

Language, Culture, and Society (LING1103) Unit Outline, Semester 2 2007

1. Unit Description

This unit provides an introduction to the study of language in its social and cultural setting, language as used by speakers to create and manipulate their social world, and how the structure of language reflects the uses to which it is put within a particular cultural context. Topics include discussion of the relationship between language and culture, cultural reflections in language through the use of conventionalised metaphor, language and gender, an introduction to socially- and historically-dependent language variation with examples drawn particularly from the history of English.

2. Broad Outcomes

As a result of working through this unit, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between language and culture.
- Describe simple speech events within the framework of the ethnography of communication.
- Describe the relationship between language and dialect, and show how to map dialect variation in geographical space.
- Describe some of the features of socially determined language variation and describe some of the methods used in its study.
- Describe the nature of language change and how linguists demonstrate that languages are related.
- Discuss the nature and consequences of language contact.

3. Unit Co-ordinator

Shelly Harrison

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4. Website

The unit website is: http://www.linguistics.uwa.edu.au/for/current_students/units/linguistics_1103_2007

NB: The only material on the WebCT site for this unit is lecture audio. All other unit material is at the site above.

Links to the site can be found at:

- I. The Linguistics Units page
(http://www.linguistics.uwa.edu.au/for/current_students/units)
- II. My discipline group page
(http://www.linguistics.uwa.edu.au/about/staff/shelly_harrison)
- III. My university web site (<http://www.general.uwa.edu.au/~shelly/>)

5. Classes

There are 2 lectures per week in this unit:

Monday	11.00 am	Alexander Lecture Theatre (Arts)
Wednesday	12.00 noon	Alexander Lecture Theatre (Arts)

Lecture overheads are available on the unit website and lecture recordings via Lectopia on the WebCT site.

Each student must attend one tutorial per week, beginning in the second week of the semester. Enrol for tutorials via the Online Class Registration (OLCR) system at: www.olcr.uwa.edu.au

6. Assessment

You are required to familiarise yourself with the Faculty policy on Academic Misconduct and the Linguistics requirements (both available through the unit website). All forms of cheating, plagiarism and copying are condemned by the University as unacceptable behaviour and are penalised accordingly.

The assessment components in this unit are:

- In-class and take-home exercises 40%
- final examination 60%

Students will be given problem sets or other exercises usually relating to the material just discussed in lectures. In some cases, these exercises will be done in tutorials. In other cases, we may begin working on an exercise in class which the students must complete outside class and hand in for assessment. In still other cases, students will undertake the exercise entirely outside of class time, and then hand in the solution for assessment. Please put your written assignments in the Assignment Box outside the Linguistics office (Room 2.45) on or before the due date indicated for each assignment.

Since I have not used this assignment format before, I am uncertain just how many problem sets we will be able to complete in this way during the semester. I expect about four or five. The student's lowest mark from amongst the marks assigned will be discarded in calculating the final mark for this component of the unit assessment. Late assignments will be penalised at a rate of 5% per day late.

Students are required to submit a *Minor/Weekly Assignments Declaration* form together with your **first** assignment only. You do not have to submit a separate declaration form with each assignment after that. (www.linguistics.uwa.edu.au/page/44050).

Please ensure that for each assignment you:

1. put your name, student number, and tutorial group clearly on each page
2. attach multiple page assignments securely by stapling the pages together
3. complete the entire assignment to the best of your ability and on your own. You are encouraged from discussing the assignment with others if you think it will be beneficial to you, but be advised that identical or near identical assignments submitted under different names will be regarded as potential instances of plagiarism.
4. submit the assignment clearly typed or legibly hand-written
5. make a copy of any assignment you submit

I cannot stress point 5 too highly. Your only guarantee that the assignment you submit will not be lost is that you have a copy of it.

Literacy Requirement

The University has a responsibility to the community at large to set high standards in all fields, including literacy. It is imperative that we ensure our graduates possess the skills of tertiary literacy and can communicate well in their chosen disciplines. Literacy in this context can be conceived of in two ways:

- generally, the competence to express oneself using a standard variety of English appropriate to a tertiary level;
- specifically, the ability to think, read, listen, and write well within particular

contexts, according to the traditions and usages of particular disciplines

Throughout the University policy statement the use of the term literacy embraces both of these concepts.

Assessment Policy

If you have not already done so, you should read the UWA *Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities* (<http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/home/policies/charter>).

If you feel that some of your work has not been assessed fairly, please feel free to come and talk to me about it and we'll see what we can work out. If you're not satisfied by that, you have the right to make a formal appeal by submitting an *Appeal Against Academic Assessment* form to the Head of School and Faculty Office. It must be submitted within 12 working days of the despatch of the assessment. It is recommended that students contact the Guild Education Officers to aid them in the appeals process. You can contact them on education@guild.uwa.edu.au or 6488-2295. Full regulations governing appeals procedures are available in the University Handbook, available online at:

handbooks.uwa.edu.au/undergraduate/poliproc/StudentProcedures/AssessmentandExamination/Assessment/Appeals

7. Assistance

If there are aspects of the material discussed in the unit or in the readings that you are uncertain about, or if you have other questions or comments about the unit and the subject matter it involves, you are encouraged to make those questions or comments known to the lecturer or to your tutor either in person, by telephone, or by email. Feel free to ask questions before class, during class, after class, during office hours. If I am unable to deal with your query or comment at the time you make it, I will endeavour to arrange an alternative time convenient to us both. Remember, there are no silly questions, and the sooner difficulties are dealt with, the easier it is to clear them up. For more general support in your studies, contact the Student Support Centre.

8. Reading

The assigned textbook for this course is:

Wardhaugh, R. 2006. *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. [5th ed.] Malden, Ma; Oxford: Blackwell.

Copies of earlier editions of this book *may* also be available in the library or in second-hand bookshops around the city.

A number of other useful introductory texts or general references on language and linguistics are in closed reserve, including

Akmajian, A. et al. 2001. *Linguistics: an introduction to language and communication*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Campbell, L. 1998. *Historical linguistics: an introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Coulmas, Florian, ed. 1997. *The handbook of sociolinguistics*. Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

Crystal, D. 1985. *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. [2nd ed.] Oxford: Blackwell.

1997 (1987). *The Cambridge encyclopaedia of language*. Cambridge: CUP.

1992. *An encyclopaedic dictionary of language and languages*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Finegan, Edward. 1997. *Language: its structure and use*. [2nd Australian ed.] Sydney: Harcourt Brace.

Fromkin, V. et al. 1996. *An introduction to language*. [3rd ed.] Sydney: Harcourt

Brace.

Holmes, J. 1992. An introduction to sociolinguistics. London; New York: Longman.

Hudson, Grover. 2000. Essential introductory linguistics. London: Blackwell.

Thomason, S. Language contact. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

9. IRIS (Introductory Research and Information Skills)

All newly enrolled students in Bachelors degree courses in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences are required to complete an Introductory Research and Information Skills unit called IRIS (unit code COMM2000). If this is your first semester at UWA you will need to complete IRIS this semester. While only students enrolled in FAHSS degree programs are required to complete the unit, it is available to all students taking LING1103 and we highly recommend that ALL students in LING1103 take IRIS. IRIS is accessed through WebCT.

IRIS will provide you with a foundation in generic research skills that enable you to locate, evaluate and effectively use information. Information literacy skills give you the capacity to use information effectively, create new knowledge, solve problems and make decisions. These skills will be of value not only in all your university study but will considerably increase your employability as you enter the workforce.

Newly enrolled students in Bachelors degree courses in FAHSS (only!) are required to pass IRIS in their first year. To pass IRIS you will need to obtain a minimum of 80% in the quiz and you can attempt the quiz as many times as necessary to pass. When you have achieved a minimum of 80% you will receive an Ungraded Pass (UP). If you do not complete IRIS and achieve a minimum of 80% within your first semester of enrolment, you will receive an Assessment Continuing (AC) and you will be required to re-enrol in the unit. If you do not pass IRIS within completion of your first 48 points you will receive an Ungraded Fail (UF). Contact the FAHSS Student Office (Ground Floor Arts Building) if you have any questions about IRIS.

10. Student Rights and Responsibilities

If you have not done so recently, it is a good idea to (re)familiarise yourself with your general rights and responsibilities as a student at UWA. You can access the University's Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities at the following web address:

<http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/home/policies/charter>

9. Syllabus

Week	Date	Topic(s)
Week 1	23/7	Introduction: Speaking the Same Language
Week 2	30/7	Vernacular and Standard: What is a Language?
Week 3	6/8	Pidgin and Creole Languages
Week 4	13/8	Multilingualism
Week 5	20/8	Language Change
Week 6	27/8	Dialects and Dialectology
Week 7	3/9	Social Dialects
	10/9	NON-TEACHING WEEK
Week 8	17/9	Social Stratification of Language
Week 9	24/9	Ethnolinguistics: On Language and Culture
Week 10	1/10	Linguistic Relativity
Week 11	8/10	Metaphor
Week 12	15/10	Ethnography of Speaking
Week 13	22/10	Language and Social Status

The above outline should not be interpreted as definitive and final. Deviations will undoubtedly occur as the unit develops, in accordance with the needs and interests of the class.