

# LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

## Linguistics 7

**type of course:** lecture, 4 hours/week

**credits:** 4, letter grading

**requisites:** none

**course description:**

Lecture, four hours. How do we use language to project our own identity? How do we use it to perceive or shape the identity of others? This course offers an introduction to speech act theory and various claims that speech act theory can account for the systematic subordination of women; maligning of racial minorities; and, in some cases, incitement to violence through hate speech. A good foundation for students of linguistic theory, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and communication studies.

**grading structure:**

- daily reading & participation (10% of your grade);
- four short (2-3p) papers (“squibs”; 40% of your grade);
- a final paper (50% of your grade):

Find and excerpt a discussion of race or gender that hasn’t been covered in class; analyze it with respect to Speech Act Theory and at least one other paper covered in the course.

**text:**

Austin, J. L. 1962. *How to do things with words*. London.

Bird, A. 2002. “Illocutionary Silencing.” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 83: 115.

Hom, C. 2008. “The semantics of racial epithets.” *Journal of Philosophy* 105: 416–440.

Hornsby, J. 2001. “Meaning and uselessness: how to think about derogatory words.” In P. French et al. (eds.) *Midwest Studies in Philosophy XXV*: 128–141. Blackwell.

Langton, R., Haslanger, S., and Anderson, L. 2012. “Language and race.” In DG Fara & G Russell (eds.), *Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Language*, 753–767. New York: Routledge.

Langton, R & West, C 1999. “Scorekeeping in a pornographic language game.’ *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 77(3): 303–319.

Lewis, David. 1979. “Scorekeeping in a language game.” *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 8(3): 339–359.

Saul, J. 2006, “Pornography, Speech Acts and Context.” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 106(2): 61–80.

Sumner, L.W. “Criminalizing expression: hate speech and obscenity.” In Deigh, J. & Doling, D. (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Criminal Law*. Oxford University Press, 17–36.

Tirrell, Lynne. 2012. “Genocidal language games.” In Ishani Maitra and Mary Kate McGowan (eds.), *Speech and Harm: Controversies Over Free Speech*. Oxford University Press, 174–221.

**schedule:**

wk	topic	readings	due
1	introduction	Austin 1962: “How to do things with words” (chapter 1)	
2		Lewis 1979: “Scorekeeping in a language game”	
3	language & gender	L&W 1999: “Scorekeeping in a pornographic language game”	sqib 1
4		Bird 2002: “Illocutionary silencing”	
5		Saul 2006: “Pornography, speech acts, and context”	sqib 2
6	language & race	Hornsby 2001: “Meaning and uselessness”	
7		Hom 2008: “The semantics of racial epithets”	sqib 3
8		Langton et al. “Language and race”	
9	hate speech	Sumner 2011: “Criminalizing expression”	sqib 4
10		Tirrell 2012: “Genocidal language games”	