

LIN 225

Language and Gender

fall 2011

Instructor:	J. Daniel Hasty	Class Room:	C105 Wells Hall
Email:	hastyjam@msu.edu	Class Time:	T R 10:20am-11:40pm
Office:	Well's Hall A-544	Office Hours:	T R 12:00pm-1:00pm

Required Materials

- Jennifer Coates and Pia Pichler (eds.). 2011. *Language and Gender: A Reader*. 2nd Ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Additional required readings posted on the class Angel site

Course Goals

“Language is a property of the speech community, an instrument of social communication that evolves gradually and continuously throughout human history in response to a variety of human needs.”

-William Labov. (1987). “Some observations on the foundation of Linguistics”

“Femininity and masculinity are in a sense the prototypes of essential expression—something that can be conveyed fleetingly in any social situation and yet something that strikes at the most basic characterization of the individual.”

-Erving Goffman. (1979). *Gender Advertisements*

Humans are inherently social creatures that seek to construct identities through social groupings that express both solidarity and separation from other groups, and humans use aspects of language to construct these identities.

This course is designed to introduce you to the study of language and its interaction specifically with one of these social groupings: gender. To do this we will explore the following topics:

- The construction and performance of gender (socially and linguistically)
- The construction of gendered identities through the use of different linguistic features
- How linguistic variation and change is shaped by social factors (gender, age, class power, ethnicity, region, sexuality, etc.)
- How the linguistic construction of gender specifically interacts with these social factors

As this is an introductory course, no prior knowledge of linguistics or social/cultural theory is assumed or required. Although there will be some discussion of social theory, the class will be heavily focused on the scientific study of language, taking gender as our central variable. However, students are welcome to discuss other theories and methods studied in other topic-related fields.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

In this course you will respond to the readings through writing personal reflections on course material and completing a short research project. Your reading and mastery of the course material will be assessed by 3 quizzes and 3 tests and a final exam.

Course Grade Determination

The course will be graded out of 100 with the percentages outlined below. Final grades will be converted to a 4.0 scale.

• Personal Reflections	5%	90-100	4.0	70-74	2.0
• Research Project	10%	85-89	3.5	65-69	1.5
• Quizzes	15%	80-84	3.0	60-64	1.0
• Tests	50%	75-79	2.5	00-59	0.0
• Final Exam	<u>20%</u>				
• TOTAL	100				

Paper Assignments

Personal Reflections

Personal reflections involve responding in writing to a topic discussed in class. Each reflection is expected to be about 1 page (typed and double-spaced). Responses will be discussed on the Angel discussion board, and each student, as part of the grade for the assignment, will respond to other students' work.

Research Project

Students will complete a research project based on methods used in the articles discussed in class. The research topic will be given to you in class. This project will be completed in small groups, and the findings will be presented to the class.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be completed in class and will not take the entire period. The quizzes are meant to assess whether or not students are reading and understanding the material. You should study the reading materials carefully and take notes in class to do well on the quizzes.

Exams

There are three exams for the class which will cover lecture notes and the readings. You will be expected to recall important details from the readings and class discussion as well as be able to apply the concepts we have learned to critically engage with questions about language and gender as well as new data sets.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance

To do well in this class, it is essential that you be in class each meeting. If you are unable to attend a class for any reason, you are responsible for contacting me to receive any materials distributed on that day. Students are will be held responsible for anything missed during an absence.

Readings

Class discussion is the heartbeat of the course, and because of this, reading the assigned material is essential to success of the course. Students are expected to have read the articles before coming to class in order to contribute meaningful insight to the discussion.

Late Work

All work must be turned in at the beginning of class on the date it is due. Late work will not be accepted. (Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis)

Academic Integrity

Students are reminded of their commitments to the MSU Academic Policy. The policy can be reviewed at <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>.

Classroom Etiquette

You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner regarding your interaction with the instructor and as well as with your fellow classmates. Some of the course material may be viewed as controversial, and lively discussion and multiple viewpoints are encouraged in this class. However, you are always expected to respond in a professional manner towards the ideas and opinions of your classmates.

All cell phones, iPods, and any other device that makes noise must be turned off before entering the classroom. You may bring food and drinks to class unless this becomes a distraction.

LIN 225 Schedule—fall 2011

This schedule is tentative and subject to change as necessary.

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Sept 1	Introduction and Sex vs Gender		
Sept 6	Construction of Gender	Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003 (pdf)	PR1
Sept 8	Biological Differences	Brizendine 2006 (pdf)	
Sept 13	Women's Language	Lakoff 1975 (pdf)	
Sept 15	The Difference Approach	Maltz and Borker (Ch 35)	
Sept 20	Conversational Differences	Tannen (Ch 36)	
Sept 22	The Dominance Approach	Swann (Ch 13)	
Sept 27	Conversational Dominance	West and Zimmerman (Ch 11)	
Sept 29	Gender and Power	O'Barr and Atkins (Ch 32) and Wetzel (Ch 33)	
Oct 4	Exam 1		
Oct 6	Compliments and Gender	Holmes (Ch 7)	Project Asd
Oct 11	Conversations between Genders	DeFrancisco (Ch 12)	PR 2
Oct 13	Women-to-Women Speech	Coates (Ch 16)	
Oct 18	Female Hierarchies	Goodwin (Ch 9)	
Oct 20	Project Work Day		
Oct 25	Displaying Masculinity	Kiesling (Ch 21)	
Oct 27	Heterosexual Masculinity	Cameron (Ch 19)	
Nov 1	Sexual Identity and Phonetics	Podesva 2007 (pdf)	
Nov 3	Presentations		Project Due
Nov 8	Exam 2		
Nov 10	Gender and Language Change	Gal (pdf)	PR 3
Nov 15	Gender and Prestige	Trudgill (Ch 2) and Eiskovits (Ch 4)	
Nov 17	Social Identity	Cheshire (Ch 3)	
Nov 22	Social Networks	Eckert (Ch 6)	
Nov 24	Thanksgiving Break		
Nov 29	Labov's Principles	Meyerhoff 2006 (pdf)	
Dec 1	Communities of Practice	Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (Ch 31)	
Dec 6	Exam 3		
Dec 8	Recap and Review		

Final Exam on Friday, Dec 16, 7:45-9:45 pm