ANTHROPOLOGY 139b

Language, Ethnicity and Nationalism

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Office hours: TBA
Class hours: M, T, Th 1:45pm-4:15pm

Course description
In the United States we often assume that communities are monolingual—that language differences divide people from one another, while a common language unites them. Yet, much of the world is multilingual. What do language differences mean for their speakers' social identities and relationships? In this course we will consider the relationship between communication and community—particularly the categories of "tribe", "ethnic group" and "nation". We will explore what kinds of social groupings those terms might label, and how they might (or might not) connect with languages and with communication networks. We will consider topics such as language use in small-scale societies, the role of language in nationalistic movements, the European colonial expansion and its influence on indigenous populations and languages, the politics of language standardization, some functions of multilingualism and code-switching, and linguistic boundaries in a globalized world. We will study and discuss examples from different regions in the world, including North and South America, Europe, Africa and India. This class has no prerequisites, but please be aware that the readings are fairly dense and will require dedication and concentration on your part. The course is envisioned as a seminar in which we discuss general issues and some case materials. In addition, students will be responsible for leading certain discussions and for exploring and reporting on a particular case study of their choosing.

Course requirements

Class attendance and participation: 20%
Since this course will cover a multitude of important topics in a very concentrated manner, attendance at all sessions is mandatory and your active participation in discussion based on the required readings will be a part of your grade. You will be allowed a maximum of TWO absences. If you must be absent for any other sessions, you must have documentation of a valid reason.

Leading discussion 20% (10% for each discussion, assuming that each student presents twice)

At the beginning of the session each student will select a particular article(s) of interest to prepare and will lead the discussion on that topic or topics . Students should prepare and submit questions based on the required readings and are welcome to consult with me if they wish to include additional material in their discussion.

Midterm exam: 20%

This will be in the form of short answers/short essays on the major concepts we discuss.

Case Study 30%

Each student will choose a language situation to research and discuss in the context of the issues that will be explored in the class (see below for a list of possible case studies, or you may choose another example that interests you, but you must get prior approval). This will be presented as an 8-10 page research paper.

Class presentation of case study: 10%

Towards the end of the session, students will present their case studies orally to the class.

All readings will be available on LATTE.

Topics and readings: (subject to revision)

Week 1

- Introduction:
  what is language**?**
  - vs. dialect
  - vs. register
  - standardized language

  language ideologies

Finegan and Besnier: *Language: its structure and use* Ch. 1

Romaine: *Language in Society: an introduction to sociolinguistics* selected chapters

Gal and Irvine: "The boundaries of languages and disciplines: how ideologies construct difference" *Social Research* 62: 967-1001 (1995)

Woolard: "Language variation and cultural hegemony" *American Ethnology*. 1985. Vol. 12. No.4. 738-748

- what is ethnicity?
  language, ethnicity and tribe
  ethnicity and race
  speech community and linguistic boundaries

Barth: "Introduction" in F. Barth, ed. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*

Fishman: "Language, ethnicity and racism" in Fishman, ed. *The Rise and Fall of the Ethnic Revival*. 3-14.

Hymes: "Linguistic problems in the definition of tribe" in Bauman and Sherzer, eds. *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking*

Gumperz: "The speech community' in Giglioli, ed. *Language in Social Context*.

<u>Week 2</u>

- language boundaries and communication networks: example from a small-scale society

Jackson, J: "*Language identity of the Vaupes Indians*" in Bauman and Sherzer, eds. Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking

- what is a nation?
- role of language standardization and print media in processes of political centralization

Hobsbawm, E. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (1990).

Renan, Ernst: 1990 'What is a nation?" in H. Bhabha, ed. *Nation and Narration*

Anderson, Benedict *Imagined Communities*: *reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* Selected chapters

Segal and Handler, "How European is nationalism?" *Social Analysis* No. 32: 52-65

Week 3

- European colonization and language policies in Africa, Asia and elsewhere

Spencer: "Colonial language policies and their legacies" in Thomas Sebeok, ed. *Current Trends in Linguistics* Vol. 7, pp. 537-47

Urban, Greg: "The semiotics of state-Indian linguistic relationships: Peru, Paraguay, and Brazil" in Urban and Sherzer, eds. *Nation States and Indians in Latin America*

Silverstein, M; "Encountering language and languages of encounter in North American ethnohistory" in *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* Vol. 6: 126-44 (1996)

Fabian: "Missions and the colonization of African languages" in Fabian, ed. *Time and the work of anthropology*

Cohn, B: "The command of language and the language of command" in R. Guha, ed. *Subaltern Studies* 4: 276-329

MIDTERM

Week 4

- nationalist language ideologies
- linguistic pluralism
- the politics of language standardization

Grillo: *Dominant Languages* Chap. 9

Bourdieu, P: "The production and reproduction of legitimate language" in Bourdieu: *Language and Symbolic Power*

Gal, S. and J. Irvine: "Language ideology and linguistic differentiation" in P. Kroskrity, ed. *Regimes of Language: ideologies, polities and identities*

Pullum: "Here come the linguistic fascists" in Pullum *The Great Eskimo Vocabulary Hoax*

Nunberg: "Afterword: the official language movement: Reimagining America" in Crawford *Language Loyalties*

Blommaert, J and J. Verschueren: "The role of language in European nationalist ideologies" in B. Schieffelin et.al, *Language Ideologies: practice and theory*

Woolard, K: "The value of languages" in *Double Talk: Bilingualism and the Politics of Ethnicity in Catalonia* Stanford: Stanford University Press

<u>Week 5</u>

- language and identity: interethnic communication in urban contexts
  multilingualism and code-switching

Urciuoli, B: "The political topography of Spanish and English: the view from a New York Puerto Rican neighborhood". *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 18: 2

Scotton, Carol Myers: "Code-switching as indexical of social negotiations" in Monica Heller, ed. *Codeswitching; anthropological and sociolinguistic perspectives*

McIntosh, J. "Baptismal essentialisms: Giriama code choice and the reification of ethnoreligious boundaries". *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15: 2 pp. 151-170

- language and identity: beyond the nation-state
  diasporic communities
  pariah groups
  linguistic and ethnic identity in a globalized world

Alim, H.S. and A. Pennycook. *Introduction: Global Linguistic Flows*. Journal of Language, Identity and Education(6) 2: 89-100

PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDIES DURING LAST WEEK OF CLASS
PAPERS ARE DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASS

Case Study topics

- The Ebonics movement in the United States
- Quebec nationalist movement in Canada
- Spain: the place of Catalan
- Corsican nationalism
- Bilingual education in the United States
- Multilingualism in India
- Role of literacy in language shift
- Language standardization in a particular country/region
- global language: examples from hip/hop, rap in other countries
- post-colonial language policy in a particular country

You may, of course, choose another topic or choose to focus on a different region; as long as the topic reflects relevance and pertinence to the concepts we are discussing it is fine. Students should communicate with me during the first two weeks of the session in order to start planning their case study and to get approval of their topic.