

Language and Identity in Contemporary Greater China

Objectives

This course will examine the ways in which language contributes to shaping social, cultural, and ethnic identities in contemporary Greater China, including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and other Chinese-speaking countries and regions. Topics will include the role of language in Chinese culture, the linguistic indexing of socio-economic class, dialects and regional language variation, the impacts of state policies, linguistic borrowings, bilingualism and bicultural identity, and language shift and attrition. We will also explore the emergence of new forms of language as influenced by modern technologies and reflect on the possible future developments.

Based on the study of contemporary Greater China, students will develop a broad theoretical understanding of the multiple ways in which language and identity are intertwined. In addition, they will emerge with an increased appreciation of the issues and challenges facing contemporary Chinese society today.

After taking this course, students are expected to:

- Explain, and argue for, the ways in which language expresses deference, power, solidarity and identity;
- Be equipped with the vocabulary and knowledge to make comments on specific cases of identity construction in language use;
- Work in a group to discuss the different ways in which language can be analyzed in terms of power, solidarity, identity, gender;
- Think about, write and present an argument related to the analysis of discourse.

The class will meet twice a week. The course will be conducted through lectures and discussion of selected readings and videos.

No knowledge of the Chinese language is required, but individual student projects may provide opportunities for students to do some work in Chinese, as desired.

Requirements

Class participation: The success of this class depends on your participation. As such, all students are expected to come to class having read all of the assigned materials. You do not have to agree with the arguments in the readings. But, the readings serve as a starting point for our discussion on the issue of language and identity. Students are expected to be respectful of other students, the instructor, and guests as well as the people in the readings and the films. Students are required to attend class and finish readings before class and prepare to discuss the content in class.

Article presentations: Each student is responsible for presenting two articles. You do not need to present everything in the article. But make sure you discuss the background, the methodology, the main findings and engage the class in class.

Class blogging: In order to encourage outside class interaction between the instructor and students, one or two topics will be provided on class blog so that students can voice their opinions and comment upon each other's as well.

Homework assignments: Two homework assignments will be given in the course. For each, students need to collect data and make their argumentation based on the data.

Final projects: You need to choose a topic related to language and identity and write a research paper. You need to include at least 5-6 scholarly sources in your paper.

Week 4: You need to submit a short proposal describing your idea for the paper so that I can make sure you are on the correct path.

Week 8: You need to submit a progress report, including literature review, your methodology, hypothesis, and references to cite.

Week 15: You will give a short presentation on your research paper during the last week of class. Final papers should be posted on the course HuskyCT site no later than our scheduled final exam time.

Grade Breakdown

Class participation	10%
Article presentations (2)	20%
Class blogging	5%
Homework assignments (2)	20%
Final project (all phases)	45%

Textbook

Gunn, Edward M. 2006. *Rendering the Regional: Local Language in Contemporary Chinese Media*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Selected readings

Blum, Susan D. 1997. Naming practices and power of words in China. *Language in Society* 26, 357-381.

Chan, Marjorie K.M. 1998. Gender differences in the Chinese language: a preliminary report. In Lin, Hua (ed.), *Proceedings of the Ninth North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics (NACCL-9)*. Los Angeles: GSIL Publications, University of Southern California. Volume 2. Pp. 35-52.

Chirkova, Katia. 2007. Between Tibetan and Chinese: Identity and language in the Chinese southwest. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 30, 3, 405-417.

Davies, Gloria and Guanjin Wu. 2008. Affirming Chinese identity in a language of violence: Reflections on writings by China's new nationalists. Presented at the 17th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia in Melbourne, 1-3 July 2008.

Davison, Chris and Winnie Y. W. Auyeung Lai. 2007. Competing identities, common issues: Teaching (in) Putonghua. *Language Policy* 6, 119-134.

- Dong, Jie. 2009. 'Isn't it enough to be a Chinese speaker': Language ideology and migrant identity construction in a public primary school in Beijing. *Language & Communication* 29, 2, 115-126.
- Dong, Jie & Blommaert, Jan. 2009. Space, scale and accents: Constructing migrant identity in Beijing. *Multilingua* 28,1, 1-23.
- Dwyer, Arianne M. 2005. *The Xinjiang Conflict: Uighur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse*. East-West Center Washington. Online at: www.Eastwestcenterwashington.org/publications.
- Ettner, Charles. 2002. In Chinese, men and women are equal - or - women and men are equal? In Hellinger, Marlis and Bussmann, Hadumod (eds.), *Gender Across Languages: The Linguistic Representation of Women and Men*. Volume 2. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Pub. Co. Pp. 29-55.
- Fan, Carol C. 1996. Language, gender and Chinese culture. *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 10, 1, 95-114.
- Gao, Liwei & Rong Yuan. 2005. Linguistic construction of Modernity in Computer-Mediated Communication. In *Proceedings of NACCL – 17*.
- Guo, Longsheng. 2004. The relationship between Putonghua and Chinese dialects. In: Minglang Zhou (ed.), *Language Policy in the People's Republic of China: Theory and Practice Since 1949*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers. Pp. 45-53.
- He, Agnes Weiyun. 2004. Identity construction in Chinese heritage language classes. *Pragmatics* 14:2/3, 199-216.
- He, Agnes Weiyun. 2006. Toward an identity theory of the development of Chinese as a heritage language. *Heritage Language Journal* 4, 1, 1-28.
- Hong, Wei. 1997. Language change in Chinese: evidence from the service industry. *Linguistische Berichte* 167, 23-31.
- Link, Perry and Xian Qiang. 2013. China at the tipping point? From “Fart people” to citizens. *Journal of Democracy*, 24, 1, 29-85.
- Luo, Shiow-Huey and Richard L. Wiseman. 2000. Ethnic language maintenance among Chinese immigrant children in the United States. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 24, 307-324.
- Norton, Bonny and Yihong Gao. Identity, investment, and Chinese learners of English. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* 18:1, 109-120.
- Pan, Yuling. 1995. Power behind linguistic behavior: analysis of politeness phenomena in Chinese official settings. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 14, 4, 462-481.
- Paolillo, John. 2001. Language variation on Internet Relay Chat: A social network approach. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5, 2, 180-213.
- Rohsenow, John S. 2004. Fifty years of script and written language reform in the PRC: The genesis of the Language Law of 2001. In Minglang Zhou (ed.), *Language Policy in the People's Republic of China: Theory and Practice Since 1949*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers. Pp. 21-43.
- Ross, Michael, W. Q. Elaine Xun, and Anne E. Wilson. 2002. Language and the bicultural self. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 28, 11, 1040-1050.
- Su, Hsi-Yao (2003). The Multilingual and Multi-Orthographic Taiwan-Based Internet: Creative Uses of Writing Systems on College-Affiliated BBSs. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 8. 2.
- Wong, Andrew. 2005. The reappropriation of tongzhi. *Language in Society* 34, 763-793.

- Wong, Andrew. 2008. Coming-out stories and the "gay imaginary". *Sociolinguistic Studies* 3,1, 1-34.
- Wong, Andrew. 2008. The trouble with *tongzhi*: The politics of labeling among gay and lesbian Hongkongers. *Pragmatics*, 18, 2, 277-301.
- Wong, Andrew. 2008. On the actuation of semantic change: The case of *tongzhi*. *Language Sciences*, 30, 4, 423-449.
- Yang, Chunsheng. 2007. Chinese internet language: A sociolinguistic analysis of adaptations of the Chinese writing system. *Language@Internet*, 4.
<http://www.languageatinternet.org/articles/2007/1142>
- Zhang, Donghui. 2004. Home language maintenance among second generation Chinese American children. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 19, 2, 33-53.
- Zhang, Qing. 2007. Cosmopolitanism and linguistic capital in China: Language, gender and the transition to a globalized market economy in Beijing. In McElhinny, Bonnie (ed.), *Words, Worlds and Material Girls: Language, Gender, Global Economies*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter. Pp. 403-422.
- Zhao, Liming. 1998. Nüshu: Chinese women's characters. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 129, 127-137.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWBCpdmQ_28&feature=results_video&playnext=1&list=PLEA10B8B3C82288F9
<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL96A25E57D62D7DD7>
- Zhou, Minglang. 2001. The spread of Putonghua and language attitude changes in Shanghai and Guangzhou, China. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* 11, 2, 231-253.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWBCpdmQ_28&feature=results_video&playnext=1&list=PLEA10B8B3C82288F9
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWBCpdmQ_28&feature=results_video&playnext=1&list=PLEA10B8B3C82288F9