

SOSC 19054: Colonization 3

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Class website: <https://canvas.uchicago.edu/courses/10271>

Office hours: By appointment only.

“In 1492, in the introduction to his Gramática, the first grammar of a modern European tongue, Antonio de Nebrija writes that language has always been the partner (“compañera”) of empire. And in the ceremonial presentation of the volume to Queen Isabella, the bishop of Avila, speaking on the scholar’s behalf, claimed a still more central role for language. When the queen asked flatly, “What is it for?” the bishop replied, “Your Majesty, language is the perfect instrument of empire.” (Greenblatt 1990: 17)

Description of the Course

This course will provide students with a focused analysis of an important, but often under-emphasized source of colonial power and transformation – the role of language and linguistic analysis. From early attempts at organizing what seemed a cacophony of unstructured sound to later attempts at creating ethnolinguistically unified nations during decolonization to post-colonial reconfigurations of global languages, the course will examine languages and language study as primary media of domination and resistance in colonial regimes via an examination of linguistic conflict and rights across the globe.

Readings

- Davies, William D. and Stanley Dubinsky. To appear. *Language Conflict and Language Rights: Ethnolinguistic Perspectives on Human Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (LCLR)
- Readings are available in electronic form (PDF) on Canvas (<https://canvas.uchicago.edu/courses/14855>).

Evaluation

Class participation and posting questions and comments	25%
Journal assignments	25%
Data mining assignment	25%
Case-study presentation	25%
Extra credit: Personal names research/report	5%

Journal assignment (25%)

This assignment requires that you submit two journal entries. Each will involve a two-page (at least 500 words) observation on some aspect of language related to the subject matter of the class. Your **FIRST** journal assignment should be introspective. You should reflect upon your own experiences, recent or past, and report what you remember and what you learned from them. Your **SECOND** journal assignment will be outwardly focused. You will observe linguistic interactions between yourself and others, between those around you, or from your observations of radio, television, and newspapers, and you will report what you observe.

In writing your observations, you will reflect on the cultural and moral values that underlie the situations and issues that you are reporting and reflecting on. You will articulate why and in what ways community values, ethics, and notions of social responsibility matter to the issue at hand. And you will consider how values shape personal and community ethics and decision-making.

For instance, you might recount how an English speaker was (or was not) accommodated at a coffee shop in Hong Kong (or a non-native speaker of English) was (or was not) accommodated in a school you once

attended). You might try to understand why the barista or the teacher involved made decisions that they did about language use in that situation. You might then reflect on how concepts learned in this class could have better informed those involved, and how their decisions might have been impacted if they had been so informed.

Data mining assignment (25%)

In preparing for your presentation, you will complete a data mining assignment. This assignment will teach you to find sources of information appropriate to an issue, to evaluate information and information sources on the basis of credibility, reliability, bias, and currency, and to effectively report on information collected and evaluated in this manner.

You will need to find two articles relevant to your topic. One article should be “objective” (e.g., news articles, academic journal articles, etc.) and one should be polemical (e.g., advocacy, websites, opinion columns, official government websites, etc.). You will find articles pertaining to the topic of your group’s case study presentation. For instance, if your topic is the language conflict between Slovakia and that country’s Hungarian minority, you might find a news story about the imposition of Slovak as an official language upon the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, and also find an official Hungarian government reaction to this situation.

You will need to work with other members of your group to insure that two (or more) people don’t report on the same articles (if two students submit a report on an identical article, each student will receive 50% credit for that part of the assignment).

You will submit a 2-3 page report on what you have found. The report should include, for each of the two articles:

- A proper citation: title, author, source, and date.
- A summary of the content (250-500 words each)
- An evaluation of the source (250 words giving information about the author; e.g., what is their background and expertise, what is their agenda, how current is the information presented, what sources do they cite, how much of the piece is presented as fact and how much is presented as opinion, who is the intended audience, etc.)
- A working URL (must be a URL that will allow anyone to click through to the article itself.)

Case-study presentation (25%)

Students will volunteer (or be assigned) to research and make a presentation upon a particular language conflict. The research topics will be drawn from a list of case studies circulated to the class, and these will be organized as a debate between two sides. Each presentation will involve students representing one side of the conflict (for instance, if the topic were the French-English conflict in Quebec, there would be a student presentation on the French majority/government perspective and a student presentation on the English language minority perspective). The presentations on a given topic will involve:

- Two 15 minute Powerpoint presentations, researched and developed by the students assigned to each side.
- 15 minutes of Q&A following the two presentations.

Students will submit a single Powerpoint file for each presentation, with names of those presenting on title page.

Each student will submit, separately, a summary of their own contribution to the presentation (failure to do this will result in a grade of 50% for the assignment). Students are required to attend all presentations, and to provide their own short evaluation and grade of the presentations they hear on a given day (failure to be present for other students presentations will reduce a students own presentation grade by 5% for each presentation missed).

Participation (25%)

This includes attendance, preparedness (doing the readings before each lecture), and active participation in class discussion.

As part of the class participation requirement, students are required to submit at least one discussion question or comment prior to each lecture, based on the readings for that lecture. These must be received by 9:00 pm on the day before the lecture. Discussion questions and comments less than 100 words will receive 1/2 credit. Questions and comments received within 12 hours after the deadline will receive 1/2 credit. Submission more than 12 hours late will receive no credit.

Some general guidelines:

- Your contribution should be, each time, at least 100 words.
- Your entry should make an insightful point or critique or raise a thought-provoking question.
- Students' comments will be accessible to the whole class.

Extra credit: Personal name assignment (5%)

Students who choose to complete this assignment will research and report upon the origins and meanings of their own given and family names, and on the origins and meanings of their parents given and family names. The report should be at least two pages, and not more than three.

Grading scale

4.0 = A, 3.7 = A-, 3.3=B+, 3.0 = B, 2.7 = B-, 2.3 = C+, 2.0 = C, 1.7 = C-, 1.3 = D+, 1.0 = D, F = 0.

Academic honesty and collaboration

You are encouraged to work together, but are expected to do your own work and acknowledge use of anyone else's work or ideas. Academic dishonesty includes: (a) copying another student's work or letting another student copy your work and (b) copying passages or ideas directly from another source and passing them off as your own; that is, without properly referencing them. Each student must write up her/his assignment independently; copying and pasting is not allowed.

If you decide to collaborate with others, please describe the nature of this collaboration, whether in the capacity of having your assignment proofread, receiving assistance with the analysis, or simply 'throwing around ideas'. A brief sentence at the top of your assignment will be sufficient. You will not be 'marked down' if you received assistance, but it is important to acknowledge those who have directly helped you develop your ideas.

Tentative Schedule (Subject to change)

See the References section for bibliographic details of the readings.

Unit	Topics
1.	May 7: Language and colonial governance: administration, missionization, and linguistic science <i>Required readings:</i> Greenblatt 1990 and Errington 2001
2.	May 8: Matters of identity <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 5-6, Lippi-Green 2012: 3-4, Irvine and Gal 2000.
3.	May 9: Language and nationalism <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 8, Anderson 1991 Chapters 1, 5 and DeFrancis 1984 Chapters 14-15. First journal assignment due
4.	May 10: The evolution and politics of orthography <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 9, Connor 2016, and DeFrancis 1984 Chapters 14-15. Recommended reading: Lu 2005
5.	May 14: Language rights <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 10, Carmichael 2009; Frese 2005; Hornberger 1998. Recommended reading: Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights
6.	May 15: Language vitality, revival, planning, and policy <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 16-17, Errington 2003; Wallace 2009.
	Data mining assignment due
7.	May 16: Typology of language conflicts 1: indigenous minorities <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 11, Bull 2002; Dubinsky and Davies 2013; Magga 1994. Group presentation #1
8.	May 17: Typology of language conflicts 2: geopolitical minorities <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 12, Casier 2010; Skutnabb-Kangas and Bucak 1994; Kontra 1997. Group presentation #2
	May 18: New Territories Excursion
9.	May 21: Typology of language conflicts 3: minorities of migration <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 13, Dubinsky and Davies 2013; Fleming 2017. Group presentation #3 Extra credit assignment due
10.	May 23: Typology of language conflicts 4: intra-linguistic (dialectal) minorities. <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 14, Dubinsky and Davies 2013; Morgan 2002; Pullum 1997; Rickford 1997. Guest lecture by Professor Cathryn Donahue from Hong Kong University Group presentation #4
11.	May 24: Typology of language conflicts 5: competition for linguistic dominance <i>Required readings:</i> LCLR 15, Casert 2010; Daley 2010; Iqbal a,b; O'Neill 2000; Pahi 2009; Saunders 2007. Group presentation #5 Second journal assignment due
12.	May 25: Linguistic progressivism: international auxiliary languages, world peace, and planning <i>Required readings:</i> Okrent 2009 8-12, 18-22.

References

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