

English 338 Topics: Playing with Language
WHITE 4281, 11:00-11:50 AM, MWF

General Information

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Office Hours

I will have informal office hours directly after class and official office hours on Tuesday mornings 9am to 10:30am and Thursday afternoons 2pm to 3:30pm. If neither of these times work for you please email or talk to me about setting up a time that works.

Textbooks

There are no assigned textbooks for this course. All course readings will be made available on the Learn@UW web page for this course. The schedule of readings is in the Course Schedule part of this syllabus.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to develop skills in indentifying and analyzing new sources of data from everyday language sources and how to form arguments from them. From these novel sources of data we will then question what we can learn about language, the structure of language and what it is to be human.

Evaluation

Data Squibs (5)	50%
Friday Class	20%
Research Project	30%
Total	100%

Data Squibs (5) 50%

There are six designated *data squib* assignments in the course schedule. For each of these assignments you will choose one of the previous week's topics (no repeats) and document novel data relevant to the topic and provide an analysis of the relevance. Each data squib should be no more than 4 pages (double spaced, 12 point font).

Group Presentation of Data 20%

Each Friday a group (size to be determined by class enrollment) of students will present novel and relevant data along with analysis (similar to the data squibs above) based on the weeks topic. The group is responsible for running the entire class and the content being presented.

Research Project 30%

The research project will consist of a short research paper (at least 12 pages double spaced) due on the last day of class (May 11th), presentation of the research paper to the class (during the last

two weeks of class), an abstract for the project due on March 2nd and a group evaluation by each member (if relevant). This project should present novel data and analysis of some form of language play as developed in this class.

There will be five research groups and thus should consist of between 3 and 5 students with the work involved in the project distributed in an equitable manner. Each member of the group will write a short (1 page single space) summary and evaluation of the other members contribution to the project. The spirit of this evaluation is to encourage as much equity of work in the project as possible and the evaluations will be used by me to determine aspects of the group project grade. The usual case is that there is equal amount of work by each member thus everyone in the group will receive the same grade. If the evaluations point to a situation where particular members contribute more or less to the project than other members then I will adjust the grades accordingly.

MA and PhD students registered for this course will be responsible for individual research projects. The page guidelines for the paper are the same but the presentation of the work will be shorter. There will be one designated day for individual presentations.

Academic Misconduct

Please make sure that you are familiar with UW's Academic Misconduct Policy which you can read at:

<http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct/uws14.htm>

NO ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT WILL BE TOLERATED.

Class Attendance

Regular class attendance is assumed to be standard behavior. IF YOU DO NOT ATTEND CLASS YOU WILL NOT DO WELL. Please inform me as soon as possible about missing any classes so arrangements can be made for you to make up any missed materials.

Learn@UW

Additional materials will be posted to the Learn@UW course site for this course. Make sure you are able to log into Learn@UW to get these extra materials. This is your responsibility.

Course Schedule

Week 1 **Jan. 22-26** *Introduction and Administrative Issues*

Week 2 **Jan. 29-Feb 2** *Observations about language*

Adams, M. (2000) Ephemeral speech. *American Speech* 75:382-384.

Bucholtz, M. (2000) Language and youth culture. *American Speech* 75:280-283.

Green, J. (1998) Language: Its a dirty job... *Critical Quarterly* 40(3):104-107.

Milroy, J. (1998) Bad grammar is slovenly. In Bauer, L. and Trudgill, P. (eds.) *Language Myths*. Penguin Books. pp. 94-102.

Week 3 **Feb 5-9** *Language Play in the Media*

FRIDAY FEB 9TH- DATA SQUIB #1 DUE

- LeClerc, F., Schmitt, B. H. and Dube, L. (1994) Foreign branding and its effects on product perceptions and attitudes. *Journal of Market Research* 31:263-270.
- Leigh, J. H. (1994) The use of Figures of speech in print ad headlines. *Journal of Advertising* 23(2):17-33.
- McLuhan, M. (1960) The media is the message. *Forum* 3(4):19-24.

Week 4 **Feb 12-16** *Slang*

Cooper, T. C. (2001) "Does It Suck?" Or "Is It For The Birds?" Native Speaker Judgment Of Slang Expressions. *American Speech* 76(1):62-78.

Kiesling, S. F. (2004) Dude. *American Speech* 79(3):281-305.

Week 5 **Feb 19-23** *The Internet*

FRIDAY FEB 23RD- DATA SQUIB #2 DUE

- Lewin, B. A. and Donner, Y. (2002) Communication in Internet message boards. *English Today* 71(3):29-37.
- Cheater, A. P. (2006) Beyond meatspace- or geeking out in English. *English Today* 85(22):18-28.

Week 6 **Feb 26-Mar 2** *Offensive Language*

Adams, M. (2002) Teaching "Bad" American English. *Journal of English Linguistics* 30(4):353-365.

Jay, T. (1992) Chapter 4- The frequency of dirty words. In *Cursing in America: A psycholinguistic study of dirty language in the courts, in the movies, in the schoolyards and in the streets*. John Benjamins Publishing. pp.111-157.

Preston, K. and Stanley, K. (1987) "What's the worst thing...?" Gender directed insults. *Sex Roles* 17:209-219.

Week 7 **Mar 5-9** *Verbal Duelling*

FRIDAY MAR 9TH- DATA SQUIB #3 DUE

Abrahams, R. D. (1962) "Playing the dozens" *Journal of American Folklore* 75(297):209-220.

Lefever, H. G. (1981) "Playing the dozens": A mechanism for social control. *Phylon* 42(1):73-85.

Schwebel, D. C. (1997) Strategies of verbal duelling: How college students win a verbal battle. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 16(3):326-343.

Week 8 **Mar 12-16** *Jokes*

Attardo, S. (1990) The violation of Grice's maxims in jokes. In Hall, K., Koenig, J-P., Meacham, M., Reinman, S. and Sutton, L. A. (eds.) *Proceedings from the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*. Berkeley Linguistics Society.

Deckers, L. and Avery, P. (1994) Altered joke endings and a joke structure schema. *Humor* 7(4):313-321.

Grice, H. P. (1975) Logic and conversation. In Cole, P. and Morgan, J. L. (eds.) *Syntax and semantics, vol 3, Speech Acts*. New York:Academic Press. pp. 41-58.

Week 9 **Mar 19-23** *Ludlings*
FRIDAY MAR 23RD- DATA SQUIB #4 DUE

- Hauptman, D. (2002) Moose laurels: New spoonerisms, pt. 1. *Word Ways: The Journal of Recreational Linguistics*. 35(3):183-85.
- Idsardi, W. and Raimy, E. (2005) Remarks on language play. Ms. University of Maryland and Swarthmore College.
- Sherzer, J. (1982) Play languages: With a note on ritual languages. In Olber, L. K. and Menn, L. (eds) *Exceptional language and linguistics*. Academic Press. pp. 175-199.
- Witte, K. L., Freund, J. S. and Csiki, I. (2002) Case-mixing effects on anagram solution. *The Journal of General Psychology* 129(2):117-126.

Week 10 **Mar 26-30** *Identity on the Internet*

- Groom, C. J. and Pennebaker, J. W. (2005) The language of love: Sex, sexual orientation, and language use in online personal advertisements. *Sex Roles* 52(7/8):447-461.
- Huffaker, D. A. and Calvert, S. L. (2005) Gender, identity and language use in teenage blogs. *Journal of computer mediated communication* 10(2)
<http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue2/huffaker.html>
- Warschauer, M. (2000) Language, identity and the internet. In Kolko, B., Nakamura, L. and Rodman, G. B. *Race in cyberspace*. New York:Routledge. pp. 151-170.

Week 11 **Apr 2-6** **SPRING BREAK**

Week 12 **Apr 9-13** *Metrics-Classical*

- Fabb, N. (1999) Verse constituency and the locality of alliteration. *Lingua* 108:223-245.
- Fabb, N. and Halle, M. (2006) Metrical complexity in Christina Rossetti's Verse. *College Literature* 33(2):91-114.
- Kiparsky, P. (1973) The role of linguistics in a theory of poetry. *Dædalus* 102(3):231-244.

Week 13 **Apr 16-20** *Metrics-Old School*

FRIDAY 4/20- DATA SQUIB #5 DUE
Analysis based on Week 12 readings- likely to be Beck, Phish...

Week 14 **Apr 23-27** *Metrics-New School*

Analysis based on Week 12 readings- likely to be Beck, Eminem...

Week 15 **Apr 30- May 4**

PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Week 16 **May 7-11**

PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Friday 5/11 Graduate Individual Presentations
LAST CLASS- Group Projects Due