

Language and the Caribbean

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Course Description: This course uses sociolinguistic, sociocultural, and linguistic anthropological perspectives to explore language variation and use across the Caribbean and its diasporas. Framing language as a central site of social action, students will consider both the ideological formations that influence language policies and practices as well as the interactional perspectives that illustrate how language (de)constructs relational identities and social worlds. Throughout the course, we will study the dynamic nature of language as embedded in historical and contemporary processes including marronage, labor migrations, colonialism and empire, nationalism, political economy, and decolonization. We will also challenge the colonial origins of linguistic and geographic fragmentation in the region by bringing the insular and continental Caribbean into the same frame and by centering linguistic diversity and multilingualism as the global norm rather than the exception.

Assignments:

Reading Responses: Students will select four weeks in the course to submit a one-page reading response. This response should go beyond synthesizing the key arguments of the readings, and instead use the readings as a springboard to develop a short, thesis-driven essay that analyzes how the readings contribute to critical understandings of the course topics. Each reading response should have a sociolinguistic orientation so that the implications of both linguistic and social phenomena are addressed. This assignment is worth 20% of the final grade.

Multimodal Keywords: Students will identify three key concepts and terms (or keywords) from across the course, and develop a multimodal (visual, textual, aural) representation and definition of the term in relation to the broader study of language in the Caribbean. Individual student contributions will be assembled together into an interactive, digital reference book for the course. This assignment is worth 25% of the final grade.

Genre Study: Students will explore text types and genres across a range of linguistic, social, and cultural contexts. Select either an oral or written genre from any geographic context or time period in the Caribbean or the Caribbean diaspora, and conduct a brief analysis of the genre's purpose, organizational structure, and language features, examining communicative practices in relation to intended audience(s). Your genre study should situate this genre in relation to its development alongside other genres. You are encouraged to use archival and digital resources to examine newspapers, magazines, literary publications, travel brochures, oral histories, artistic journals, songs, radio shows, internet forums, or other media. This assignment is worth 25% of the final grade.

Speech Communities Digital Presentation: Students will use their emerging understandings of speech communities to conduct research and develop a digital presentation on one speech community. The focus of this project is on the discursive and material representations produced by speech communities and circulated through a variety of social semiotic representations.

Speech communities can be local or transnational, and may include politicians, activist groups, religious communities, musicians and performers of a particular genre, youth communities, members of specific professions, bloggers, and many others. Your digital presentation should include references to published research as well as multimodal artifacts (audio clips, videos, murals, lyrics, pamphlets, material culture, etc.) produced by the focal speech community. This assignment is worth 30% of the final grade.

Week 1: The Caribbean as Geopolitical Project

Benítez-Rojo, A. (2018). The Caribbean: From a sea basin to an Atlantic network. *The Southern Quarterly*, 55(4), 196-206.

Gaztambide-Géigel, A. (2004). The invention of the Caribbean in the 20th century. (The definitions of the Caribbean as a historical and methodological problem). *Social and Economic Studies*, 53(3), 127-57.

Girvan, N. (2001). Reinterpreting the Caribbean. In F. Lindahl & B. Meek (Eds), *New Caribbean thought* (pp. 3-23). University of West Indies Press.

Torres-Saillant, S. (2016). The Hispanic Caribbean question: On geographies of knowledge and interlaced human landscapes. *Small Axe*, 20(3), 32-48.

Week 2: Anthropology of the Caribbean

Jaffe, R. (2014). Toward an anthropology of the Caribbean state. *Small axe*, 18(1), 173-180.

Slocum, K., & Thomas, D. A. (2003). Rethinking global and area studies: Insights from Caribbeanist anthropology. *American Anthropologist*, 105(3), 553-565.

Trouillot, M. R. (1992). The Caribbean Region: An open frontier in anthropological theory. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 21, 19-42

Yelvington, K. A. (2001). The anthropology of Afro-Latin America and the Caribbean: Diasporic dimensions. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 30, 227-260.

Week 3: Caribbean Discourse

Benítez-Rojo, A. (1997). Introduction: The repeating island. In A. Benítez-Rojo, *The repeating island: The Caribbean and postmodern perspective* (pp. 1-29). Duke University Press.

Glissant, E. (1989). *Caribbean discourse* (J. M. Dash, Trans.) University of Virginia Press. (Original work published 1928). (*selected excerpts*)

Kamugisha, A. (2019). Chapter 3: Creole discourse and racism in the Caribbean. In *Beyond*

coloniality: Citizenship and freedom in the Caribbean intellectual tradition (pp. 76-113). Indiana University Press.

Lalla, B., D'Costa, J., & Pollard, V. (2014). Introduction. *Caribbean literary discourse: Voice and cultural identity in the Anglophone Caribbean*. The University of Alabama Press.

Week 4: Sociolinguistic Foundations

Carlin, E. B., Léglise, I., Migge, B., & Tjon Sie Fat, P. B. (2015). Looking at language identity, and mobility in Suriname. In E. B. Carlin, I. Léglise, B. Migge, & P. B. Tjon Sie Fat (Eds.), *In and out of Suriname: Language, mobility, and identity* (pp. 1-12). Brill.

Fenigsen, J. (2007). From apartheid to incorporation: The emergence and transformation of modern language community in Barbados, West Indies. *Pragmatics*, 17(2), 231-261.

Ferreira, J. S. (2012). Caribbean languages and linguistics. In B. A. Reid (Ed.), *Caribbean heritage* (pp. 130-147). University of the West Indies Press.

Managan, K. (2016). The sociolinguistic situation in Guadeloupe: Diglossia reconsidered. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, 31(2), 253-287.

Youssef, V. (2010). Sociolinguistics of the Caribbean. In M. Ball (Ed.), *Sociolinguistics around the world: A handbook* (pp. 52-64). Routledge.

Week 5: Genre

Bakhtin, M. M., Holquist, M., McGee, V., & Emerson, C. (1986). The problem with speech genres. In *Speech genres and other late essays*. University of Texas Press.

Bhatia, V. K. (2006). Genres and styles in World Englishes. In B. B. Kachru et al. (Eds.), *The handbook of World Englishes* (pp. 386-401). Blackwell.

Briggs, C. L., & Bauman, R. (1992). Genre, intertextuality, and social power. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 2(2), 131-172.

Garrett, P. B. (2005). What a language is good for: Language socialization, language shift, and the persistence of code-specific genres in St. Lucia. *Language in Society*, 34(3), 327-361.

Week 6: Speech Communities

Morgan, M. H. (2014). *Speech communities*. Cambridge University Press. (selected excerpts)

Mühleisen, S. (2002). Chapter 4: From speech community to discourse communities: Changing Creole representations in the urban diaspora. In S. Mühleisen, *Creole discourse: Exploring prestige formation and change across Caribbean English-lexicon Creoles* (pp. 135-182). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Otheguy, R., Zentella, A. C., & Livery, D. (2008). Language and dialect contact in Spanish in New York: Toward the formation of a speech community. *Language*, 83(4), 770-802.

Youssef, V. (1993). Marking solidarity across the Trinidad speech community: The use of an ting in medical counselling to break down power differentials. *Discourse & Society*, 4(3), 291-306.

Week 7: Creolization and Creole Languages

De Graff, M. (2003). Against Creole exceptionalism. *Language*, 79(2), 391-410.

Mufwene, S. (2000). Creolization is a social, not a structural, process. In I. Neumann-Holzschuh & E. Schneider (Eds.), *Degrees of restructuring in Creole languages* (pp. 65-84). John Benjamins.

Palmié, S. (2006). Creolization and its discontents. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 35, 433-456.

Rickford, J. R. (1985). Standard and non-standard language attitudes in a creole continuum. In N. Wolfson & J. Manes, *Language of inequality* (pp. 145-162). De Gruyter Mouton.

Week 8: Language, Racialization, and Capitalism

Heller, M., & McElhinny, B. (2017). Chapter 3: Language and imperialism II: Evolution, hybridity, history. In M. Heller & B. McElhinny, *Language, capitalism, colonialism: Toward a critical history*. University of Toronto Press.

Lopez, Q., & Hinrichs, L. "C'mon, get happy": The commodification of linguistic stereotypes in a Volkswagen Super Bowl Commercial. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 45(2), 130-156.

Mesthrie, R. (2017). Slavery, indentured work, and language. In S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of migration and language* (pp. 228-242). Routledge.

Stephenson Watson, S. (2014). Introduction: Race, language, and national identity in Afro-Panamanian literary discourse. In S. Stephenson Watson, *The politics of race in Panama: Afro-Hispanic and West Indian literary discourses of contention* (pp. 1-16). University Press of Florida.

Week 9: Blackness and Language

Bullock, B. & Toribio, J. (2008). Kreyòl incursions into Dominican Spanish: The perception of Haitianized speech among Dominicans. In M. Niño-Murcia & J. Rothman (Eds.), *Bilingualism and identity: Spanish at the crossroads with other languages* (pp. 175-197). John Benjamins.

De Graff, M. (2020). *Black lives will not matter until our languages also matter: The politics of*

linguistics and education in post-colonies. ABRALIN.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-M91rn4Tr_Q&feature=youtu.be

Makoni, S., Smitherman, G., Ball, A. F., & Spears, A. K. (2003). Introduction: Toward Black linguistics. In *Black linguistics: Language, society, and politics in Africa and the Americas* (pp. 1-18). Routledge.

Mugabo, D. (2019). Black in the city: On the ruse of ethnicity and language in an antiblack landscape. *Identities*, 26(6), 631-648.

Zéphir, F. (1997). Haitian Creole language and bilingual education in the United States: Problem, right, or resource? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 18(3), 223-237.

Week 10: Language and Decolonization

Feliciano-Santos, S. (2017). How do you speak Taíno? Indigenous activism and linguistic practices in Puerto Rico. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 27(1), 4-21.

Gonzalez, S. C. (2020). Decolonial multilingualism in the Caribbean. *Small axe*, 24(1), 11-21.

Macedo, D. (2019). *Decolonizing foreign language education. The misteaching of English and other colonial languages*. Routledge. (select excerpts).

Rosa, J. (2020). *Raciolinguistic ideologies and decolonizing anthropology: A conversation with Jonathan Rosa*. Society for Cultural Anthropology.

<https://culanth.org/fieldsights/raciolinguistic-ideologies-and-decolonizing-anthropology-a-conversation-with-jonathan-rosa>

Week 11: Language Contact Beyond Creolization

Satterfield, T., & Benkí Jr., J. R. (2020). Caribbean Spanish influenced by African-American English: U.S. Afro-Spanish language and the new U.S. caribeño identity. In W. Valentín-Marquez & M. Gonzalez-Rivera (Eds.), *Dialects from tropical islands: Caribbean Spanish in the United States*. Routledge.

Walicek, D. E. (2007). Chinese Spanish in 19th century Cuba: Documenting sociohistorical context. In M. Huber & V. Velupillai (Eds.), *Synchronic and diachronic perspectives on contact languages* (pp. 297-324). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Wirtz, K. A “brutology” of bozal: Tracing a discourse genealogy from nineteenth-century blackface theater to twenty-first-century spirit possession in Cuba. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 55(4), 800-833.

Yakpo, K., & Muysken, P. (2017). *Boundaries and bridges: Language contact in multilingual ecologies*. De Gruyter Mouton. (selected excerpts)

Week 12: Gendered Language

La Fountain-Stokes, L. (2007). Queer ducks, Puerto Rican patos, and Jewish-American feygelekh: Birds and the cultural representation of homosexuality. *Centro Journal XIX* (1), 192-229.

Mühleisen, S., & Walicek, D. E. (2008). Language and gender in the Caribbean: An overview. *Sargasso, 1*, 15-30.

Schnepel, E. M. (2003). The other tongue, the other voice: Language and gender in the French Caribbean. In R. K. Blot & C.L. Briggs, (Eds.), *Language and social identity* (pp. 199-224). Praeger.

Sidnell, J. (2000). "Primus inter pares": Storytelling and male peer groups in an Indo-Guyanese rumshop. *American Ethnologist, 27*(1), 72-99.

Week 13: Language and Sound

Brathwaite, K. (1984). *History of the voice: The development of nation language in Anglophone Caribbean poetry*. New Beacon Books. (selected excerpts).

Farquharson, J. (2017). Linguistic ideologies and the historical development of language use patterns in Jamaican music. *Language & Communication, 52*, 7-18.

Guilbault, J., & Rommen, T. (2019). Introduction. The political economy of music and sound. Case studies in the Caribbean tourism industry. In *Sounds of vacation: Political economies of Caribbean tourism*. Duke University Press.

Leung, G. A. (2009). Negotiation of Trinidadian identity in ragga soca music. *World Englishes, 28*(4), 509-531.

Week 14: Language Socialization and Childhood

Bonner, D. M. (2001). Garifuna children's language shame: Ethnic stereotypes, national affiliation, and transnational immigration as factors in language choice in southern Belize. *Language in Society, 30*(1), 81-96.

Drayton, K.-A. (2012). "How yuh make a story?": Narrative development in young Trinidadian children. In G. Rampaul & G. E. Skeete (Eds.), *The child and the Caribbean imagination*. University of the West Indies Press.

Garrett, P. B., & Baquedano-López, P. (2002). Language socialization: Reproduction and continuity, transformation and change. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 31*, 339-361

Paugh, A. L. (2019). Negotiating language ideologies through imaginary play: Children's code

choice and rescaling practices in Dominica West Indies. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 144, 78-91.

Week 15: Language and Education

Dijkhoff, M., & Pereira, J. (2010). Language and education in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. In B. Migge, I. Léglise & A. Bartens (Eds.), *Creoles in education: An appraisal of current programs and projects* (pp. 237-272). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Morren, R. (2001). Creole-based trilingual education in the Caribbean archipelago of San Andres, Providence and Santa Catalina. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 22(3), 227-241.

Nero, S. (2006). Language, identity, and education of Caribbean English speakers. *World Englishes*, 25(3/4), 501-511.

Smith, P. (2019). (Re)positioning in the Englishes and (English) literacies of a Black immigrant youth: Towards a transraciolinguistic approach. *Theory into Practice*, 58(3), 292-303.

St. Hilaire, A. (2009). Postcolonial identity politics, language, and the schools in St. Lucia. *International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*, 12(1), 31-46.