Course Description

How we speak, write, and think/feel about the language(s) we know and others use, in what kinds of sociocultural contexts, and the very form and nomenclatures of those language(s) are never free of “sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (Silverstein, “Language structure and linguistic ideology,” 1979)—or, ideologies of language. Ideologies of language are concerned with how we become predisposed to understand parameters of normalcy about language- and writing-related matters and how we navigate the politics of gender, race, and class in the sociocultural worlds which we occupy. Where and how are ideologies of language and writing produced, articulated, naturalized and documented? What ideas are revealed, implied, suppressed, and authorized in linguistic and inscriptive ecologies? How do language ideologies shape circumscribe the speakers of language(s) and the cultural practices associated with such language(s)? How does attention and sensitivity to language ideologies deepen and complicate the way we understand society, culture, and history?

KORLIT 211 examines the centrality of language-related matters—the written, the spoken, and the imagined—in topics such as nation-building, national/cultural identity/unity, empire and colonies, colonial and postcolonial subjectivities, English as a global language, the postwar “Two Koreas”, literary canonization, popular media, soundscape, and ethnicity and multiculturalism.

Focused on Korea, KORLIT 211 equips students with comparative, transcultural, and interdisciplinary insights.

Requirements

Attendance, active participation, and completion of all of the assignments.
1. Regular attendance & Preparation of all readings and active participation (30%): In-class discussion & weekly online posting of reading responses.
2. “Siting language ideology” essay (10%): 750-1000 words. Post online on Canvas. Due by Feb 16.
3. Three reading summaries in class of assigned readings (book chapters) (30%): (a) Oral presentation of the reading in class (20 min. max.); (b) a max. 3-page written summary to be posted before class on canvas; (c) 2-3 questions to spark class discussion. For instructions see Appendix.

Submit (1) a research proposal (title, abstract, annotated table of contents) due by May 1; (2) annotated bibliography due by May 5; and, (3) final paper due by May 15.
Final projects must be approved by me.

* Extensions
As a rule, extensions will not be given on the paper assignments. However, if you contact me at least 72 hours before the deadline and can demonstrate extenuating circumstances (documentation required), extensions will be considered on a case-to-case basis.

Schedule & Readings

**Week 1 (January 28)**

*What is Language Ideology? Why Language Ideology Now?*

> Language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group. ...

> [L]anguage ideological approaches emphasize political economic forces (and other interest-informed action), diversity and contestation, the influence of speakers’ consciousness on both linguistic and social systems, the constitutive role of language in social life, and the myriad ways that ideologies of language and discourse construct identity.


> Ideologies cannot be attributed to one particular actor, not located in one particular site . . . but that it penetrates the whole fabric of societies or communities and results in normalised, naturalised patterns of thought and behavior.

> - Jan Blommaert, *Discourse*, 159


**Week 2 (February 4)**

*The Korean Language in Contemporary South Korean Culture and Media*


* In-class analysis activity:
Sites of language ideologies.

Further reading

Week 3 (February 11)
Infected Korean Language

There is no such thing as the original unity of language with which hybridity can be contrasted. ... [L]anguage is essentially a site of hybridity.
- Sakai Naoki, Voices of the Past, 19


ASSIGNMENT #1 (Due Feb 16):
“Siting Language Ideologies” Essay: Identify an example of language-based inequalities or debates in contemporary society. In your discussion, clarify what you mean by “language ideology” and on which linguistic, sociocultural, political, and economic aspects you are focusing. You can write a review essay of a recent publication—e.g., The Fall of Language in the Age of English by Minae Mizumura, translated by Mari Yoshihara and Juliet Winters Carpenter (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015)—or you turn to a debate in a more distant past.

*********** No Class on February 18 ***********

University Closed

Week 4 (February 25)
Language Ideologies in the Two Koreas


* GUEST SPEAKER: Professor Ross King
(Tentative) “Linguistic Etiquette, Women’s Language, and ‘Language Morality’ in North Korean Language Planning Discourse.”

Further reading
Week 5-6 (March 4 and March 11)
“Nationalization” of the Linguistic Field

March 4


In-class analysis activity:

March 11


Week 8 (March 25)
Colonial Linguistics and the Japanese Empire


Week 9 (April 1)
Colonialism, Language, and Modern Korean Literature

SUMMARY Hanscom, Christopher P. The Real Modern: Literary Modernism and the Crisis of Representation in Colonial Korea (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard East Asia Center, 2013)

In-class analysis activity:
Lecture: Ch’oe Namsŏn, “Images of Korea in Japanese Literature” (1931).

Week 10 (April 8)
Sound of Modernity/Modern Language


Week 11 (April 15)
Language and/as Identity

“In April 1946, less than one year after the end of Japan’s long Fifteen Year War (1931-1945), the prominent Japanese writer Shiga Naoya (1883-1971) published a controversial essay in which he advocated changing Japan’s national language from Japanese to French.

... Language ideology is of course by no means restricted to colonial contexts—but it can become particularly visible in them, as the seemingly self-evident relationships between language and national identity can no longer be taken for granted.

... Language use itself was a site of contestation and negotiation, with urgent political ramifications.”
- Christina Yi, Colonizing Language, xv, xviii.

* GUEST SPEAKER: Professor Christina Yi

In-class analysis activity:
Short Story: Kim Saryang, “Into the Light.”

**Week 12 (April 22)**
*Special Session: Colonial and Postcolonial Korea in Asian American Context with Emily Jungmin Yoon.*

Read Emily Jungmin Yoon’s poetry, attend two events associated with Yoon’s visit, and participate during Q & A.


**Week 13 (April 29) Last Day of Class**
*Final Paper Conference (final project) & Wrap-Up*