

LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION ◇ Sociology 142
Winter 2015 ◇ Mon-Wed - 5:00-6:45 p.m. ◇ Porter 144

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Drop-In Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2- 4 p.m.

Office Hours by Appointment: If you cannot make the Wed. hours, you may email me to arrange a different appointment time.

In one sense, you are already experts on the subject matter of this course, for we all use language and we all interact with others in particular social contexts. What may be less familiar to you is the complex and changing interplay between language and society. The ways in which we use and understand language profoundly affect our social interaction, just as the nature of our social interaction clearly influences what we say and how we say it.

This course focuses on the social psychological dimensions of this interplay, drawing on the work of sociologists as well as that of sociolinguists, law professors, anthropologists, psychologists, and social critics. A range of supplemental readings and resources will be assigned and posted on eCommons, drawn from newspapers, magazines, academic journals, the Internet, television, film and radio - valuable not only for their content, but also because each constitutes a distinct arena of language use as well as a specific realm of social interaction.

The course title -- Language and Social Interaction -- implies an intersection between what we say, or read, or write, and what we do, especially in the presence of others.

We begin with Peter Trudgill's *Sociolinguistics*, a lucid and comprehensive overview that has been continually updated since its original publication in 1974. This most recent edition takes account of how dramatically both language and society have changed in the past generation, and continue to be transformed.

We then explore the work of John Palfrey and Urs Gasser, whose book *Born Digital* represents a thoughtful, well-balanced attempt to understand the first generation of "digital natives." We next turn to a recent exploration of what Hal Niedzviecki terms "Peep culture" (*The Peep Diaries: How We're Learning to Love Watching Ourselves and Our Neighbors*), probing the many ways in which our use of technology is altering our social interactions, our language use, and the distinction between public and private - a distinction that is becoming increasingly difficult to draw.

We will be raising more questions than we answer. The themes of this course touch upon our personal as well as academic concerns, and can be as perplexing as they are illuminating. Without a doubt, however, they will reward sustained attention and energetic study.

REQUIRED READINGS

These three books are available at **The Literary Guillotine**, 204 Locust St. in downtown Santa Cruz, 457-1195 (year-round buy-back policy and many used copies available).

◇ Peter Trudgill. *Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society* (4th edition). Penguin, 2000.

◇ John Palfrey and Urs Gasser. *Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives*. Basic Books, 2008.

◇ Hal Niedzviecki. *The Peep Diaries: How We're Learning to Love Watching Ourselves and Our Neighbors*. City Lights Books, 2009.

◇ Additional required readings and resources will be posted throughout the quarter on eCommons (and announced in class a week before they are due to be read).

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Your presence in class is essential to your work in this course. Other people's notes cannot take the place of live dialogue, films, in-class exercises, etc. Since lectures do not simply reiterate the readings, but rather, complement and supplement them, it is particularly important that you complete each day's assigned readings before class.

That said, do attend class even if you are unable to complete that day's readings, so that you do not miss lecture and discussion; you can catch up with missed reading more effectively than you can catch up with missed lecture.

PAPERS, EXAMS and GRADING

Three Essays (of 3 pages each) will be assigned, with topics distributed at least ten days in advance of the due date. In addition, there will be two Reading Reflections, for which instructions will be distributed in class. Assignments are due at the start of class; thus, there is nothing to be gained by skipping class to finish working on a paper, as work submitted at end of class will be counted as late.

The two closed-book exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. You will receive a study guide in advance, and may

prepare one double-sided page of notes (or two single-sided pages) to consult during each exam. The notes must be your own work, though you are welcome to study in groups.

The Final Exam is not cumulative. Approximately one-third of each exam covers lecture material, while two-thirds covers course readings.

The following percentage weights will be used to calculate your final grade. Three Essays: 10% each (30% total); Two Reading Reflections: 5% each (10% total); Midterm: 30%; Final Exam: 30%.

CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

It is important that you do not miss class unless you are ill or have an emergency. If you need to arrive late, please come in through the back door and find the nearest available seat. There is no eating allowed in the classroom (even before class). Those using laptop computers must sit in the aisle rows or in the last row (so as not to distract the people near you), and are expected to use the laptop only to take notes. Use of phones in class for any purpose is not acceptable; if you must take an emergency call, please step outside. Keep all electronic devices on silent mode (or off) during class.

DRC ACCOMMODATION (Information from the Disability Resource Center)

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please get an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and submit it to the instructor in person within the first two weeks of the quarter.

Contact DRC at 459-2089 (voice), 459-4806 (TTY), or <http://drc.ucsc.edu> for more information on the requirements and/or process.

PLAGIARISM and ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

All students are responsible for maintaining accepted standards of academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are contrary to the ideals and purposes of a university, and carry serious consequences (among the possibilities: receiving a lower grade, failing a class, being placed on suspension or expelled). Be sure to read the full text of UCSC's policy on academic dishonesty - available online at www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity. You should also consult UCSC Library guides on Citing Sources and Plagiarism: <http://library.ucsc.edu/help/howto/citations-and-style-guides>, and NetTrail: <http://nettrail.ucsc.edu/> (Section 6, Info Ethics).

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Planning your reading schedule effectively allows you enough time to complete each day's readings before the due dates listed below. Lectures will assume

that you have done the reading assigned for that day. Note that there will be additional reading assignments posted on eCommons and announced in class; these do not appear on the list below.

Mon. Jan. 5 Introduction to course

Wed. Jan. 7 *Sociolinguistics*: Ch. 1 - Language and Society

Mon. Jan. 12 *Sociolinguistics*: Ch. 2 - Language and Social Class
Ch. 3 - Language and Ethnic Group

Wed. Jan. 14 *Sociolinguistics*: Ch. 4 - Language and Sex
Ch. 5 - Language and Context

- 1st Reading Reflection due

Mon. Jan. 19 • No Class - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Wed. Jan. 21 *Sociolinguistics*: Ch. 6 - Language and Social Interaction

Mon. Jan. 26 *Sociolinguistics*: Ch. 7 - Language and Nation

Wed. Jan. 28 *Sociolinguistics*: Ch. 8 - Language and Geography,
Ch. 9 - Language and Contact

- 2nd Reading Reflection due
- Distribute Study Guide for Midterm Exam

Mon. Feb. 2 *Sociolinguistics*: Ch. 10 - Language and Humanity

Wed. Feb. 4 • Midterm Exam

Mon. Feb. 9 *Born Digital*: Intro.; Acknowledgments; Ch. 1 - Identities;
Ch. 2 - Dossiers

Wed. Feb. 11 *Born Digital*: Ch. 3 - Privacy; Ch. 4 - Safety

- Essay #1 due

Mon. Feb. 16 • No Class - Presidents' Day

Wed. Feb. 18 *Born Digital*: Ch. 5 - Creators; Ch. 6 - Pirates

Mon. Feb. 23 *Born Digital*: Ch. 7 - Quality; Ch. 8 - Overload; Ch. 9 - Aggressors

Wed. Feb. 25 *Born Digital*: Ch. 10 - Innovators; Ch. 11 - Learners;
Ch. 12 - Activists; Ch. 13- Synthesis

Mon. Mar. 2 *The Peep Diaries*: Ch. 1, 2

- Essay #2 due

Wed. Mar. 4 *The Peep Diaries*: Ch. 3, 4

Mon. Mar. 9 *The Peep Diaries*: Ch. 5, 6, 7

Wed. Mar. 11 • Distribute Study Guide for Final Exam

Mon. Mar. 16 Last Day of Class

- Essay #3 due

Thurs. Mar. 19 • Final Exam - 7:30 - 10:30 p.m.
(Note time of exam - not usual class time)

Summary of Due Dates and Exams:

Wed. Jan. 14 • 1st Reading Reflection due

Wed. Jan. 28 • 2nd Reading Reflection due
• Distribute Study Guide for Midterm Exam

Wed. Feb. 4 • Midterm Exam

Wed. Feb. 11 • Essay #1 due

Mon. Mar. 2 • Essay #2 due

Wed. Mar. 11 • Distribute Study Guide for Final Exam

Mon. Mar. 16 • Essay #3 due

Thurs. Mar. 19 • Final Exam - 7:30 - 10:30 p.m.