

## **CES 240: Language: the Colonial and Imperial Difference**

<http://ces240w17.blogspot.com/>

Kalamazoo College

Winter 2017

Tuesday/Thursday 12:10PM - 02:00PM

Olds Upton Hall, Room 321A

### **Dr. Reid Gómez**

107 Humphrey House

269.337.7353

Office Hours: Wednesday 1-3, Thursday 2-4

CES 240 is an interdisciplinary survey course designed to introduce students to the study of language and power. Our primary objective will be to assert linguistic rights and to interrogate the politics of language use, and thought, in light of colonization, imperialism and the transit of empire. We will consider the geo-political ideas and practices of literacy, language revitalization, translation and identity. These explorations will serve as a means to counter monologism, monoculture, and monolingualism often invoked in nationalist projects. These ideas are grounded in narratives and vocabularies particular to racial and colonial projects, consequently, each student will be asked to develop to their own creative understanding (linguistically speaking) of the field (language and the meta-linguistics of power). This will require fluency and immersion in a practice of meta-linguistics and the exploration of the inter-relationship between the language of the academy, and the language of social cultural community relevance. Critical Ethnic Studies requires scholarship able to counter the false binary between activism and intellectualism—that process is grounded in language.

*“The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people’s definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment, indeed in relationship to the entire universe.”*

Ngugi wa Thiong’o

### **Required Texts:**

*Language Planning and Policy in Native America: History, Theory, Praxis* (Bilingual Education and Bilingualism) (2012) by Teresa L. McCarty

*His Own Where* (Introduced by Sapphire) (1971: 2010) by June Jordan

*Translation and Identity in the Americas* (2007) by Edwin Gentzler

Selected readings available on course reserve at the Kalamazoo College library

Handouts distributed in class, or via email

### **Requirements:**

Assessing the status of your language: 10 points

Oral Performance: 10 points

Listening Mid-Term Examination: 10 points

Policy Brief: 20 points

On Translation and Multilingualism: 20 points  
Politics & Society Op-Ed Assignment: 20 points  
Participation and Decorum: 10 points

Extra credit option: The film *Âs Nutayuneân* [videorecording] [DVD] = *We still live here* is available at the circulation desk [DVD/Videos (W22- 1729)]. You may screen this film alone, or in a group, and write up a review of the film. This review should be 500-1,000 words and should explicitly reference course themes of materials. Each student must write their own review. (Up to 10 points available.)

Permalink for

video: [http://oneseearch.kzoo.edu/iii/encore/record/C\\_Rb1500234?lang=eng](http://oneseearch.kzoo.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb1500234?lang=eng)

### **Part One: Points of Entry**

*“Language is political. That’s why you and me, my Brother and my Sister, that’s why we sposed to choke our natural self into the weird, lying, barbarous, unreal, white speech and writing habits that the schools lay down like holy law.”*

June Jordan

### **Week One: Stalking With Stories: Language is Political**

Readings: June Jordan, “White English/Black English: The Politics of Translation (1972),” *Civil Wars* (1981), and “Nobody Mean More To Me Than You and the Future Life of Willie Jordan”

Leslie Silko, “Language and Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective,” *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit* (1997)

Keith H. Basso, “Stalking with Stories,” *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (1996)

Waziyatawin, “Defying Colonization Through Language Survival” (2005)

### **Part Two: Language Planning and Policy**

*“Applied to the project of language reclamation, continuance, as we understand it, is not so much about bringing a language ‘back’ as bringing it ‘forward’ into the vital, ever changing, everyday of people’s lives.”*

### **Week Two: First Peoples, First Principles: Context and Concepts**

Reading: *LPP: History, Theory, Praxis* pp. 1-50

**Assessing the status of your language:** Due Thursday at the beginning of class. No exceptions.

Sign-up for oral performance.

### **Week Three: Repatriating the Spoken Word**

Reading: *LPP: History, Theory, Praxis* pp. 51-102

Reading: *His Own Where*, Jordan readings from week one (review)

### **Week Four: Language Regensis in Practice**

Reading: *LPP: History, Theory, Praxis* pp. 103-154

**Op-Ed Topics:** Due Thursday at the beginning of class. No exceptions.

**Week Five: The Youth and the Seventh Generation**

Reading: *LPP: History, Theory, Praxis* pp. 155-202

**Listening Mid-Term Examination:** Thursday in class.

**Policy Brief:** Due Thursday at the beginning of class. No exceptions.

**Part Three: Translation and Identity**

*“The identity-forming power of translation always threatens to embarrass cultural and political institutions because it reveals the shaky foundation of their social authority.”*

**Week Six: New Definitions and Multiculturalism**

Reading: *Translation and Identity*, pp. 1-47

**Oral performances begin.** Consult sign up for your date and time.

**Op-Ed Bibliography:** Due Thursday at the beginning of class.

**Week Seven: Feminism and Cannibalism**

Reading: *Translation and Identity*, pp. 48-100

**Review published Op-Ed and Generate Grading Rubric:** Thursday class workshop

**Week Eight: Latin America, Border Writing and the Caribbean**

Reading: *Translation and Identity*, pp. 101-150

**Op-Ed Draft:** Due Thursday at the beginning of class.

**Week Nine: New Directions**

Reading: *Translation and Identity*, pp. 151-187

**On Translation and Multilingualism:** Due Thursday at the beginning of class. No exceptions.

**Week Ten: Creative Understanding**

Reading: M. M. Bakhtin (authoritative discourse, and creative understanding)

**Op-Ed (final):** Due Monday morning (after the final day of class) at 8 am via email.

You must include the media outlet and plan for submission of final piece. No exceptions.

**Format for All Written Assignments:** A note about form: all papers must be typed, proofread and printed. You should use a number 12 font. Times New Roman is my preferred font. All papers should include your name, my name (spelled correctly), the date, the assignment and an original title. There are no exceptions to these formatting requirements. Points will be deducted for failure to comply. Additional details for each assignment follow:

*NB: I recommend you keep a writer’s diary for the duration of this class. This is a private space. You should keep it close at all times. Do not let anyone look through this*

*space. If you want to share items you've placed in your diary, read it aloud, or copy out the section. Write, draw, doodle, cut-n-paste and copy—this will provide the source material for each of your written assignments, as well as class dialogue and discussion.*

**Assessing the status of your language: 10 points**

Read Waziyatawin's chapter ("Defying Colonization Through Language Survival"). This text is available on course reserve at the Kalamazoo College Library. Answer the questions Waziyatawin asks in this chapter. If you feel they are not relevant, please argue that point. You should think about the assumptions about language she is working from. Your reading of this chapter and your response to these questions should be informed by the readings for week one (Jordan, Silko and Basso). This paper will be used through out the term, as you engage in your own project of meta-linguistics, and for each of your written projects. Papers will be evaluated according to the clarity and depth of responses.

**Oral Performance: 10 points**

Each student will be required to deliver a five minute dramatic reading of a text. Each text must be given written approval by Dr. Gómez. Sign-ups for individual performances will take place in the second week of the term. Performances will begin in the sixth week. Each performance will be evaluated according the following criteria: verbatim recitation of text by memory, and the embodiment of the language of the text (physical, emotional and spiritual). Performance grades will be decided by Dr. Gómez (5 points) the CES 240 language community (5 points).

**Listening Mid-Term Examination: 10 points**

Students will listen to a story in class. They will not be allowed to ask questions. Immediately following the story they will be given a written exam. They will be required to re-tell the story, in the greatest detail possible, with as much original language as possible. Exams will be evaluated according to the following criteria: accuracy of retelling, detail, and use of original language.

**Policy Brief/Statement: 20 points**

This paper must follow the format and length requirements of standard policy briefs and statements. Students will be given a written assignment sheet in class. Student's arguments should reflect a detailed and nuanced understanding of the course material, particularly part two of the course design. Policy Brief/Statements will be evaluated according to the following criteria: evidence of engagement with course material, format, strength of argument, originality of argument and innovativeness of policy recommendations.

For examples and/or guidelines see:

[Questions To Consider When Writing a Policy Paper](#)

[Writing Effective Policy Papers](#)

[Suggestions for Writing Policy Analysis](#)

These links will be posted on the course blog.

**On Translation and Multilingualism: 20 points**

This paper should be 1,000 words (you must include word count) that critically address ideas of translation and multilingualism. You may focus your ideas on either, or both, of the primary texts (McCarty or Gentzler). You should formulate an argument you can argue. Following Strunk and White's "Elementary Principles of Composition" (rule no. 12) you should "Choose a suitable design and hold to it." Your writing should reflect your passion and creativity, and should be profound. Consequently, you should select a point, or matter, you care intensely about. Each paper will be evaluated according to three principles: has the author (you) identified a key concept (or argument) of the text, can they articulate that concept in their own words, and finally have they clearly and effectively formed an original argument/response to that concept.

**Politics & Society Op-Ed Assignment: 20 points**

This Assignment is adapted from *Public Sociology for Political Sociology: A Politics and Society Op-Ed Assignment*. Assignment goals: "Students will learn how to synthesize sociological research and communicate their findings in a new but important format: an op-ed piece. In doing so, they will learn how to communicate research findings to non-academic audiences in an effective manner." Assignment parts: topic submission; annotated bibliography; Op-ed review and rubric creation; Op-ed draft; and final submission. Details of the assignment will be distributed in class via handout. This handout will also be available in the course reserves.

*Full citation: Brown, Hana E. 2012 "Public Sociology for Political Sociology: A Politics and Society Op Ed Assignment." Assignment published in TRAILS: Teaching Resources and Innovations Library for Sociology. Washington DC: American Sociological Association. (<http://trails.asanet.org>)*

**Participation and Decorum: 10 points**

Your participation will be evaluated on your attendance, participation in class discussion, use of office hours, responsibility toward intellectual partners (when, and as, assigned) and response to email correspondence.

**Required Attendance and Participation:**

*Class participation:* We create the class together. Everyone's voice is essential and valuable. We will focus on listening, speaking and responding to each other. Dialogue (meaningful conversation) and translation (between languages and viewpoints) will be an everyday activity. Daily attendance is required. Any and all absences must be discussed with me, in writing, or during office hours; together we will decide on the best means of making up any missed work. Any unexcused absence will result in a reduction of grade (by 10 points).

*Class Responsibility and Decorum:* Each class session will consist of group discussion and individual writing exercises. My goal is to maintain an intellectually stimulating and supportive class environment. I expect everyone to be prepared for, and to participate in, discussion. Readings are to be completed before each class. Each member of the class is expected to follow a code of ethics: no tardiness, no sleep deprivation, no demeaning,

hateful or violent remarks, no cell phones, no internet or email, no texting and no intimidation. Failure to follow this code of ethics will result in direct and immediate action.

**Resources:**

- Kalamazoo College Library: [https://reason.kzoo.edu/library/research\\_help/](https://reason.kzoo.edu/library/research_help/)
- The Writing Center: <http://reason.kzoo.edu/writingcenter/>
- Student Code of Conduct: <https://reason.kzoo.edu/studev/stuconduct/>
- Academic Honesty: <https://reason.kzoo.edu/studev/policies/dishonest/>