DPLS 744 Leadership, Language, & Culture

Summer 2010  3 Credits
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Overview
In this course we will investigate the various meanings and practices around language, culture and leadership, the relationship between them and their significance in the late 20th and early 21st century. Questions we will investigate include: What is the relationship between language and culture? Who represents whom? What does it mean to be on the linguistic/cultural margins? In the center? At the borders? What does this have to do with authority? Power? Leadership? We will examine both a theory of language-in-use as well as a method for analysis and research (i.e., d/Discourse analysis). We will discuss and use a set of building tasks or tools of inquiry as a framework for understanding language, culture and leadership.

What are the discourse analysis building tasks?
Building tasks can be applied to any (discourse) situation or speech event (e.g., small talk in a health club sauna, a cooperate meeting, a wedding, a classroom lecture) Here are the building tasks and some accompanying questions (posed several times throughout Gee).

- **Building significance:** We use language to make things significant (to give them meaning or value) in certain ways, to build significance. How is a text being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?
- **Building activities:** We use language to get recognized as engaging in a certain sort of activity, that is, to build an activity here-and-now. What activity or activities is a text being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)?
- **Building identities:** We use language to get recognized as taking on a certain identity or role, that is to build an identity here-and-now. What identity or identities is the text being used to enact?
- **Building relationships:** We use language to signal what sort of relationship we have, want to have, or are trying to have with our listeners, readers, or other people, groups or institutions about whom we are communicating. What sort of relationship or relationships is the text seeking to enact with others (present or not)?
- **Building politics:** We use language to convey a perspective on the nature of the distribution of social goods, that is to build a perspective on social goods. What perspectives on social goods is this text communicating?
- **Building connections:** We use language to render certain things connected or relevant (or not) to other things, that is, to build connections or relevance. How does this text connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another.
- **Building significance for sign systems and knowledge:** We use language to make certain sign systems and certain forms of knowledge and belief relevant or privileged, or not, in given situations. How does a text privilege or disprivilige specific sign systems.
Pedagogical philosophy and assumptions

- Students are just as capable of theory building as theoreticians
- Authority is not either/or; there is not a limited supply of power
- Shared power in the classroom, but not abdication of authority or free for alls or unstructured activities and tasks
- Learning a new language (or D/discourse) requires an "apprenticeship" (at the least---comprehensible input followed by a lot of practice and rehearsal)
- Everyone learns best by doing

Course Tasks

I. Choose either A or B

A. Scholarly paper based on an Interview and Analysis 30%
This is a 10-15 page paper based on at least two interviews that you conduct with another person whose culture is different from your own (e.g., different ethnic origin, religious affiliation, socioeconomic conditions, age, profession, occupation). Begin thinking now of someone that you would like to interview since it will be your responsibility to set up the interview. Interviews should be set up soon if you choose this option. Advice: Use a good audio/video system to tape; make notes while you are interviewing

Or

B. Scholarly paper on topic/text of your choice or a topic 30%
Write a paper that is of current interest to you on some aspect of language, culture and leadership.

Whether you choose option A or B the papers and accompanying analysis should include the discourse analysis building task ideas from the course text (J. Gee, pages 12, 83, 93). Papers should reflect a doctoral brand of scholarship meaning:

- APA Formatting
- Well documented citations (from your own research and course texts)
- Substantiated claims
- Not overly anecdotal, autobiographical or solipsistic

Other criteria to be discussed, either individually or as a group

II. Presentation of the Paper 20%
In the last week of the semester, you will present some aspect of your interview/paper in 30 minute blocks. We will discuss presentation guidelines and criteria for grading later in the session.

III. Brief! Discourse Analysis and Short Paper 20%
Beginning the second day either individually or in pairs, bring in some kind of "text" (e.g., essay, poem, short story, news feature--print or media, movie clip, stretch of talk, advertisement, bumper sticker, sign in yard,) to analyze with the group.
• Provide just enough context so that we are not left in the dark
• It should relate to language and culture and their combination
• You should bring to bear its connection to leadership
• In your discussion, you should tie it to the course texts as much as you can, particularly to the building tasks and questions (See Gee)
• If you would like, tie it to our other texts.
• Each individual/pair will have 20-30 minutes to lead the discussion/presentation. Please keep track of time!!!

IV. Language, Society and Power Jigsaw TBA
Each group will read a chapter from Language, Society and Power and present to the rest of the class. Format and possible supplementary readings TBA.

V. 1 Reflection Paper due 20%
1 short reflection paper (2-5 pages, double spaced) on a topic of your choice or a prompt given by me (based on any of the readings or texts). Ideally, this reflection papers are drafts for the final paper (making it more manageable)

Reflection paper Due Date: weekend, May 13/14

VI. Blackboard Participation TBA 10%

**Required Texts (in GU bookstore)**
• Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method (Routledge), James Paul Gee
• Elegance of the Hedgehog (a novel by Muriel Barbery)

Other texts TBA

Also: Additional course readings to be posted on BB