Language and Culture  
LING 473  
The University of Montana

Autumn 2008  
Instructor: Dr. Leora Bar-el

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor information
☒ <leora.bar-el@mso.umt.edu>  
☎ 243-2387  
Office: Social Science 210  
Office hours: Wednesdays 10:00am-12:00pm, or by appointment

Course meeting times and venue
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
9:40am-11:00am  
Liberal Arts 106

Course objectives
This course focuses on the relationship between language and culture and the influence they may have on one another. The course is divided into three sections: Part I examines the universalist and relativist approaches to language and culture in the domains of kinship systems, colour terms and categorization, time and space conceptualizations, and classifier systems. In Part II, we will examine some domains in the ethnography of speaking, and in particular, the ways in which language varies with respect to gender, social position, personhood, and the speech event itself (genre). Finally, in Part III, we will briefly touch on the issues of linguistic diversity and language endangerment and their importance to our understanding of language and culture. Throughout the course, we will explore issues of methodology and the ways in which language and culture are studied. A variety of languages from across the world will be examined. This course co-convenes with LING 573.

Prerequisite
LING 470 is a prerequisite for this course.

Moodle
This course has an online Moodle site (http://umonline.umt.edu/). Articles, class handouts, lecture slide, and other useful information will be posted there for downloading. Instructions on using Moodle are available at the login page. Please let me know if you have any problems accessing the site.
Course Structure

Class meetings will include powerpoint presentations, article discussions, data sets, guest lectures, student presentations, and other linguistic training. Lecture slides and other materials will be posted on the course Blackboard site for downloading.

Throughout the course we will be reading and discussing chapters from the course textbook (Foley 1997). As well, we will be reading and discussing a number of articles that provide an in-depth and focused examination on an aspect of the textbook readings. Articles are available for downloading from the course Moodle site (see schedule below for a reading timetable). You are required to submit three article summaries over the course of the semester. You will also be giving an in-class group presentation (with one or more classmates) of one of the articles.

Your final project in this course is a research paper. For this you will (i) submit an outline of your paper and attend a brief consultation with me about your paper, (ii) give an in-class presentation of your paper, (iii) write a five-page draft of your paper and take it to the Writing Centre for feedback, (iv) revise and submit your research paper (see details and due dates below).

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

(a) understand the universalist and relativist approaches to analyzing the interaction of language and culture in a variety of research areas
(b) understand some of the ways that linguists study language variation
(c) understand some of the critical issues in the study of linguistic diversity and language endangerment
(d) analyze and compare data from a variety of different languages
(e) critically read, summarize, and discuss claims and arguments from primarily linguistic literature
(f) communicate your linguistic research findings in the form of oral presentations, research papers, etc.
(g) respond to feedback on your research
(h) write a linguistic research paper, making an original contribution to the field

Assessment

| Participation | 10% |
| Article summaries (2 x 10% each) | 20% |
| Group article presentation | 10% |
| Research paper outline and consultation | 10% |
| Research paper draft (5 pgs; Writing Centre) | 10% |
| Research paper presentation | 10% |
| Research paper (10-12 pgs) | 30% |

Grading criteria

| A | 90-100% |
| B | 80-89% |
| C | 70-79% |
| D | 60-69% |
| F | Below 60% |

• Participation includes attendance, introductory questionnaire, readings, in-class worksheets/discussions, answering/asking questions in-class, etc.

• Article summaries are due at the beginning of class on the day that the article is scheduled to be discussed (see schedule below).

• Your research paper outline is due at the beginning of class on Thursday November 3. Research paper consultations will be held in Week 11. A sign-up will be circulated later in the term.

• A 5-page research paper draft must be completed and taken to the Writing Centre for review/feedback prior to submission of your paper to me.

• Research paper presentations will take place in the final two weeks of classes. A presentation schedule will be circulated later in the term.

• Research papers are due in my office by 11:00am on Tuesday December 13.
REMINDERS: Plagiarism is an offence and is not tolerated. You are welcome (and encouraged) to discuss assignments, articles, etc. together with classmates, but you must write up your work on your own. Always keep a copy of your submitted work.

Textbook and other required readings

- **Main Text:**

- **Other required readings (see list on p. 4-5)** are posted on Moodle.

- Typically, we will cover a chapter from Foley’s text on Tuesday and then assigned articles on Thursday. For some topics, there is no reading from Foley and so we will cover assigned articles on both Tuesday and Thursday. Additional readings may be assigned throughout the term.

- Make sure you have the assigned readings done BEFORE the relevant classes. Even if you do not understand all the material you read, it is to your advantage to be familiar with the topic before we discuss it in class.

- You are expected to bring two questions about each reading to every class.

Course Policies and Procedures

- **Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class and be an active participant. If you miss a class, inform me by e-mail as early as possible. I also urge you to contact a classmate to catch up on what you missed. An attendance sign-in sheet will be circulated in each class. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the sheet so that you are registered as being in class.

- **Respect:** Arrive to class on time! We will begin class promptly at 9:40am. You are responsible for all material covered, including announcements, questions/answers, etc., that may occur at the beginning of class. If you are late, please be courteous to your fellow classmates and me – avoid being disruptive. You can catch up on what you may have missed after class. If you anticipate being late to class regularly (e.g., due to a work schedule, a class on the other side of campus), contact me as soon as possible.

- **Student Conduct Code:** You are expected to be familiar with the *University of Montana Student Conduct Code*. “Being a student at UM presupposes a commitment to the principles and policies embodied in this Code.” The Conduct code is downloadable from the following website: [http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php](http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php). You are also expected to be familiar with the University of Montana Academic Policies and Procedures: [http://www.umt.edu/catalog/acad/acadpolicy/default.html](http://www.umt.edu/catalog/acad/acadpolicy/default.html).

- **E-mail:** Throughout the semester, course information will be circulated by e-mail to your UM e-mail address. Make sure that you check that e-mail account often. You are responsible for ensuring that you are able to receive any course information circulated by e-mail. If you have any concerns about this, please speak to me.

- **Course Accommodations Statement (DDS):** If you are a student with a disability who will require reasonable program modification in this course, please meet with Disability Services for Students in Lommasson 154 for assistance in developing a plan to address program modifications. If you are already working with Disability Services your responsibilities are to contact me to discuss reasonable modifications that may be necessary. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at [http://life.umt.edu/dss](http://life.umt.edu/dss).

- **Technical Requirements:** Using the Moodle learning environment requires your computer to be set up to view and download documents, webpages, etc. Contact UMOnline: 406-243-4999; [http://umonline.umt.edu/techsupport/helpdesk.aspx](http://umonline.umt.edu/techsupport/helpdesk.aspx) for assistance.
• **Submitting work:** Hard copies of article summaries, final papers, etc. must be submitted at the **beginning of class on the day they are due** (see assessment above and schedule below). **Formatting requirements:** 12 point font, Times, Times New Roman or Arial, 1 inch margins, double-spaced. Use DoulosSIL for a phonetic font (see below). **Double-sided copies are strongly preferred!**

### Fonts

- North American Indigenous Languages use a variety of different orthographies, thus special fonts are needed to create and view some documents in this course. I will post .pdf files of lecture slides, etc., which should avoid font problems. Whenever possible, I will use **DoulosSIL** in this course, a free font available for both Mac and PC operating systems. You may want to use this font in your own work. The font can be downloaded from the following site:
  

Instructions on how to download and install the fonts will vary depending on your computer and operating system. Some advice is available from the link below:


For your reference, further information on phonetic fonts and the web can be found at the following sites:

  - [http://www.alanwood.net/unicode/](http://www.alanwood.net/unicode/)
  - [http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/ipa-unicode.htm](http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/ipa-unicode.htm)

If you are having any trouble downloading fonts/viewing files, please ask!

### Article summaries

- You are required to submit two article summaries over the course of the term. You may choose any starred (*) article from the list of assigned required readings (i.e., not chapters in Foley’s textbook); **however**, the two articles must be different from the article that you are presenting in class (see below).

- In your article summary you should identify the central research question/issue being addressed in the paper, the author’s proposal(s), the arguments that the author presents in support of the proposal, and where appropriate, the implications of the proposal.

- Your summaries must be submitted as a **typed hard copy** at the beginning of class on the day they are scheduled to be discussed (see schedule below). **Hand-written copies are not permitted.** Regardless of the length of the article each summary can be a **maximum** of two pages, and must be double-spaced, 12-point font (Times, Times New Roman or Arial), with 1-inch margins. Double-sided copies are strongly preferred.

### Article presentation

- You are required to give one in-class presentation of an article from the list of readings. A sign-up sheet will be posted on my office door. Your presentation involves leading the discussion of the article in class (i.e., think of yourself as the instructor). You should plan on a 30-40 minute presentation, which may end up being longer, depending on the discussion that arises. You are free to divide up the time in any way you see fit. I suggest you create a short handout and bring copies for the class.

### Research paper outline

- You are required to submit a one-page outline of your proposed essay topic at the beginning of class on **Thursday November 3**. A list of references (other than those articles we have discussed in class) which you have consulted or plan to consult for your essay should be included.

- The following week I will meet with each of you individually to discuss your proposals and give you some feedback. Scheduled meeting times will be arranged later in the term.
Research paper

- Your research paper is expected to identify a central research question and to make an original contribution. I want you to go beyond simply a report of the literature and to make a proposal/claim with appropriate argumentation. You should consult materials other than just those we cover in class. Foley gives a lot of suggested readings at the end of each chapter. You can also look at the references from other articles covered in class, do your own search through the literature, ask a fellow classmate, ask me, etc.

- A mini in-class workshop on writing research papers and giving presentations is scheduled for later in the term.

Research paper draft

- You are required to write a 5-page draft of your research paper and take it to the Writing Centre for feedback [http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter/](http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter/). This will involve booking an appointment at the Writing Centre, which should be done in advance. This draft and review is a requirement of the course and will count towards 5% of your final grade. You will submit a form signed by a Writing Centre tutor confirming your review appointment when you submit the revised version of your research paper to me.

- The director of the Writing Centre will give a presentation in our class during the term to discuss this further.

- Please note that you are encouraged to visit the Writing Centre for feedback on any of your work for this class or other classes!

Research paper presentation

- The last four classes of this course are set aside for essay presentations. You will be required to give a short presentation of your essay (approx. 15 minutes). Your essay need not be in its final state for the presentation. The purpose of the presentation is not only to gain experience giving a presentation, but also to get feedback from me and your peers that you may incorporate into your final paper.

- You are required to prepare a short handout and/or powerpoint slides and bring copies for the class.

- Respect your fellow students: you are expected to attend each presentation and to arrive to class on time; you will be asked to complete a peer evaluation/feedback form for each of your classmates.

- A presentation schedule will be circulated later in the term (see also note above re: workshop)
**Proposed Schedule (subject to change)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>Introduction and overview</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 1; Pullum 1991 (see also Martin 1986)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Aug. 28</td>
<td>Introduction (cont’d)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>PART I: UNIVERSALISM AND RELATIVISM</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>Overview; Kinship</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 6 (see also Ch. 5, 10)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Sept. 4</td>
<td>Kinship (cont’d)</td>
<td>Hill &amp; Hill 1998 (see also Kasakoff 1984)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Sept. 9</td>
<td>Colour</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 7 (see also Berlin &amp; Kay 1969)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Colour (cont’d)</td>
<td>Davies et al. 1998; Stanlaw 1997 (see also Levinson 2001, Hardin &amp; Maffi (eds.))</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Sept. 16</td>
<td>Relativism; Space</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>Space (cont’d)</td>
<td>Levinson 1997; Bowerman 1996 (see also Pederson et al. 1998; Brown &amp; Levinson 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Sept. 23</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
<td>Time (cont’d)</td>
<td>Boroditsky 2001</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
<td>Classifiers</td>
<td>Craig 1986; Gomez-Imbert 1996 (see also Allan 1977)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>Classifiers (cont’d)</td>
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<td><strong>PART II: ETHNOGRAPHY OF SPEAKING</strong></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Oct. 7</td>
<td>Intro; Politeness, face</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 13, 14 (see also Bauman &amp; Sherzer 1975)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Oct. 9</td>
<td>Politeness, face (cont’d)</td>
<td>Matsumoto 1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Oct. 14</td>
<td>Language and gender</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 15</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>Language and social position</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 16</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Oct. 23</td>
<td>Lang. and social position (cont’d)</td>
<td>Eckert 1988</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>Foley Ch. 18</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Oct. 30</td>
<td>Genre (cont’d)</td>
<td>Sherzer 1989</td>
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<td><strong>PART III: LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT</strong></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS - Election day</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Nov. 6</td>
<td>Linguistic diversity and language endangerment</td>
<td>Nettle &amp; Romaine 2000 Ch.1-2; Krauss 1992 (see also Hale et al. 1992, UNESCO 2003)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Nov. 11</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS - Veterans day</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Diversity and endangerment (cont’d)</td>
<td>Hale 1992; Nettle &amp; Romaine 2000 Ch. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td>Language endangerment and language revitalization</td>
<td>Ash et al. 2001</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Nov. 20</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Nov. 25</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Nov. 27</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS - Thanksgiving</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Dec. 4</td>
<td>Presentations / Wrap-up</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Required Readings

**NOTES:** Only articles that appear with an asterisk can be chosen for article summaries and presentations. Hass 1944 and Kimball 1987 cannot be considered separately – for article presentations, both must be presented. For article summaries, both must be summarized in a single summary and will only count towards one of the two required summaries.


Some further articles available for downloading and books on reserve at the library


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