

LING 2371-002: Language in Multicultural USA
Tuesday & Thursday 9:30-10:50 a.m.
210 Woolf Hall

Instructor: Darcey Browning
Office: Trimble Hall 217E

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00-3:00 p.m.; by appointment
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Prerequisites: A desire (or need) to learn about language diversity in America.

Required Text: *Language in the USA: Themes for the Twenty-first Century*. Edited by Edward Finegan and John R. Rickford. 2004. Cambridge University Press.

Description of Course Content: This multiculturalism course examines the relationship of language in the U.S.A. to race, ethnicity, class, religion and gender. Topics covered include:

- **Race:** African American English ('Ebonics'), Native American languages, Asian Americans;
- **Ethnicity:** European immigrant language communities, Hispanic Americans, Cajuns, 'Whites';
- **Class:** regional dialects, Jocks and Burnouts;
- **Religion:** Jewish languages, Pennsylvania German, and West Texas and religion;
- **Gender:** "women's language", masculinity, gay and lesbian speech (aka 'Queer Linguistics')
- **American Sign Language and the Deaf Community:** Deaf culture and language

Learning Goals / Objectives: Students who successfully complete LING 2371 should be able to do the following:

- Develop awareness, appreciation and respect for the multitude of cultures in the U.S.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and terms used in analyzing language and social variation
- Differentiate between descriptive and prescriptive approaches and attitudes toward language
- Collect linguistic phenomena for description and analysis (conduct basic research)
- Reflect on different experiences of diversity and multiculturalism

ASSESSMENTS AND CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNING GRADES

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels. The following chart reflects the points assigned for each assignment.

GRADE ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN		
Assignments	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
Exam 1	75	25%
Exam 2	75	25%
Final Project	80	26.67%
Homework	30	10%
Language Journal	30	10%
Participation	10	3.33%

To calculate your own grade, you can use the following:

A 90-100% 270-300 pts.	B 80-89 % 240-269 pts.	C 70-79 % 210-239 pts.	D 60-69 % 180-209 pts.	F 59% or lower 179 pts. or lower
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Description of Major Assignments

Exams. There will be two (2) exams. The exam format will be announced one week prior to each test; formats may change from one exam to the next. (Please see below for exam make-ups.)

Homework. There will be at least six (6) homework assignments. They are worth 5 points each. Homework is due at the beginning of class and **will not** be accepted late.

Language Observation Journal. Students will be required to complete a journal of language behavior/linguistic observation. Your goal is to begin to think critically about the language you hear every day.

- Students must make at least 6 journal entries (in at least 6 different topic areas). Appropriate entries will earn 5 points each, with a maximum of 30 points.
- The file must be saved as a single file ending in .doc or .docx (see me if you have questions with this).
- Contributions should be relevant, respectful, and substantive; for any topic, each entry must be at least 300 words long (failure to meet this word requirement will result in a zero for that entry).
 - Each entry must describe, in detail, a language/dialectal feature or phenomenon you have observed in your daily life (this can be in personal interactions or something you have seen through media). Describe the language feature in detail and give concrete examples. Then, make some generalizations or predictions concerning this observation (Why is it used? Who uses it? Is the variation widespread or limited?).
 - Entries must be original and the observations personal (information reported secondhand will not be accepted).
- There will be a journal checkpoint midway through the semester (October 17) so that I can see if you have been working toward completing your journal. The final, completed journal will be due on **November 26 by 9:30AM** on Blackboard.

Final Project. For your final project, you will be researching a dialect or language spoken in the United States. You may choose any dialect or language that interests you, including ones that have already been discussed (or will be discussed) in class. If you choose a dialect or language covered in this class, you will be expected to go into more depth than what we have discussed. If you choose a dialect or language not covered in this class, you should be sure to research background information about the group that speaks it.

Your final project should include the following information:

- **BRIEF background of speech community**
 - History, geography, ethnicity, etc. that led to the formation of this speech community
 - Who speaks it? When do they speak it? Where do they speak it? etc.
- **BRIEF discussion of any non-linguistic features that are relevant**
- **Linguistic features:**
 - Phonological features
 - How is the pronunciation different from Standard English?
 - Syntactic features
 - How is the sentence structure different from Standard English?
 - Morphological features
 - How are words formed differently than Standard English?
 - Lexical features
 - How is the vocabulary different from Standard English?
 - Pragmatic features
 - How are things like politeness, respect, speech acts accomplished differently from Standard English?

You do not have to include ALL linguistic features in your project. However, you must include at least 2 types of linguistic features. Be sure to give examples with REAL language. In other words, don't just talk about the fact that the dialect/language is different from English. Give language examples to support your claim.

Your Final Project will be presented to the class during the Final Exam time. You may choose to present your project as you see fit, such as PowerPoint, conference-style poster, video, etc. You must have a 1 page handout, and you must have enough copies for your classmates. More information on this will follow. Also, you must cite your sources & include them in your final presentation. The entire Final Project is worth 80 points (26.67%).

Librarian to Contact: Our librarian for linguistics, Jody Bailey, is your friend. She can help you find the best scholarly, authoritative materials you'll need for your research project. Find her at Room 312, Central Library, or contact her at jbailey@uta.edu or 817.272.7516.

The following is the outline of due dates for your project & points per project step:

Week 8 – October 8th

- **5pts** – Paragraph discussing the dialect/language that you have chosen & why you are interested in it. *You should have done a little digging at this point, such as reading the chapter in the book that discusses the dialect/language or doing a Google search.*

Week 11 – October 29th

- **5pts** – List of 3 references. *These should be **reputable** source, as discussed on the assignment sheet for this project. Failure to provide enough sources that are reputable, as defined on the assignment sheet, may result in lower grade. You are free to use your book or internet sites in conjunction with the reputable sources for the final presentation, but all must be listed in the references section. DO NOT use Wikipedia as a source. See Jody Bailey, our librarian, for more help with this.*

Week 13– November 12th

- **5pts** – Notes on what you have found so far on background, non-linguistic and linguistic features. *This is to make sure that you are making progress and not leaving it all until the end.*

Week 15

- **10pts** – Meet with me to show me a rough draft of your presentation & handout.

Week 16 & Final Exam Time – Tuesday, Dec 3 (9:30-10:50 AM) & Thursday, Dec 12 (8AM-10:30 AM)

- **50pts** – Final Project Presentations. Final Projects should be uploaded to Blackboard by 9:30 AM on Dec. 3. This includes the handout, which is mandatory, and optional powerpoint, etc.
- **5pts** – Attendance/Participation on both presentation days. See assignment sheet for details.

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance will be taken in the course. Please be in class on time, ready to begin the day's activities. Students will earn .5 pts towards their participation grade for each class they attend. Two instances of tardiness will count as one absence, which will result in only earning half of the participation points for that day. If you need to leave early or if you think you may have some type of emergency, please speak to me before class begins. Students who leave without doing so will be counted as absent.

Students with no more than 3 absences will be positively rewarded for good attendance. Students who are within 2% (6 pts.) of a higher grade and have 3 absences or fewer (with ALL homeworks

turned in and journal entries completed) will automatically be bumped up to the higher grade. For example, if a student has an 88% (normally a B), has turned in all homework, completed all journal entries and has 3 absences, his/her grade will be raised to a 90% (receiving an A).

Students are responsible for all information and assignments given out in class during the semester. Missing class does not absolve a student of this responsibility. Students should try to exchange email or telephone information with several classmates to have a resource in case of an absence. Failure to hear back on a request for information does not absolve a student from his or her responsibility for assignments or quizzes.

Excused absences include official university activities, military service, and/or religious holidays. Students must inform the instructor in writing at least one week in advance of an excused absence.

Extra Credit and Make-up work. There will be various extra credit opportunities throughout the semester.

Exams. If you miss an exam, you will be allowed to take a make-up only if you can provide written documentation of an extreme and reasonably unforeseeable circumstance (e.g. sudden serious illness, major family crisis, etc.). Should you find yourself in such a predicament, you must contact the instructor by e-mail before 8:00 PM of the exam date to request a make-up. Students who miss an exam but do not notify the instructor as specified herein will receive a grade of zero (0%).

Classroom behavior. Class sessions require your full attention. All cell phones, pagers, iPods, MP3 players, laptops, and other electronic devices should be **turned off and put away when entering the classroom**; all earpieces should be removed. Store homework from other classes, newspapers, crosswords, magazines, bulky bags, and other distractions, so that you can concentrate on the readings and discussions each day.

Note: I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom if you are being disruptive, and this will count as an absence.

According to *Student Conduct and Discipline*, "students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in conduct, either alone or in concert with others, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that in fact obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any instructional, educational, research, administrative, or public performance or other activity authorized to be conducted in or on a University facility. Obstruction or disruption includes, but is not limited to, any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, or computer equipment, software, or networks" (UTA Handbook or Operating Procedures, Ch. 2, Sec. 2-202). Students who do not respect the guidelines listed above or who disrupt other students' learning may be asked to leave class and/or referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

And a further note on civility in the classroom: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave class. Appropriate student behavior (whether online, in person, or over the telephone) creates a better environment for learning and teaching.

Because this class involves topics of multiculturalism and diversity, the professor requests that students choose their language with caution. It is very easy to become emotional in discussing these topics. Do not call names, use an abusive tone, call someone stupid or otherwise insult another person. Slurs or epithets in particular should be avoided whenever possible. Linguistic behavior is one way that

members of different social groups express attitudes; be aware of this at all times in personal conduct. Disruptive or abusive behavior will not be tolerated.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend *at least* an additional 6-7 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

Blackboard. This course will utilize Blackboard this semester. Handouts and other materials will be available via Blackboard, and students will also be using it to submit assignments. Once this course becomes available to students, it can be accessed by logging into the Blackboard website:

<http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/>. Within the first week of class look for an email from your instructor letting you know that you can now access this class on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are able to access Blackboard.

Electronic Communication Policy. All students must have access to a computer with internet capabilities. Students should check email daily for course information and updates. All communication will take place either through MyMav and/or BlackBoard.

I check my email periodically during the school week and occasionally on the weekend. I do not monitor my email 24 hours a day; however, I do try to respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them. If you don't have a response from me by email within 24 hours of sending it, please come see me in class or resend your email as there may be a chance it was lost in cyberspace. (Also, please make sure that you use your MavMail address—not your hotmail, gmail, yahoo, etc. addresses—when emailing me.)

The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University "MavMail" address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are assigned a MavMail account. **Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly.** Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/>. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington.

Syllabus and Schedule Changes. Instructors try to make their syllabuses as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester they may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies/assignments. Instructors reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. Students will be informed of any changes in writing.

Important Academic and Administrative Policies

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the

result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for more information.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364. As a student, your responsibility rests with informing the instructor in writing or email and providing the official documentation from the Office for Students with Disabilities no later than the end of the second week of classes.

Academic Integrity: All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. There is a difference between making a mistake in citation and straight-out copying, of course, but ignorance is a poor excuse. Be forewarned; I will take all possible measures against cheaters and plagiarists.

Safe Assign

By taking this course, students agree that all assignments are subject to submission to Safe Assign, an online plagiarism prevention and detection service provided through Bb. Specifically, this service compares the student's paper with Internet web pages, articles in databases, and all papers previously submitted. In cases of detected plagiarism, the paper and supporting evidence will be handled in compliance with the Student Code of Conduct

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room. From there, students should turn left and proceed down to the end of the hall. The stairs are located near the end of this hallway on the left: proceed down the stairs and straight through exterior doors. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

Auditors: The Department of Linguistics and TESOL has a "no audit" policy. However, with instructor permission, Department of Linguistics and TESOL faculty, staff, and students enrolled in a linguistics/TESOL program may be able to sit in on a course. These courses cannot be used to satisfy any degree or program requirements/electives, nor will any credit (including retroactive credit) be granted.

PROJECTED COURSE SCHEDULE

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

	Class Topic	Assignments and Readings Due
Week 1		
8/22	Course Overview	Download Syllabus from Blackboard or research profile.
Week 2		
8/27	Introduction to Linguistics	Plagiarism Tutorial
8/29	Standard and Non-standard Language	Read: Chapter 15 (Language ideology and language prejudice)
Week 3		
9/3	Social Class	Read: Chapter 4 (Social varieties of American English)
9/5	Jocks and Burnouts	Read: Chapter 19 (Adolescent language) HW 1
Week 4		
9/10	Gender and language	Read: Chapter 22 (Language, gender, and sexuality)
9/12	LGBT language	Read: TBA
Week 5		
9/17	Video: "The Sound and Fury"	HW 2
9/19	American Sign Language (ASL) and the Deaf	Read: Chapter 12 (American Sign Language)
Week 6		
9/24	Digitally Mediated Communication	Read: TBA
9/26	Regional Dialects	Read: Chapter 3 (Regional dialects) and 26 (Language attitudes to speech)
Week 7		
10/1	English in Texas	Read: TBA
10/3	English in Texas	Read: TBA HW 3
Week 8		
10/8	Review	FP Checkpoint 1
10/10	Test 1	Study all material covered up until this point
Week 9		
10/15	Ethnicity: PA German, Cajuns; Jewish Americans	Read: Chapters 7 (Multilingualism and non-English mother tongues) and 14 (Linguistic diversity and English language acquisition)
10/17	Ethnicity	Language Journal Checkpoint
Week 10		
10/22	African Americans and language	Read: Chapters 5 (African American English), 16 (Ebonics and its controversy), and 21 (Hip Hop Nation Language)
10/24	African Americans and language	HW 4
Week 11		
10/29	Latinos and language	Read: Chapters 10 (Spanish in the Northeast) and 11 (Spanish in the Southwest) FP Checkpoint 2
10/31	Latinos and language	HW 5

Week 12		
11/5	White Identity	Read: TBA
11/7	Indigenous Languages	Read: Chapter 9 (Native American languages)
Week 13		
11/12	Asian Americans	Read: Chapter 13 (Asian American voices: language in the Asian American community) FP Checkpoint 3
11/14	Creoles	Read: Chapter 8 (Creole languages: forging new identities) HW 6
Week 14		
11/19	Review	Study all material covered since first test
11/21	Test 2	
Week 15		
11/26	Final Project Workshop	Language Journal Due by 9:30 AM on Blackboard
11/28	No class. Thanksgiving holiday.	
Week 16		
12/3	Final Project Presentations	ALL STUDENTS: mandatory: Upload handout on Blackboard by 9:00 AM. If you are using a powerpoint, also upload it online.
	FP Checkpoint 3	
Final Exam	Thursday, Dec 12 7, 2 - 4:30 p.m. Final Project Presentations (continued)	

Other dates: September 9 - Census date; October 30 - Last day to drop