



Language, Symbols, and Society

ANTH 3630 (Fall 2023)

Instructor: Dr. Venera R. KHALIKOVA
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Office Hours:
By appointment, NAH 305

Lecture: Wednesday, 2:30 pm – 4:15pm
Location: Cheng Yu Tung Bldg (CYT) 201

T1: Wed 4:30 – 5.15 pm CYT 201
T2: Wed 5:30 – 6.15 pm CYT 201

TA: Juliette Wu
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Course Description

This course examines language as a uniquely human, social practice. We use language to communicate with others, but also to define ourselves and others. Language serves as a tool for establishing both belonging and boundaries. Languages, accents, certain words and gestures can bring us closer to each other yet can also work as markers of exclusion. As an introduction to the study of language from diverse anthropological perspectives, this course covers early anthropological studies on the nature of language, its relation to culture and thought, and how members of a society get socialized into and through language. The course then moves to the discussion of language in the context of power, focusing on the concept of language ideologies and examining case studies about the role of language in politics and healthcare. We also cover the relation between language and identity, particularly gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, and nationality. The course ends by reflecting on contemporary phenomena that influence the use of language, such as the rise of Internet and social media, migration, and globalization.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- describe the scope of linguistic anthropology
- name and explain leading scholars, theories, and concepts in anthropological studies of language
- identify and explain distinctive characteristics of language and how language differs from animal communication

- define and give examples of language ideology, linguistic relativity, language socialization, language shift and other core concepts
- identify and analyze language in its complex socio-cultural and political contexts, including gendered and classed dimensions of language, as well as nationalistic, racialized, and health discourse.

Learning Material

All readings will be available on Blackboard, but you may want to purchase hard copies of the following textbooks:

- *Language, Culture, and Society: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. By Zdenek Salzmann, James Stanlaw and Nobuko Adachi, 7th EDITION, 2018
- *The Routledge Handbook of Linguistic Anthropology* by Nancy Bonvillain. Taylor & Francis Group, 2015

Assessment Criteria

Tutorial participation – 40%

Exchange of ideas is essential to learning; therefore, you are expected to attend tutorials regularly, and come prepared with comments and questions related to the assigned readings.

Field trip report and reflection – 20%

The purpose of a field trip is to provide insights and direct experience with real-life initiatives and activities related to linguistic practices in Hong Kong. We will make a visit to an organization called TheM – Translate for Her <https://www.translateforher.org>. After the visit, you will need to write a report/reflection on the facts and ideas you will have learned during the visit and connect them to your life.

- About 500 words (450 min – 550 max)
- Submitted to Blackboard no later than October 30, before the class
- With an attached VeriGuide report

Term Essay: “Linguistic Landscape” – 40%

Linguistic landscape describes the appearance and visibility of linguistic signs such as road signs, billboards, graffiti, names of buildings, shops, and restaurants, as well as other signs displayed in a particular place. For this assignment, you will need to choose a street, a shopping mall, or another small area of Hong Kong and conduct an analysis of its linguistic landscape, focusing on one aspect (multilingualism, consumer culture, food, healthcare, gender, etc.). You will need to photograph all salient linguistic signs and conduct interviews with people in the area. Overall, the assignment involves collecting textual and ethnographic data and analyzing it with the help of class readings.

- About 2500 words (2200 min - 2800 max)
- 3-7 photos
- Minimum 5 interviews
- Submitted to Blackboard before December 15, 23:59, with a VeriGuide report

Detailed guidelines for all assignments will be posted on Blackboard and explained in class.

Grading Scale

Grade	%	participation	field trip report	final essay
A	95-100	You have participated in all classes (one absence is ok). Your comments demonstrate that you have read the assigned readings, and your questions show a nuanced understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip on time and written an original report of the correct length and format before the deadline. The report is accurate and reflexive with a clear, relevant example	The chosen topic is engaging, data is relevant, analysis is convincing. Literature is relevant and cited correctly. Your essay is coherent, factually accurate, and submitted on time
A -	90-94	You have participated in almost all classes, with two classes missed or inactive. Your comments demonstrate that you have read the assigned readings, and your questions show a good understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip on time and written an original report of the correct length and format before the deadline. The report is almost accurate and reflexive with a relevant example	The chosen topic is engaging, data is relevant, analysis is convincing. Literature is relevant and cited correctly. Your essay is overall coherent with minor issues, but is factually accurate and submitted on time
B+	85-89	You have participated in the majority of classes, with three classes missed or inactive. Your comments demonstrate that you have read most of the assigned readings, and your questions show a sufficient understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip on time and written an original report of more or less correct length and format before the deadline. The report is almost accurate and reflexive with a somewhat relevant example	The chosen topic is somewhat engaging, data is relevant, analysis is satisfactory, although missing some nuance. There are few minor issues with the cited literature. Your essay is a bit unclear and contain a few minor factual errors, but submitted on time
B	80-84	You have participated in the majority of classes, with four classes absent or inactive. Your comments demonstrate that you have read most of the assigned readings, and your questions show a sufficient understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip and written an original report of more or less correct length and format before the deadline. The report is somewhat accurate and reflexive with a somewhat relevant example	The chosen topic is somewhat engaging, data is partially relevant, analysis is satisfactory, although missing some nuance. There are some minor issues with the cited literature. Your essay is unclear, too brief or too long, contains many minor factual errors, but submitted on time

B -	75-79	You have participated in the majority of classes, with five classes absent or inactive. Your comments demonstrate that you have read most of the assigned readings, and your questions show a sufficient understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip and written an original report before the deadline, although with some minor issues in the length and format. The report is somewhat accurate and reflexive with a somewhat relevant example	The chosen topic is somewhat engaging, data is partially relevant, analysis is satisfactory, although not nuanced. There are many minor issues with the cited literature. Your essay is unclear, too brief or too long, and contains major factual errors, but submitted on time
C +	70-74	You have participated in about half of classes, with six classes absent or inactive. Your comments demonstrate that you have read some of the assigned readings, and your questions show a partial understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip and written an original report before the deadline, although with some minor issues in the length and format. The report lacks accuracy or reflexivity, and an included example is not entirely clear	You submitted the essay on time but the case is mostly unclear or irrelevant; the data is inappropriate, the essay is confusing, not engaging and factually incorrect. There are few major issues with the cited literature.
C	65-69	You participate in about half of classes, with seven classes missed or inactive. Your comments demonstrate that you have read some of the assigned readings, and your questions show a partial understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip and written an original report before the deadline, although with many minor issues in the length and format. The report lacks accuracy or reflexivity, and an included example is not entirely clear	You submitted the report on time but the case is unclear or irrelevant; the data is inappropriate, the report is confusing, not engaging and factually incorrect. There are some major issues with the cited literature.
C -	60-64	You participate in about half of the classes, with eight classes absent or inactive. Your comments demonstrate that you have read some of the assigned readings, and your questions show partial understanding of the course material	You have attended the field trip and written an original report before the deadline, although with minor issues and major errors in the length and format. The report lacks accuracy or reflexivity, and an included example is not clear	You submitted the report on time but the case is unclear or irrelevant; the data is inappropriate, the report is confusing, not engaging and factually incorrect. There are many major issues with the cited literature.
D +	55-59	You have participated in a small number of classes, with 9-10 classes absent or inactive; or you show a low level of engagement. Your comments demonstrate that you have not read the assigned readings, and you do not quite understand what is being discussed	You have attended only some part of the field trip because of being late. You have written an original report before or slightly after the deadline, and it contains many major errors in the length and format. The report lacks accuracy or reflexivity. There is no example	You submitted the report after the deadline. The case is unclear or irrelevant; the data is inappropriate, the report is confusing, not engaging, and factually incorrect. Literature is cited incorrectly or is irrelevant

D	50-54	You participate in a small number of classes, with 11-12 classes absent or inactive, or you show a low level of engagement. Your comments demonstrate that you have not read the assigned readings, and you do not understand what is being discussed	You have missed a significant part of the field trip because of being late. You have written an original report but submitted it many days after the deadline, and it contains many major errors in the length and format. The report lacks accuracy or reflexivity. There is no example	You submitted the essay long after the deadline. The case is unclear or irrelevant; the data is inappropriate, the report is confusing, not engaging and factually incorrect. Literature is cited incorrectly and is irrelevant
F	49 and below	You have never participated, or missed all the tutorials, or have always come unprepared	You have missed the field trip entirely. Or you have attended the fieldtrip but have not submitted a report. Or the submitted report is not original.	You have not submitted the essay or the essay is not original. Literature is absent

Weekly schedule

*Subject to change. Stay tuned on Blackboard. Further optional readings are available on Blackboard for each week

1. September 6: Introduction to the Course: Linguistic Anthropology and Language as a Uniquely Human Feature

- Chapter 1: Introducing Linguistic Anthropology. In *Language, Culture, and Society*
- Chapter 2: Methods of Linguistic Anthropology. In *Language, Culture, and Society*

2. September 13: Language and Cognition

- Chapter 12: Language, Culture and Thought. In *Language, Culture, and Society*, pp. 231–256
- Guy Deutscher (2010) Does Your Language Shape How You Think? In *New York Times Magazine*
- (Optional) Levinson, S.C. (1997), Language and Cognition: The Cognitive Consequences of Spatial Description in Guugu Yimithirr. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 7: 98-131. <https://doi.org/10.1525/jlin.1997.7.1.98>

3. September 20. Ethnography of Communication

- Chapter 10: Ethnography of Communication. In *Language, Culture, and Society*, pp. 199–212
- Benjamin Bailey (2009) Communication of Respect in Interethnic Service Encounters. In *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*, edited by Alessandro Duranti

4. September 23 (Saturday), 10am – 1pm: Health, Wellbeing, and Spirituality in Hong Kong’s Linguistic Landscape

A field trip to the neighborhood of Tsim Sha Tsui

Meetup point: 8-10 Carnarvon Rd

Participation is required. Before the field trip please read the following article:

- TBD

5. September 27: Language Socialization

- Chapter 7: Acquiring Language(s). In *Language, Culture, and Society*, pp. 145–158
- Junehui Ahn (2016) “Don’t Cry, You’re Not a Baby”: Emotion, Role, and Hierarchy in Korean Language Socialisation Practice. *Children and Society*, 30, pp. 12-24

6. October 4. Language Ideology

- Bambi B. Schieffelin and Rachelle Charlier Doucet (1994) The "Real" Haitian Creole: Ideology, Metalinguistics, and Orthographic Choice. *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 176-200
- Anne Franziskus (2016) “One does not say Moien, one has to say Bonjour”: Expressing Language Ideologies through Shifting Stances in Spontaneous Workplace Interactions in Luxembourg. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, Volume 26, Issue 2
- (optional) Paul Kroskrity: Language Ideologies: Emergence, Elaboration, and Application. In *Routledge Handbook*, pp. 95 – 108

7. October 7 (Saturday), 3–5.30pm: Language and Everyday Life: Empowering Ethnic Minority Women through Translation

A field trip to TheM—Translate for Her

Location: DreamImpact, Unit C, 4/F, 760 Cheung Sha Wan Rd, Lai Chi Kok

Participation is required. Before the fieldtrip, explore the following websites and watch the videos:

- An Introduction to TheM's Whatsapp translation and Cantonese class Translate Anytime and Anywhere 《隨傳隨譯》 : <https://youtu.be/ilOqF7Zb71Y>
- A mutual-support micro-fund project sponsored by TheM this year Awareness Campaign for Migrant Domestic Workers: https://fb.watch/iZ2g_OpL-U/?mibextid=RUbZ1f
- Translate for Her's website: <https://www.translateforher.org/>

8. October 11. Media Language and Media Ideology

- Ana Deumert and Kristin Vold Lexander (2013) Texting Africa: Writing as Performance. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 17/4, pp. 522-546

- Ileana Gershon (2010) “Breaking Up is Hard to Do: Media-Switching and Media Ideologies.” In *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 20(2), pp. 389 – 405
- (optional) McIntosh, Janet 2010 “Mobile Phones and Mipoho’s Prophecy: The Powers and Dangers of Flying Language,” *American Ethnologist*, 37(2): 337-353.

9. October 18. Political discourse: Nationalism and Immigration

- Brian Lap-ming Wai and Foong Ha Yap (2018) Inclusivity and exclusivity in the use of Cantonese ngo⁵dei⁶ (‘we’) in evasive replies in Hong Kong political discourse. *Discourse & Society* 2018 29:6, 691-715
- Janet E. Connor (2019) “The Langue d’Oc Is Bringing People Together”: Debating the Place of Regional Languages in France. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, Volume 29, Issue 2
- (optional) Chapter 14: Language, Identity, and Ideology II – Variations in Class, Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality. In *Language, Culture, and Society*, pp. 297–332.

10. October 25: Language and Medicine

- West, Candace (1984) “Turn-taking in doctor-patient dialogues.” In *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology* (2009), Second Edition, by Peter Brown and Ron Barrett, pp. 375-384
- Brian King (2023) “Communicating health knowledges across clinic and community: The case of sex characteristics in plurilingual Hong Kong.” In *Language, Health and Culture: Problematizing the Centers and Peripheries of Healthcare Communication Research* by Olga Zayts-Spence, Susan M. Bridges
- (optional) Lanita Jacobs, Mary Lawlor, and Cheryl Mattingly (2010) “I/We Narratives Among African American Families Raising Children with Special Needs.” *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*. DOI 10.1007/s11013-010-9196-5

11. November 1: Language and Gender

- M. Agnes Kang and Katherine HY Chen (2014) Stancetaking and the Hong Kong Girl in a shifting heterosexual marketplace. *Discourse & Society* 2014, Vol. 25(2) 205–220
- Deborah Cameron: Speak up, I can’t hear you. In *Guardian*, October 2, 2007 www.theguardian.com/books/2007/oct/02/gender.familyandrelationships
- (Optional) Chapter 13: Language, Identity, and Ideology I – Variations in Gender. In *Language, Culture, and Society*, pp. 257–296

12. November 8. Multilingualism, Language choice, and Identity

In class: “Multilingual Hong Kong”– a documentary by Katherine Chen and Gray Carper (2003, revised 2017)

- Reem Bassiouney (2012) Politicizing identity: Code choice and stance-taking during the Egyptian Revolution. *Discourse & Society* 23(2) 107–126
- Jane Hill (2007) Mock Spanish: A Site for the Indexical Reproduction of Racism in American English. In *Race, Ethnicity, and Gender: Selected Readings*, Joseph F. Healey, Eileen O’Brien, eds. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 270-285.

13. November 15. Language and Globalization

- Jan Blommaert (2011) Language and Superdiversity. *Diversities*, 13(2): 1 – 21
- Britta Ingebretson (2021) “Living Fossils”: The Politics of Language Preservation in Huangshan, China. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*
- (optional) Chapter 15: Linguistic Anthropology in a Globalized and Digitized World. In *Language, Culture, and Society*, pp. 333 – 368

Course Policies and Support

Contacting me

Use your CUHK email (not your personal email), when communicating about class matters. For most situations, you should write to the Teaching Assistant first—the class TA is very knowledgeable and ready to help you. But feel free to email me as well, if there is something that the TA does not know, or if you want to contact me directly. I will do my best to answer your email within 24 hours, with an understandable exception of weekends and public holidays.

Educational technology

This class relies on the use of Blackboard, Zoom, and VeriGuide. All class communications, announcements, assignment guidelines, and homework submissions will be done through Blackboard. Note that it uses the email address assigned to you by the University, so it is your responsibility to have an electronic mail forwarded to your primary email address. Each written assignment should be run through VeriGuide

Academic Integrity

The University has recently updated its policy on Academic Integrity and the penalties for plagiarism, AI writing, and cheating. Read here: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_html_files_%282013-14%29/p06.htm or watch a video: [https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_html_files_\(2013-14\)/video_e.html](https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_html_files_(2013-14)/video_e.html) Every student is expected to comply with the policy; otherwise, if you are suspected of violating these obligations, you will be subject to the outlined sanctions. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask me or your TA about this!

Use of AI

CUHK has designed a general policy for the use of AI in learning. Please, refer to the following document: <https://www.aqs.cuhk.edu.hk/documents/A-guide-for-students-use-of-AI-tools.pdf>. It specifies that “*as a general principle, students are prohibited from using any AI tools to complete their assignments, assessments and any other works that count towards their final grade of the course or attainment of the desired learning outcomes, unless explicitly permitted.*” In this course, you are not

permitted to use AI in graded assignments. If such use is detected, it will result in a failing grade.

Special accommodation

If you need special accommodations or classroom modifications, you need to notify both me and the University's Wellness and Counselling Center (<https://www2.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/disability/en-GB>) no later than the third week of class.

Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, **you may not record** our discussions and activities during the class without my permission obtained in advance, and only solely for your own private use. Typically, PowerPoint slides will be uploaded to Blackboard and available for review. For days, when the class cannot meet, a lecture will be pre-recorded and posted to Blackboard.

Late Work and Absence

Late or incomplete assignments will be marked down: a full grade will be subtracted **for each late day**. Class attendance is not required, but if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to copy class notes and go over the PowerPoint presentations; otherwise, it will most likely result in poor understanding of class material and, ultimately, in a low grade. You are welcome to talk to me during office hours to go over the missed lectures!

Discussion Rules

We will discuss many interesting, important, and potentially controversial topics. I expect you to be **polite and respectful** of your classmates' opinions, limit your statements to academic (not emotional) arguments, and not use offensive language or judgmental statements.

Grade Review

If you want to discuss and contest your grade, you can send me an email to set up an appointment during my office hours when we will go over your exam/written work and decide on a grade together. During this process, I can both mark your original grade up, if you demonstrate evidence that you know the material well, or mark it down.

Independent Learning Center

If you need help with communication and learning skills, the University has an excellent resource for you. You can schedule a consultation or attend workshops on various strategies for improving learning outcomes <https://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/EN/mission.aspx>