

Course Description

This course will examine the nature and structure of human language, the nature of speech and its relationship to language acquisition, models of language acquisition and the relationship of language to thought. In addition it will explore the role of language as it affects our experience of self and others, how language and culture interact and how, in general, language is "constitutive" versus merely "instrumental" in our uniquely human experience of the universe.

Goals

Provide an understanding of the nature of spoken language.

Provide an understanding of how speech and language are acquired and of common speech and language disorders.

Provide an understanding of how language shapes our experience of the universe.

Provide an understanding of how language and speech unite to develop uniquely human characteristics.

Provide an understanding of how language is constitutive of self, other and the universe.

Provide an understanding of how differences in language affect cognition and our ability to relate to one another effectively.

Provide an understanding of how language and communication interact with culture.

Objectives

1. Students will gain an understanding of the structure of human language
2. Students will gain understanding of the nature of spoken language
3. Students will gain an understanding of the timetable of language and speech development.
4. Students will gain an understanding of the nature and etiology of common speech and language disorders.
5. Students will gain an understanding of the interaction of language and culture.
6. Students will gain an understanding of language differences between cultures and within cultures.
7. Students will gain understanding of how language is constitutive of our experience of self and others.
8. Students will develop an understanding of the inter-relationship between language and thought.

Outcome/Assessment Criteria

A developed understanding of the nature of speech and language

Measured by essays, term paper and essay exams. (1,2,3,4)

Developed understanding of the relationship among speech, language and human thought.

Measured by essays, term paper and essay exams. (7, 8)

A developed understanding of the relationships among speech language and culture.

Measured by essays, term paper and essay exams. (5,6)

Course Activities

Lecture

Assigned text, Journal and periodical readings

Class Discussion

Essay Examinations

Essays

Research Papers

Course Outline:

1. The Nature of Language
 - a. "The Difference in Man and the Difference it Makes"
2. Language Acquisition
 - a. Behaviorist Interpretation
 - b. Nativist Interpretation
 - c. Generative Semantics Interpretation
 - d. Cognitive Interpretation
 - e. Information Processing Interpretation
 - f. Pragmatics Revolution
 - g. Social Interactionist Interpretation
 - h. Evolution Continues
3. Get Ready... Get Set.. Talk!
 - a. Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development
 - b. Vygotsky's Theory of Cognitive Development
 - c. Perceptual Groundwork for Communication
4. Stages of Development of Language, Speech and Communication
5. Building Blocks of Speech
6. Speech & Language Disorders
7. Anatomical and Physiological Bases of Speech, Language and Hearing
8. The Functions of Speech Communication
9. Language Diversity
 - a. Intercultural differences
 - b. Intracultural differences
 - c. Gender Differences
10. Human Experience and Language
 - a. Relativism
 - b. Birth and Death of Meaning: Becker, Mead, Goffman, Laing
 - i. Constructing Self and Others
 - ii. Social Reality
11. Media and Communication
 - a. McLuhan
 - b. Ong