

Ling 155AC

Julia Nee

Summer 2020, Session A

Instructor: Julia Nee

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Class meetings: M-Th 10-12, online via Zoom (link on course homepage)

Section meetings: F 10-12, online via Zoom with Emily Ramirez

Office hours: M-T 2-3, W-Th 9-10, and by appointment

Land Acknowledgment

We recognize with great respect that UC Berkeley sits on the ancestral and unceded land of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. This land was, and continues to be, of great importance to the Ohlone people. We recognize that every member of the Berkeley community has benefited and continues to benefit from the use and occupation of this land. Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible the University's relationship to Native peoples.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

“Languages are not mere abstractions or replaceable products; language issues are always ‘people issues’.” (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002)

While many may think of the United States of America as an English-speaking nation, a closer look will quickly reveal that the US is home to a wide diversity of languages and dialects. Where does this diversity stem from? Is this a recent phenomenon or one that began before the nation's founding? In this course, we will examine the languages of what is now known as the United States, from pre-colonial times to the present. By examining language in the US from a historical perspective, we will begin to critically examine ideas that many of us hold about language and language policies in the US. Throughout the course, we will look at language, as described by Lomawaima and McCarty (2002) above, as being necessarily situated within a social context. Our discussions, therefore, will require engagement with, and self-reflection on, ideas about society, race, (em/im)migration, education, and nation-building. Our main course goals are:

1. Describe the linguistic landscape of North America before the arrival of Europeans, and analyze how that landscape has and has not changed, including language loss, maintenance, and revitalization.
2. Analyze the ways in which settler colonial languages (including English, German, and Spanish) have impacted language use and language ideologies in the US.

3. Examine the relationship between languages, dialects, and other language varieties brought to and developed in the US by the slave trade, along with the developing notion of ‘race’ in America.
4. Apply insights gained from class readings and discussion on language in the US to an analysis of your own lived experiences and first-hand reports of lived experiences as relates to one or more experiences in which language and social factors (such as race(ism)/ethnicity, class, gender, and Queer identities) interact.
5. Engage in critical discussion on issues of language, race, culture, and the development of the US as a nation-state through a variety of media and registers, including verbal and written forms, both formally and informally.

Grading Policies

Your grade in this class will be determined based on your achievement of the learning objectives outlined in the course calendar below, as well as your completion of a final project. We will work together to make sure that you have the skills and resources necessary to complete the final project successfully through various checkpoints throughout the course.

Written reflections: For each learning objective, you will submit a written description (between 200-500 words in length) or a recording of your own explanation (between 30 seconds and 2 minutes in length) of what you have done to show your understanding of that learning objective. This description could take a number of forms; for example, you might summarize a discussion you had on this point in class, describe a conversation with me in office hours, or copy in a discussion post or other work you’ve submitted. I will grade each written description with a letter grade:

Score Description

| | |
|---|--|
| A | Demonstrates full acquisition of the objective and application in a novel context. |
| B | Demonstrates full acquisition of the objective. |
| C | Demonstrates partial acquisition of the objective. |
| D | Does not yet demonstrate acquisition of the objective. |
| F | Does not yet provide evidence to determine acquisition of the objective. |

If you are unhappy with your score on a given learning objective, you may talk with me about what would need to be improved in order to achieve a higher score. If improvements are made, you may resubmit your written response, and I may adjust your grade up or down depending upon how the new response reflects your understanding of the learning objective. Reflections are tentatively due the day after the learning objective is covered in class, but these due dates are flexible. If you have non turned in the learning objective reflections for all of the learning objectives in a given module when we move to the next module, I will request a one-on-one meeting to discuss what your plan is to get back on track. I reserve the right not to accept written reflections that are turned in more than seven days after the class in which they are due, as well as any that are turned in after the final day of the course.

Discussion board posts and comments: I will post a discussion board for each day of class, and I will include several questions that you may wish to consider in writing a response

and in commenting on classmates' posts. Please post by midnight the night before our class so that we may all have time to review the discussion board before our class meeting at 10am. You may skip one post per week. While these posts are not themselves graded, they contribute to your grade in two ways: (1) you may use them as evidence that you have achieved a learning objective related to what you write, and (2) you may use them as evidence that you have achieved the learning objectives of "Module 5" (engaging in critical discussion).

Paper: You will write a final paper in this course in which you reflect upon the experiences of a particular family (or family-like social unit) and tie concepts discussed in this class to first-hand accounts of how language and its interactions with social factors (such as race(ism)/ethnicity, class, gender, and Queer identities) have impacted that family over time. You may choose to report on your own family/chosen family, or another family or similarly organized social unit that you chose for the project. The family can be in/from the US, or from elsewhere. You must include data collected through interviews with at least two individuals from different generations within that family, as well as one primary source document relating a first-hand account relevant for your analysis. You should submit a project proposal before conducting interviews and other research so that I can make sure that your project will meet the requirements for success in this class. It is worth noting that this project may require difficult conversations and reflections; I am more than happy to provide support as needed and to guide you as you collect data for the project.

Detailed instructions will be provided for the final paper, as well as each of the checkpoints leading up to it. The paper should be double spaced, Times New Roman (or similar) with 1-inch margins, 6-8 pages in length and will be submitted to bCourses online.

Participation: You should come to class having done the readings and having engaged in discussion on the discussion post. Participation may include asking questions, volunteering answers, actively working in small groups, engaging effectively in peer review, respectfully listening to both me and your fellow students, and meeting with me outside of class. Each of us has our own ways of learning best, and I would like to be respectful of these different learning styles. If you have any questions about your participation, please let me know in office hours or via email.

Readings and bCourses: All assignments, resources, and announcements will be posted to the bCourses website. Be sure to check these updates regularly. All readings (except for the book *American Nations* by Woodard) will be made available on bCourses or will be available through the library eBooks services.

Office Hours and Email: Office hours are useful for asking questions regarding course material, assignments, or simply chatting about your interests. I am also more than happy to correspond via email. Please allow 48 hours for a response, and note that I may not respond to emails sent on Friday afternoon until Monday.

Grade Disputes and Academic Integrity: If you wish to dispute a grade you have received, please submit your dispute *in writing* within one week of when I returned the grade to you. Indicate clearly each issue you wish to dispute. I will then carefully go over it. Please note that your grade may go up or down after your assignment is reviewed.

All work you turn in must be your own; plagiarism in any form will be penalized accordingly. All assignments will be checked for plagiarism against Turnitin. If you discuss your work with others, you must acknowledge them appropriately (either by citations, footnotes, or written at the top of your work). See more here:

<http://sa.berkeley.edu/code-of-conduct>

<http://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/academic-misconduct-intro/>

Accommodations: Special accommodations are provided for students with documented disabilities. For more information, or to obtain an official letter of accommodation, contact the Disabled Students' Program (<http://www.dsp.berkeley.edu/>). Resources are also available for students who are struggling either academically or personally. The Students Learning Center (<http://slc.berkeley.edu>) offers free workshops on study skills and time management. Counseling and Psychological Services provides free and timely consultations; during business hours call (510) 642-9494 or after hours (855) 817-5667. As your instructor, I am legally obligated to report instances of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and so while I can offer support, I cannot promise confidentiality. Confidential advocates are available at the PATH to Care Center (510) 642-1988.

Throughout the course, we will discuss potentially difficult, triggering, and controversial topics, particularly violent histories that have occurred in the US and instances of discrimination. I will do my best to announce potentially upsetting topics in advance, and I also invite you to bring any concerns that you may have about course content or discussions to me, in person or via email. At the beginning of the term, we will establish Community Norms for maintaining a respectful environment. However, it is likely that we may have conflicts arise throughout the term. My goal is for us to be able to talk through those conflicts and come to an understanding of what was harmful, why, and how we might move forward in the future. You are also invited to bring any issues to other Linguistics faculty who may be able to help, such as Prof. Keith Johnson (Department Chair, keithjohnson@berkeley.edu), Prof. Eve Sweetser (Head Equity Advisor, sweetser@berkeley.edu), or Prof. Peter Jenks (Head Undergraduate Advisor, jenks@berkeley.edu). You can also contact the student Ombuds office (sa.berkeley.edu/ombuds) for confidential advice or the Academic Accommodations Hub (evcp.berkeley.edu/programs-resources/academic-accommodations-hub) to talk to someone who is not an instructor.

Assignments and Grade Distribution

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-------------|
| Achievement of learning objectives | 60% | Throughout |
| Module 1 learning objectives | | June 2 |
| Module 2 learning objectives | | June 16 |
| Module 3 learning objectives | | June 24 |
| Module 4 learning objectives | | July 1 |
| Module 5 learning objectives | | July 2 |
| Final paper (6-8 pages) | 40% | Finals week |
| Paper proposal | | TBA |
| Project family history | | TBA |
| Final draft | | July 1 |
| Presentations | | July 1 & 2 |

Course Calendar

Note: Any changes will be announced on the bCourses site; readings and assignments are due on the day listed. I reserve the right to change weekly, but I will honor the grade distribution in the table above.

MODULE 1: Native languages in the US

- Tuesday, May 26: *Introduction to the languages of North America*
 - Learning objective: (1.1) Describe the linguistic landscape of North America before the arrival of Europeans; (1.2) Compare and contrast linguistic features of North American indigenous languages and European languages
 - Readings: Mithun (1999) Introduction; Hinton (1994), Chapter 1-5, 17; *Note: begin reading Woodard (2011) this week if possible, as the reading load next week is fairly heavy*
 - Consider: What languages were spoken throughout North America before colonization? What did that linguistic diversity look like? How did it reflect cultural diversity and similarity?
- Wednesday, May 27: *Indigenous peoples and the University of California*
 - Learning objective: (1.3) Relate the history of the founding of the University of California, Berkeley to ongoing issues in the Berkeley area
 - Readings: Garrett et al. (2019); Piatote (2019), Falling Crows
 - Consider: Reflect on your position as a student at this university. How do your actions and your presence within this campus community relate to the colonial history of this place?
- Thursday, May 28 *Revitalization & reclamation of indigenous languages*
 - Learning objective: (1.4) Explore how language revitalization and reclamation projects contest, incorporate, and leverage colonial structures in the US
 - Readings: Hinton, Huss, and Roche (2018); “We still live here” (56 minute documentary) (McCarthy & Humenuk, 2010)
 - Consider: What narratives have been told about indigenous language preservation, reclamation, and loss? How do the framings of these narratives (i.e. whether they focus on ‘loss,’ ‘preservation,’ ‘growth,’ etc.) impact speakers and learners?
- Monday, June 1: *A closer look at specific languages*
 - Learning objective: (1.5) Compare and contrast the general historical and linguistic descriptions covered in this unit with a specific case of a language indigenous to the US
 - Reading: begin reading Woodard (2011) (we will not be discussing this today in class, but I encourage you to begin reading, as the load for next week is quite heavy)

- Consider: In what ways is the specific history of the group you are learning about reflective of the national trends that we have discussed, and in what ways is it unique? What factors may have led to the specific outcomes and approaches to language used in this situation?

MODULE 2: **Settler colonial languages in the US**

- Tuesday, June 2: *Introduction to Language in America*
 - Learning objective: (2.1) Identify key concepts in linguistics used in studying dialects, including differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical forms
 - Readings: Davies and Dubinsky (2018), chapters 1, 2, 4 (chapter 3 optional)
 - Consider: What differentiates a language from a dialect? What linguistic features might we consider when determining how similar or different language varieties are from one another? What social factors would also influence our decision to call language varieties ‘languages’ or ‘dialects’?
- Wednesday, June 3: *The (multiple) foundings of what is now known as the US*
 - Learning objective: (2.2) Identify key social and linguistic features of the “American Nations” described by Woodard
 - Reading: Woodard (2011), Introduction & Chapters 1-8
 - Consider: How does Woodard’s description of the founding of the US compare to what you’ve previously learned about the founding of the US? Are there any social, cultural, or linguistic groups that you hadn’t heard of before, or that you see are missing from Woodard’s account?
- Thursday, June 4: *Yankeedom, New Netherlands, and Tidewater*
 - Learning objective: (2.3) Describe the role of languages other than English (particularly German, French, and Spanish) in the early formation of what would become the US
 - Reading: Woodard (2011), Chapters 9-18
 - Consider: Given what we’ve read and discussed, how would you respond to someone who claimed that English is **the** language of the US? Would you agree or disagree, and what evidence would you use to back up your claim?
- Monday, June 8: *The Deep South, Midlands, and Appalachia*
 - Learning objective: (2.3) Describe the role of languages other than English (particularly German, French, and Spanish) in the early formation of what would become the US
 - Readings: Woodard (2011), Chapters 19-23
 - Consider: Given what we’ve read and discussed, how would you respond to someone who claimed that English is **the** language of the US? Would you agree or disagree, and what evidence would you use to back up your claim?

- Tuesday, June 9: *New France and El Norte*
 - Learning objective: (2.3) Describe the role of languages other than English (particularly German, French, and Spanish) in the early formation of what would become the US
 - Consider: In light of what we’ve read and discussed, are there any place names whose histories are more (or less) clear to you now? What can we learn from examining place names throughout the US?
- Wednesday, June 10: *Building a historical narrative*
 - Learning objective: (2.4) Critically analyze the timeline-focused presentation of the history of the United States in light of alternative narratives about history, time, and place
 - Reading: Erdrich (1985)
 - Consider: How does Erdrich’s article support and contradict Woodard’s claims about the founding of the US? Does reading this article change how you feel about any accounts of US history (whether fiction or non-fiction)? Why/why not?
- Thursday, June 11: *Dialects of US English*
 - Learning objective: (2.5) Use linguistic data and apply concepts from learning objective 1.1 to support and/or refute Woodard’s claims that there are 11 regional ‘nations’ within the US
 - Reading: Wolfram & Schilling (2015), chapter 5; Labov, Ash, and Boberg (2006), Part D, introduction
 - Consider: What data does Labov use to determine which areas share the same dialect of English? To what extent do his conclusions align with Woodard’s claims? In what ways do they problematize Woodard’s claims?

MODULE 3: Slavery and language in the US

- Monday, June 15: *The idea of ‘race’ in the US*
 - Learning objective: (3.1) Explain the socially constructed nature of the concept of race in America by examining how individuals may be classified by others as belonging to different ‘races’ depending on the social context
 - Readings: Smedley (1997); “Brazil in Black and White” from Rough Translation (32 minute podcast) (Warner, n.d.)
 - Consider: How is the concept of ‘race’ enacted differently in Brazil and in the US? What does this difference reveal about the underlying foundation of ‘race’ as a concept?
- Tuesday, June 16: *Language in Education*

- Learning objective: (4.2) Define and apply the concept of ‘raciolinguistic ideology’ to experiences you may have witnessed, heard about, or read about in schools
- Readings: Flores and Rosa (2015)
- Consider: What evidence do Flores & Rosa provide to support their claim that educators’ perceptions of a students’ linguistic competence may be influenced by race or other factors? Are you convinced by these claims? Why/why not?
- Wednesday, June 17: *Language contact resulting from the slave trade*
 - Learning objective: (3.2) Define and provide examples of pidgins and creoles spoken in the US and the social situations in which they were formed
 - Reading: Language Files, files 12.0-12.6
 - Consider: Given the descriptions of the conditions under which pidginization, creolization, and other types of language shift take place, do any of these resemble conditions in the US, in your opinion? Which ones, and how?
- Thursday, June 18: *Pidgins and creoles in the US*
 - Learning objective: (3.2) Define and provide examples of pidgins and creoles spoken in the US and the social situations in which they were formed
 - Readings: Campbell (2011), Drager (2012)
 - Consider: How do the social conditions outlined in Campbell and Drager resemble the discussions presented in Language Files? Have the readings influenced your views on ‘nonstandard’ varieties of English or other English-based languages? Why/why not?
- Monday June 22: *The Great Migration and African American English*
 - Learning objective: (3.3) Provide support for the claim that African American English is a systematic variety of English using linguistic evidence
 - Readings: Wolfram (1998), “Code-switching” (57 minute documentary) available at <https://www.pbs.org/video/whro-documentaries-code-switching/>
 - Consider: What are some of the systematic differences between ‘Standard American English’ and ‘African American English’? Do you see any value of one language variety over the other? Why/why not? How might your views be influenced by factors beyond linguistic ones?
- Tuesday, June 23: *The Ebonics Controversy*
 - Learning objective: (3.4) Support your position with respect to the Ebonics controversy in California based on your understanding of the linguistic circumstances
 - Readings: Applebome (1996); Pullum (1999); Green (2010)
 - Consider: What arguments do supporters and opponents of Ebonics as a separate language use to argue their positions? Which of these arguments are founded in linguistic arguments? Social arguments? Other?

MODULE 4: Current effects of language in the US

- Wednesday, June 24: *Language shift in the US*
 - Learning objective: (4.2) Compare and contrast language shift and maintenance situations across languages indigenous and not indigenous to the US.
 - Reading: Fishman (1991), chapter 7
 - Consider: To what extent to the experiences shared by individuals from indigenous, large-scale, and small-scale immigrant communities in the US share similar trends? In what ways do they diverge?
- Thursday, June 25: *Revisiting race*
 - Learning objective: (4.3) Criticize race as a static concept using historical examples.
 - Readings: Woodard (2011), chapter 23; Sacks (1994)
 - Consider: How have ideas about race in the US changed over time? What social factors have shaped those changes? What has remained the same?
- Monday, June 30: *Language in education*
 - Learning objective: (4.4) Define and apply the concept of ‘raciolinguistic ideology’ to experiences you may have witnessed, heard about, or read about in schools
 - Reading: Wong Fillmore and Snow (2000)
 - Consider: Based on the readings, our discussions, and your own experiences, what do you think should be included in training for teachers in public schools in the US?
- Tuesday, July 1: *Language in the courts*
 - Learning objective: (4.1) Analyze how raciolinguistic ideologies and other types of linguistic biases may affect racialized individuals in contexts outside of the classroom.
 - Reading: Rickford and King (2016)
 - Consider: According to Rickford and King, how was the trial of George Zimmerman affected by the language spoken by those who testified and those who listened? How do these facts relate to our previous discussions about language, ideology, and race?
- Wednesday, July 3 & Thursday, July 4: Paper presentations
 - Learning objective: (5.2) Report findings verbally to an audience and discuss questions or doubts that arise; (5.3) Report an analysis of a topic through writing
 - Assignments: Verbal presentation and written paper

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