:30-1:45
Boyden 220

Dr. Joyce Rain Anderson
Tillinghast 320
Student Hours:
TH 9:30-10:30

and by appointment

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We die. That may be the measure of our life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives.

--Toni Morrison

Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going.

--Rita Mae Brown

Kenepeum (welcome) to ENGL 324: Language and Society. As human beings, we have remarkable abilities through language, but we also have used language in exclusionary way. The manner in which we say things or use language makes significant difference in the meaning. The words, the language, the style, when and where we talk/write, who picks up our words and recasts them all contribute to meaning in our society. This course will explore many aspects of how we use language to make social meaning. A crucial purpose is to make sure you go away with a critical understanding of language issues in society. Students will learn how language works, how society works, and how they work together.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course explores topics in sociolinguistics, including regional and social dialects; gender-specific difference in language use; language change; cross-linguistic borrowing; language birth, death and revival; bilingualism and multilingualism in societies and on the individual level. Special attention is paid to language policies and planning. The course draws examples from English and a variety of other languages.

COURSE OUTCOMES:

- To critically examine the forces of language and culture, including how language and culture shape our beliefs about ourselves and others.
- To enhance an understanding and appreciation of languages and cultures--ours and others.
- To define in complex ways the questions "What is society?" and "What is language?"
- To analyze the relationship of language to power, control, gender, socio-economic class, sexuality, and ethnicity/ race and more.
- To conduct your own observations, research, and writing in the subject area.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

A selection of readings will be posted on my website www.joycerain.com



ASSIGNMENTS, ACTIVITIES, AND PROJECTS

There will be several short projects for this course that will go through reviews and submitted in a final portfolio.

One-page Critical Reading Responses:

Reading actively helps you to work with the ideas of the writer. Marking the text with comments and questions will allow you to enter into a conversation with the author and provide you with points of departure for class discussions. Writing about a text also allows you to speak back, ask questions and sort out your thinking about what and how the author tries to engage readers. These one-pagers are assigned to express your active engagement with the readings: what you glean from the readings, how you make connections to your own experiences, other readings, your writing, work of the class and so on. You may consider how the readings contribute to your understanding of language, society, and power, what relationships they might have to your learning, identity, career goals, and other aspects of your experiences, and/or connections among the class readings and your own readings. You might also create a list of questions that these readings raise which can be brought to our class discussions. These responses must be done before each class, and you must bring a hard copy to each class for peer response. You will also keep these to include in your midterm and final portfolios. These responses will also add to the "mulch piles" that can be fertilizer for your projects.

Inkshedding: Inkshedding is a social form of freewriting that encourages deeper engagement with concepts through written dialogue. In this class, we will use inkshedding with our one-pagers at the beginning of class. Procedure: Pass your one-pager to the right. Read your neighbor's writing all the way through and then underline a sentence or two that stands out as interesting or intriguing. Then, flip the page over, and write a response. This response should not be evaluative (i.e. "good job!"), but written to continue the conversation on paper - to continue the writer's thinking, pose questions raised by the writer's thoughts, reflect on what the writer said. When you're done, look for another person who has finished writing and swap one-pagers. The goal is for each one-pager to receive at least two responses. Once each piece has two sets of responses, we will return the one-pagers to the writers. We will then use these written conversations to start the class discussion, and I will collect the one-pagers at the end of class (assignment and description written by Dr. Michelle Cox).

Project 1: Sociolinguistics Scrapbook (on-going activity):

You will work on this project throughout the semester. For the Sociolinguistics Scrapbook, you will collect and reflect on “artifacts” that are connected to our class. An artifact can be a news article (print or online), media clip, literary text, signage, social media, or live event including overheard conversations. Artifacts can be drawn from your other classes as well. For each artifact, you will write a short (less than one page) reflection that explains why you chose this artifact, and how it relates to sociolinguistics. We will talk about some examples in class. Many of these artifacts will become obvious to you as we read and discuss class materials and make connections. Carry a notebook with you or digitally record these artifacts. We will have weekly check-ins to keep you on track. By the end of the semester, you will put together a presentation on your scrapbook and had in your reflections and presentation in your final portfolio. **Due: For check-ins each week, present Dec, 12-14 and in final portfolio**

Project 2: Linguistic Landscapes Mini Presentations (ongoing)

Language is all around us and is connected to the objects and places that we encounter as we go about our everyday lives. When you look around at billboards, posters, business signs, traffic signs, signs in stores or on public transportation, public notices, graffiti, menus, and brochures what do you notice about the language used in them? What do these artifacts tell us about the “linguistic landscapes” of where we live? Find one that interests you and consider the linguistic meaning behind it. What does the linguistic marker say about the community? How is language used? Is it inclusionary or exclusionary? How so? How is one’s linguistic identity shaped by the landscapes surrounding them? The chapter on “Linguistic Landscapes” will provide you with some background. Create a 5-10 minute presentation. We will choose dates for your presentation.

<https://linguisticlandscapes.com/>

Due: On assigned date and in final portfolio



Project 3: Sociolinguistic Profile

Take note of the cultural and linguistic communities you are a part of then consider what identities do you identify with? How do you interact with those communities? What sort of linguistic norms are present? What D/discourse communities do you inhabit? What are familiar phrases or “slang”? What are some linguistic taboos within the cultural group? Are there any tensions between or among any identities you possess? Once you have done this work, create a one to two page profile with words and a few visuals. **Due: September 28 for review and in final portfolio.**

Project 4: Analyzing Language and Politics in the Media

Andrew Wong suggests that “the right to make meaning is an important form of symbolic capital.” Consider the recontextualization of political language in the media – for instance, backlash to student loan relief, the seizure/raid of documents from Mar-a-Lago, variants of the phrase “Black Lives Matter” (e.g., All/Blue/No Lives Matter), competing political slogans, or social justice campaigns. How do these linguistic turns of phrase reflect/react to discussion around current events? Who has “the right to make meaning”? Using evidence to back them up, write a short analysis (3-5 pages) of your findings. **Due: November 7 for review and in final portfolio**

Project 5: Reflection on the Course

At the end of the course, take an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned/gained from the course. Look back on what you came into the course knowing and how you end the course. Your reflection should discuss specific readings, projects, and class discussions. What specifically helped you in your understanding of how language works in society and how power influences language in society? How has this course shaped your perceptions of language(s)? Finally, what more would you have liked to study? This reflection should be at least two pages. You may incorporate some of your assignments in writing this reflection. **Due in final portfolio**

EVALUATING YOUR WORK

Evaluating Your Work: I value your labor in taking a class. If you complete all the work on time fulfilling all the requirements with satisfactory effort, you will earn a C for the class. Earning a B means you complete the work on time fulfilling all the requirements with above average effort. Earning an A means you complete the work on time fulfilling all the requirements, demonstrating clear and critical thinking, and going above the ordinary. Below is a rough scale for the components of the course.

10% Class Participation: You should be actively engaged in the class. This means reading all the materials, responding in a critical manner, taking part in discussions and workshops, and being prepared. I value your insights regarding class materials and the nature of our discussions. This kind of participation allows us as scholars to engage in thoughtful discussions and, ultimately, new levels of learning.

30% Homework: In upper-level classes, homework is a priority and includes anything you are asked to do before the next class meeting. Late homework puts all of us behind. One pagers are important to our class discussions. If the responses are less than a page or do not show evidence of thoughtful response, they will receive half or zero credit.

60% Final Portfolios: Your final portfolio consists of all your work in the class and all your other work such as the one-page responses, inksheddings, and in-class writing contribute to your work of the course. The portfolio introduction (2-3 pages), which should be placed at the front of your portfolio, will include your assessment of that work by pointing to specific pieces in the portfolio. You will then organize the other pieces as you see fit and create a table of contents.

Attendance, Academic Honesty, Relationships to Each Other, and Suggestions

1. In Native communities, we talk about the four Rs: Reverence, Reciprocity, Respect, and Responsibility that make up our relationships. I make every attempt to conduct my personal and professional life under these four Rs. I hold great admiration for each of you and for the work we will do together. We are in a space of sharing gifts of learning with one another. As with any endeavor, there are responsibilities that we take on and expectations that need to be fulfilled. It goes without saying that respectful behavior is expected from all of us. Respecting one another includes coming to class on time and prepared as well as being present and engaging in deep listening as well as contributing. While we may disagree, and I hope we will, there are ways to challenge and ask difficult questions in ways that do not devalue anyone in the room.

2. You should make every effort to be on time. After four missed classes (equally two weeks), your grade will be affected; miss six classes and do not expect to pass the course. Please take the class seriously through your attendance and participation; it makes the atmosphere better for all of us.

3. Plagiarism—we all know that this is intellectual theft. Bottom line, don't do it. It's a serious offense that could not only jeopardize your grade but has other serious consequences. This is a link to BSU's Academic Integrity Policy: <http://catalog.bridgew.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=970>

4. Please let me know if you have a preferred name or preferred pronouns. I will expect the class to respect your preferences.

5. Special Accommodations: Any student who needs special accommodations due to a documented disability must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in the Academic Achievement Center (Maxwell Library, ground floor). A letter will be provided for you which needs to be delivered to me before the add/drop period. At that time, we can discuss your specific needs. [Student Accessibility Services | Bridgewater State University](#)

6. For students who need support with other needs:

[Student Crisis Information | Bridgewater State University](#)

7. In addition to the Writing Studio, Second Language Services is also located in the AAC. Make use of the center for conversation groups or other services they provide. Please see your Writing Fellow first for your papers! [Academic Resources | Bridgewater State University](#)

8. Feel challenged-one of the great things about this work is that we are still breaking some new ground. While the reading load is very heavy, there is still so much more. If you find something that looks interesting, bring it in or discuss it in your responses. Enjoy the learning, work hard at it, and open yourself to thinking in challenging ways

9. Talk to me-I make myself available in multiple ways. Let me know if there are any issues before they grow.

10. Have a sense of humor.

11. Take risks



Protocols for Fall 2022

Masks are to be properly in the classroom, and appropriate care will be taken to keep everyone safe. Please do not come to class if you are ill. Please consult the Covid information on the BSU website for policies and procedures: [Covid-19 | Bridgewater State University](#)

Tentative Schedule

Notes: 1. All reading selections with the exception of *Sociolinguistics* are available on the website

www.joycerain.com.

2. This schedule is a draft and subject to revisions with sufficient notification to the class.

THESE READINGS HAVE BEEN SENT OUT TO PREPARE FOR OUR FIRST CLASS. PLEASE READ THESE AND WRITE A SHORT RESPONSE TO BRING TO CLASS:

Why Language Is Humanity's Greatest Invention David Peterson

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_peterson_why_language_is_humanity_s_greatest_invention

Chapter 1: "Language" *Language, Society, and Power* Annabelle Mooney and Betsy Evans

"Linguistic Glossary"—for reference (no need to read and respond)

Week 1	
Sept. 7	<p>9/7 Introductions; Syllabus What this class will entail Fry, Kenneth. "Language." YouTube 2010. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7E-aoXLZGY DISCUSS: Peterson; Mooney and Evans</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read How Language Shapes the Way We Think Lera Boroditsy https://www.ted.com/talks/lera_boroditsky_how_language_shapes_the_way_we_think?language=en Chapter 5: "Linguistic Landscapes in Mooney and Evans Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class.</p>
Week 2	
<p>Last day to add or drop a class is September 14* Academic Calendar https://www.bridgew.edu/office/registrar/academic-calendar</p>	
Sept. 12 and 14	<p>9/12 Inkshedding and Discussion Project 1: Sociolinguistic Profile – begin lists Read Linguistic Autobiography in class Create Writing Groups</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read "D/discourse" (J. Gee) and "Linguistic Landscapes" (Mooney and Evans) Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class. Sketch out Sociolinguistic Profile to share</p> <p>9/14 Inkshedding and Discussion Project 2 Linguistic Landscapes – discuss presentations and choose dates Writing Groups</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read "Language Evolution, Adaption, and Change" and "Language Identity, and Equity." Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class. Work on Sociolinguistic Profile to share in groups.</p>

Week 3	
Sept. 19 and 21	<p>9/19 Inkshedding and Discussion Writing Groups to share Sociolinguistic Profile Sketch HOMEWORK: Read "Arguments about 'Literally' Listen "When a Sociolinguist Eavesdrops on a Bus" Vera Regan https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAGgKE82034 Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class. Bring scrapbook artifacts to class for check-in</p> <p>9/21 Inkshedding and Discussion Check-in for Scrapbooks HOMEWORK: Read "Academic English," "," and "Rachel Jeanteal's Language Is English" Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class</p>
Week 4	
Sept. 26 and 28	<p>9/26 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion HOMEWORK: Read "Embarrassed to Speak," and "Oh, I like your Accent" Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class. Rewrite Sociolinguistic Profile to peer review next class.</p> <p>9/28 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion Writing Groups to peer review Sociolinguistic Profile Drafts HOMEWORK: Read "Southern English" and "Talking in American Midwest" Watch <i>Do You Speak American?</i> Ep 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOTzkejL7ks Ep 2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYN_CIDocBI Ep 3 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PR34EJOZFs Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class.</p>
Week 5	
Oct. 3 and 5	<p>10/3 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion HOMEWORK: Read "Code Switching and Code Mixing". Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class.</p> <p>10/5 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion HOMEWORK: Read "Language and Politics" in Mooney and Evans, and Negative Affective Politics". Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class.</p>
Week 6	
Oct. 10* and 12	<p>Monday 10/10 is Indigenous Peoples Day – no classes</p> <p>10/10 Holiday – no class</p> <p>10/12 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion Writing Groups to discuss Project 4 HOMEWORK: Read How to talk like a politician -- https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/10/how-to-talk-like-a-politician-111841/ Listen: "How to Have Better Political Conversations' Ted Willer Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class. Write some notes for Project 4</p>
Week 7	
Oct. 17 and 19	<p>10/17 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion</p>

	<p>Writing Groups to discuss Scrapbook artifacts to date.</p> <p>9/19 No Class – I will be away from October 19-22. Please</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read “Revisiting the Promise of Students’ Right to Their Own Language” and “English Only Policies” Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class.</p>
Week 8	This week, Wednesday follows a Friday schedule so we will not have class.
Oct. 24 and 26*	<p>10/24 LL Presentation _____</p> <p>Inkshedding and Discussion</p> <p>10/26 – Friday Schedule – no class – I am available for conferences</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read “Gender Differences” and Tannen. Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class.</p>
Week 9	
Oct.31 and Nov. 2	<p>10/31 LL Presentation _____</p> <p>Inkshedding and Discussion</p> <p>Read: “Feministic Linguistics” Watch How Language Shapes Our Thoughts on Equity-- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Yq2WycjTNg Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class.</p> <p>Writing Groups</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read</p> <p>Submit proposal for Midyear Symposium!</p> <p>11/3 LL Presentation _____</p> <p>Inkshedding and Discussion</p> <p>Homework: Read “Transgender language reform” “Gender and Language on Facebook” “I’m a G” Write a one-page response and bring a hard copy to class. Draft your Project 4 for review</p>
Week 10	This Friday, November 11 is Veterans Day – no classes (does not affect ENGL 324)
Nov. 7 and 9	<p>11/7 LL Presentation _____</p> <p>Inkshedding and Discussion</p> <p>Review Project 4--Political Analysis</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read. Language, social class, and education: listening to adolescents’ perceptions” “I Don’t Know if That Be English” Write a one-page response bring a hard copy to class.</p> <p>11/9 LL Presentation _____</p> <p>Inkshedding and Discussion</p> <p>Writing Groups to share Scrapbook artifacts</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read Critical Hiphop Language” “Talking Hiphop” “Korean Hiphop”. Write a one-page response bring a hard copy to class. Prepare Scrapbook for review</p>
Week 11	
Nov. 14 and 16	<p>11/14 LL Presentation _____</p> <p>Inkshedding and Discussion</p> <p>Writing Groups to share drafts</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read “RU Texting” Watch “txing is Killing Language. JK.” John McWhorter https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_txtng_is_killing_language_jk/transcript . Write a one-page response bring a hard copy to class.</p> <p>11/16 LL Presentation _____</p> <p>HOMEWORK: Read “Slurs and Offence” “Derogatory Language” . Write a one-page response bring a hard copy to class.</p>

Week 12	
Nov. 21 and 23	11/21 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion Writing Groups 11/23 Virtual Conferences (see sign-up) HOMEWORK: Read -Find an article on sociolinguistics to discuss. Write a one-page response bring a hard copy to class.
Week 13	November 29 is the last day to withdraw from a class
Nov. 28 and 30	11/28 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion Writing Groups--portfolios HOMEWORK: Catch up on projects Work on portfolios and course reflection Prepare Presentation on Scrapbooks 11/30 LL Presentation _____ Read " Saving Lakota, " <i>Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project</i> , " Two Languages "
	RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM December 8 and 9
Week 14	
Dec 5 and 7	12/5 LL Presentation _____ Inkshedding and Discussion Homework: Read "2019 UN Year of Indigenous Languages" <i>Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project</i> , http://www.wlrp.org/ Write a one-page response on Indigenous Languages for your portfolio. Writing Groups to share portfolios and reflection. 12/7 We will attend an event on Indigenous Languages today. Prepare presentations
Week 15	
Dec. 12 and 14	12/12 Presentations 12/14 Presentations
	December 16 is Reading Day December 16-22 Finals https://www.bridgew.edu/office/registrar/final-exam-schedule