

Language and Gender

English 301/Linguistics 394

TTh 10:10-11:30, 1360 EH

<Course website available on CTools>

Instructor Information

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We check email Monday through Friday, 8:00 – 5:00. You can generally expect a response within 24 hours, often sooner.

GSI:	Casie LeGette	Renée Echols
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Course Description

The relationship between language and gender has been a widely researched and debated topic in sociolinguistics, English language studies, and linguistic anthropology since the early 1970s when Robin Lakoff published *Language and Woman's Place*. And the topic sparks lively conversations outside the academy as well. At the most basic level, do men and women really speak differently? Are they represented differently in the language itself? We will re-examine these questions in light of some of the more complex questions that researchers have considered with respect to the relationship of language and gender, such as: How do patterns of speaking and interpreting reflect, perpetuate, and create our experience of gender? How does gender interact with sexual identity, race, class, socioeconomic status, age, occupational and social/familial roles, institutional settings, and other factors in terms of how we speak? Does gender connect to language change? What do controversies about sexism and other biases in language suggest about the connections between language, thought, and socially situated political struggles? In this course, we will explore these questions and integrate a variety of approaches in working toward an understanding of the relationship(s) between language and gender. No background in linguistics is required; a genuine interest in the workings and power of language is highly recommended.

Required Texts (books available at Shaman Drum)

- Coates, Jennifer, ed. 1998. *Language and Gender: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bucholtz, Mary, and Kira Hall, eds. 1995. *Gender Articulated*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Coursepack. Available on Electronic Reserves and at Dollar Bill Copying, 611 Church St.

Grading and Requirements

Weekly responses	25%
Data collection paper	20%
Discourse analysis paper	20%
Short literature review	10%
Final exam	20%
Participation/Section grade	5%

Work Commitments

Weekly written responses

Throughout the term, you will be writing 1-2 page, single-spaced papers in response to the readings and/or questions that we pose. Some of these assignments will build toward the longer papers; some of them will be useful for our discussions of the material. Written responses will be graded on a scale of 1-5 in the following way: 5=Outstanding; 4=Very good; 3=Fine; 2=Fair; 1=Weak; 0=Incomplete. If you work hard on these assignments and write them well, you should expect to receive a 4; we reserve the 5 for written responses that are in some way outstanding. We will announce the topic of the response papers during lecture and then post them to the CTools web site. Responses will be due as noted on the schedule. Renée's students should post the responses to the CTools site by 10:00 AM (i.e., before class) that day; Casie's students should bring hard copies of the responses to class. We will generally not accept late response papers. We will drop your two lowest response grades.

Individual data collection paper (due Feb. 3)

Everyone will conduct an investigative project involving the collection, analysis and discussion of linguistic data. The paper will be approximately 4-5 pages (1½-spaced), and it will focus on lexical items related to gender, such as derogatory terms for men and women, politically correct terms for particular groups, or taboo gendered terms. You will receive a handout with more details.

Discourse analysis paper (due March 31)

You will record a conversation involving either a mixed-sex or a same-sex group of up to 4 speakers. You will transcribe approximately 5 minutes of the conversation and write an approximately 4-5 page paper (1½-spaced) providing a description and analysis of the data in relation to the scholarship we will read. You will receive a handout with more details.

Short literature review (due Feb. 24)

You will be asked to write a 2-3 page essay summarizing and synthesizing three scholarly journal articles dealing with an issue related to language and gender. More specific information will be provided closer to the due date.

Final exam (April 24)

The final exam will be cumulative, covering both material in the assigned readings and material discussed in class. Attendance at the final exam is mandatory; there will be no make-up exam without written documentation of illness or a family emergency. If you know of a conflict that will make it impossible for you to take the exam, you must contact one of us as soon as possible.

Class Participation:

Participation is vital to your success in this class. If you are not present, you can't participate. We are very open as to what counts as participation. Talking in class is only one type of participation; there are others (such as talking with us privately or posting lively discussion posts). We will occasionally give quizzes during lecture, which will be factored into the participation grade.

】 Please turn off all cell phones and beepers before class begins.

Attendance

Attendance at your section meetings is required. More than two absences will result in your final grade being lowered. (The only exception is a documented extended illness; please stay in touch with us if you find yourself in these circumstances.) We give you these absences because we know that sometimes "life happens" and you have to miss a class. Use them wisely if you must use them. Your attendance at "lecture" (which will often be as much discussion as lecture) is in every way expected. This class rests on the premise that you are taking responsibility for your own education and will attend class to participate fully in this learning community.

Time Protocol

All of our time is valuable and, as we all know, none of us ever has enough! We expect you to come to class and section on time. In return, we promise to make every effort to end class on time. We also expect you to turn in your papers on time; except for exceptional circumstances, we will not accept late work. You will typically turn these in to the GSIs in class; if you cannot be present in class, you must turn in the assignment BEFORE class by leaving it in the GSIs' department mailbox.

E-mail

We are delighted to hear from you on e-mail; e-mail can be a great way to ask a quick question, share a comment, and/or make an appointment to visit. If you have a long, complicated question, please come visit during office hours or make an appointment to come talk with one of us.

Plagiarism

You should be fully aware of the University's policies on scholastic dishonesty. When scholastic dishonesty is detected on any written assignment or exam, you will receive a zero. Further, the matter may be turned over to the Dean of Student Academic Affairs for inquiry, with a recommendation of 'E' for the course. You should be particularly aware of plagiarism. **Plagiarism** is a form of cheating in which you use someone else's ideas and/or words (including those of your roommate, classmate, parent, significant other, etc.) without proper citation of the source. It is plagiarism regardless of whether the material comes from a printed source, from the Internet or from a lecture or a friend: if you got the idea from someone else, you must cite the source properly—and this is true even if you aren't using the source's exact wording. Please read the English Department's web page on plagiarism carefully (<<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/plagNote.asp>>) as well as LS&A's policies on academic misconduct (<<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/saa/standards/acadjudic.html>>). If you have any questions about how to reference material or about what constitutes plagiarism, please come see us or either of the GSIs.

Documented Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that requires special accommodations, please contact one of us at the beginning of the semester so that the proper arrangements can be made.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Jan. 5 Introduction and Housekeeping
Why study language and gender?

Week 2: Fundamentals in the Study of Language and Gender

Jan. 10 Key concepts in the systematic study of language
Read for class: Lippi-Green (Chapter 1)
Response #1 due

Jan. 12 Key concepts in the study of language and gender
Read: Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (Chapter 1)

Week 3: Gender, Grammar, and the Lexicon

Jan. 17 The gender-neutral pronoun question
Read: Bodine; Baron
Response #2 due

Jan. 19 The gendered lexicon
Read: Sutton (*GA*); Hines

Week 4: Gender, Grammar, and the Lexicon (cont.)

Jan. 24 The taboo lexicon
Read: Cameron
Response #3 due

Jan. 26 Gender in the dictionary
Read: Treichler; Brown and Kitzinger

WEEK 5: Gender, persuasion, and power

Jan. 31 Textbooks, advertising, and gender
Read: Talbot (*GA*); Mills; Macaulay and Brice
Response #4 due

Feb. 2 Gender and questions of power
Read: Gal (*GA*)

** Feb. 3 DATA COLLECTION PAPER DUE

Week 6: Case Studies: How gender and power play themselves out

Feb. 7 Case Study 1: The medical profession
Read: West (*LG*); Trix and Psenga

Feb. 9 Case Study 2: The Clarence Thomas hearings
Read: Lakoff; Smitherman (1/2 the class); Mendoza-Denton (*GA*; 1/2 the class)
Response #5 due

Week 7: Gender and Language Variation

Feb. 14 Sociolinguistic studies
Read: Cheshire (*LG*); Trudgill (*LG*)
Response #6 due

Feb. 16 Sociolinguistic studies
Read: Nichols (*LG*); Eckert (*LG*)

Week 8: Explanations: Difference Models

Feb. 21 Difference models, part 1
Read: Tannen (*LG*); Maltz and Borker (*LG*)
Response #7 due

Feb. 23 Difference models, part 2
Read: Brown (*LG*); Holmes (*LG*)

** Feb. 24 SHORT LITERATURE REVIEW DUE

Week 9: Explanations: Dominance Models

March 7 Dominance models, part 1
Read: O'Barr and Atkins (*LG*); DeFrancisco (*LG*); Fishman
Response #8 due

March 9 Dominance models, part 2
Homework due: Herring (*GA*); McIlhenny (*GA*)

Week 10: Same-Sex Talk

March 14 Same-sex talk: Men talking with men
Read: Cameron; Kiesling
Response #9 due

March 16 Same-sex talk: Women talking with women
Read: Coates (*LG*); Holmes (*LG*)

Week 11: Language in Families and Communities

March 21 Language socialization
Read: Ochs and Taylor (*GA*); Goodwin (*LG*)
Response #10 due

March 23 Language, gender, and ethnicity
Read: Morgan; Moonwomon (*GA*)

Week 12: Language, Gender, and Diversity

March 28 Language, gender, and ethnicity (cont.)
Read: Bucholtz (*GA*); Velazquez (*GA*)
Response #11 due

March 30 Language, gender, and multilingualism
Read: Gal (*LG*); Kulick

** March 31 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

Week 13: Language, Gender, and Sexuality

April 4 Language, gender, and sexuality
Read: Barrett; Queen
Response #12 due

April 6 Language, gender, and sexuality
Read: Thorne and Coupland; Gaudio

Week 14: Language, Gender, and Desire

April 11 Language, gender, and desire
Read: Hall; Eckert
Response #13 due

April 13 Language, gender, and desire
Read: Deignan; Channel

Week 15: Wrapping It All Up

April 18 Where do we go from here?
Read: Bergvall and Bing (*LG*); Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (*LG*)

April 24, 4:00-6:00 PM FINAL EXAM

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Coursepack: Table of Contents**

- Baron, Dennis. 1986. "Chapter 10: The Word That Failed." In his *Grammar and Gender*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 190-216. (1-16)
- Barrett, Rusty. 1995. "Supermodels of the World, Unite!: Political Economy and the Language of Performance Among African-American Drag Queens." In W. L. Leap (ed.), *Beyond the Lavender Lexicon: Authenticity, Imagination, and Appropriation in Lesbian and Gay Languages*. Luxembourg: Gordon and Breach. 207-226. (17-38)
- Bodine, Ann. 1990 [1975]. "Androcentrism in Prescriptive Grammar: Singular 'they', Sex-indefinite 'he', and 'he or she'." In D. Cameron (ed.), *The Feminist Critique of Language: A Reader*. London/New York: Routledge. 166-186. (39-51)
- Braun, Virginia, and Celia Kitzinger. 2001. "Telling it Straight: Dictionary Definitions of Women's

- Genitals." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5/2: 214-232. (53-71)
- Cameron, Deborah. 1992. "Naming of Parts: Gender, Culture, and Terms for the Penis among American College Students." *American Speech* 67/4: 367-382 (73-88)
- Channell, Joanna. 1997. "'I just called to say I love you': Love and Desire on the Telephone." In K. Harvey and C. Shalom (eds.), *Language and Desire: Encoding Sex, Romance and Intimacy*. London/New York: Routledge. 143-169. (89-117)
- Deignan, Alice. 1997. "Metaphors of Desire." In K. Harvey and C. Shalom (eds.), *Language and Desire: Encoding Sex, Romance and Intimacy*. London/New York: Routledge. 21-43. (119-142)
- Eckert, Penelope. 2002. "Demystifying Sexuality and Desire." In K. Campbell-Kibler, R. J. Podesva, S. J. Roberts, and A. Wong (eds.), *Language and Sexuality: Contesting Meaning in Theory and Practice*. Stanford: CSLI. 99-110. (143-156)
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- Fishman, Pamela. 1983. "Interaction: The Work Women Do." In B. Thorne, C. Kramarae, and N. Henley (eds.), *Language, Gender, and Society*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle. 89-101. (199-216)
- Gaudio, Rudolf P. 1997. "Not Talking Straight in Hausa." In A. Livia and K. Hall (eds.), *Queerly Phrased: Language, Gender, and Sexuality*. New York/Oxford: Oxford UP. 416-29. (217-230)
- Hines, Caitlin. 1999. "Rebaking the Pie: The WOMAN AS DESSERT Metaphor." In M. Bucholtz, A. C. Liang, and L. A. Sutton (eds.), *Reinventing Identities: The Gendered Self in Discourse*. New York/Oxford: Oxford UP. 145-163. (231-250)
- Kiesling, Scott. 2004. "Dude." *American Speech* 79/3: 281-305. (251-275)
- Kulick, Don. 1992. "Anger, Gender, Language Shift and the Politics of Revelation in a Papua New Guinean Village." *Pragmatics* 2.3: 281-296. (277-294)
- Lakoff, Robin. 2000. "Mad, Bad, and Had: The Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas Narrative(s)." In her *The Language War*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 118-157. (295-336)
- Lippi-Green, Rosina "Chapter 1: The Linguistic Facts of Life." In her *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States*. London/New York: Routledge. 7-41. (337-376)
- Macaulay, Monica, and Colleen Brice. 1997. "Don't touch my Projectile: Gender Bias and Stereotyping in Syntactic Examples." *Language* 73/4: 798-825. (377-404)
- Mills, Sara. 1995. "Conclusions." In her *Feminist Stylistics*. London; New York: Routledge. 198-202. (405-411)
- Morgan, Marcyliena. 1999. "No Woman No Cry: Claiming African American Women's Place." In M. Bucholtz, A. C. Liang, and L. A. Sutton (eds.), *Reinventing Identities: The Gendered Self in Discourse*. New York/Oxford: Oxford UP. 27-46. (413-433)
- Queen, Robin M. 1997. "'I Don't Speak Spritch': Locating Lesbian Language." In A. Livia and K. Hall (eds.), *Queerly Phrased: Language, Gender, and Sexuality*. New York/Oxford: Oxford UP. 233-256. (435-460)
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- Treichler, Paula. 1989. "From Discourse to Dictionary: How Sexist Meanings Are Authorized." In F. W. Frank and P. A. Treichler (eds.), *Language, Gender, and Professional Writing: Theoretical Approaches and Guidelines for Nonsexist Usage*. New York: MLA. 51-79. (507-537)
- Trix, Frances, and Carolyn Psenka. 2003. "Exploring the Color of Glass: Letters of Recommendation for Female and Male Medical Faculty." *Discourse and Society* 14/2: 191-220. (539-568)