Language We Live by: Language in Cognition, Learning, and Organization Spring 2018 Tuesday/Thursday 9:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m. Dey Hall 412

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I. Course Description

What is the nature and structure of language? How do we acquire and learn language? How does the way we use language affect our interactions with the world? Throughout history, these questions have sparked debate and spurred reflection. This seminar continues that tradition through an interdisciplinary approach into language, focusing on its philosophical, linguistic, educational, and informational dimensions. We will study popular and scholarly articles alongside various kinds of media artifacts to engage with both historical and contemporary investigations of language. These investigations include language acquisition, language learning, behavioral patterns, and cultural diversity. Students will have the opportunity to examine their personal language experiences in linguistically and culturally diverse settings. Through class discussions, writing assignments, group presentations, and student-designed creative projects, students will have an opportunity to hone the active inquiry, creative thinking, and communication skills necessary for future academic endeavors.

This course fulfills a UNC undergraduate General Education requirement in philosophy and moral reasoning.

II. Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- 1. Evaluate the phenomena of language from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives
- 2. Apply approaches from linguistics, education and information science to investigate the nature of language
- 3. Synthesize evidence from the disciplines we study to formulate and defend an argument about the nature of language

III. Course Requirements

1. Reflection Posts, Responses & Post Portfolio

We will assign frequent reflection prompts will be assigned to help cement and extend the readings and classroom learnings. Students will either be assigned a reflection or will be split into pairs, with one student writing a reflection and the other responding to it. At the end of the semester, each student will select three posts to revise and present in a portfolio. This portfolio will include a brief overall reflection, and students will have a chance to reply to their partners' responses, if any.

Posts and responses will be ungraded but checked for completion, forming 15% of your grade. Your portfolio will be graded and forms the other 15% of this category.

2. Attendance

Attendance in class is required. If you have a good reason for missing class, you will need to send me an email at least 24 hours before the class to let us know what the reason is. If you miss a class without informing us in advance, you will lose 1% (1 point). Also, you need to arrive for class on time. If you are late for class two times, you will also lose 1% (1 point). In the case of illness or family emergency, a doctor's note or a note from your academic advisor is required to verify your absence.

3. Participation

There will be plenty of opportunities during class time to ask questions, do group work, make comments, and respond to what your classmates and we say. Everyone is expected to come to class prepared to participate. There are several aspects on which you will be graded: your active participation in class, your critical engagement with the materials, most importantly, the respect you demonstrate towards all other members of the course.

We will try our best to make sure that the class atmosphere is friendly and engaging such that everyone feels comfortable speaking up; if you feel that that is not the case, we strongly encourage you to come and talk to me.

4. Three 2-page papers

You will need to write three papers, 2-page long (double space). You will be given specific guidance and rubrics for writing these paper. The topics for these papers will be distributed well in advance. The papers must be handed in physically in class and have only your PID number.

You will be evaluated on more than just mere comprehension of the material: you will be expected to analyze critically the materials we have discussed. We will provide prompt and constructive feedback on the papers for the course.

5. Group Presentation

Before the spring break, you will be asked to team up with at least one student in the class and form a presentation group. Each group will be assigned a section of a reading and present the main idea in the reading. Each member should be responsible for one or two slides. All the slides need to be uploaded to Sakai by *Monday, Mar 19, 11:59 PM (EST)*. Each presentation is no longer than ten minutes. We will provide guidelines before you do the presentations.

Your presentation will be evaluated based on the quality of your understanding, engagement with the reading, and the effectiveness of the delivery. We strongly encourage you to schedule a meeting with us in advance to discuss your presentation. Keep in mind that there will be no make-ups for missing the presentations except for the case of illness or family emergency. In such case, a doctor's note or a note from your academic advisor is required to verify your absence. You will need to do your make-up presentation at the end of the semester (*Apr. 24*).

6. Final Project

Your final project is the opportunity to show how you have met the course goals. It will be worth 20% of your final grade (see rubric for details). The format is not specified, so it is up to you. Your work may be conducted individually or with one partner; bear in mind that, in the case of a partner project, the work should reflect the work of two people.

Your project must be accompanied by a short (1.5-page, double-spaced, maximum) paper arguing that your project has met the goals for this course.

Milestones (See syllabus for due dates)

- Project proposal. 1 page description of the project you are interested in completing. For a partner project, each partner needs to submit one page detailing the work they will do on the project.
- 2. Progress reports (2). 1-page, double-spaced, summary of the work completed to date, where you are in your thinking, and any challenges or concerns that might have arisen. For partner work, each partner needs to submit one page detailing the work they have completed.
- 3. Presentation. Length of time will be determined depending on the total number of projects and will be shared with you when you receive feedback on your proposal.

Posts, Responses, and Portfolio, 30% total Participation and attendance, 10% Group presentation, 10% Three 2-page papers, each worth 10%, 30% total Final Project, 20%

IV. Course Resources

The following resources might be useful for your study.

1. The Learning Center

The Learning Center is designed for a range of students: those who need help with basic reading problems, those who are good readers but who wish to become even better, and those who wish to improve their study skills. The Learning Center is located in the Student and Academic Services Building (SASB North) and is open all year (except for regular University recesses) from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. Students may register at any time during the year. If you have any questions, call the Learning Center office at 919---**962** --- 3782 or visit their website <u>http://learningcenter.unc.edu/</u>.

2. The Writing Center

The Writing Center assists members of the University community who have writing needs that are not met in the classroom or by other services on campus. The Writing Center is located in the Student and Academic Services Building. Appointments are made by visiting the Writing Center's website at <u>http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb</u>.

3. The Academic Advising Program

Academic Advising offices are located in Steele Building. In addition to providing guidance related to course enrollments and majors and minors, Academic Advising can help with any problems you may be having with progress in your courses or other concerns you may have. Contact Academic Advising at 919-966-5116 or visit their website at http://advising.unc.edu/.

4. Student Success and Academic Counseling

The Center for Student Success and Academic Counseling in SASB North, Room 2203 can be useful in solving problems non-mainstream students sometimes encounter. Contact CSSAC at 919-962-1046 or visit their website at <u>http://cssac.unc.edu/</u>.

5. Counseling and Wellness Services

The staff at CWS (located in the Student Health Building) provides positive, professional counseling for students who need academic, vocational, and personal guidance. Contact CWS at 919-966-3658 or visit their website at http://campushealth.unc.edu/.

6. Dean of Students Office

Located in suite 1106 of the Student Academic Services North Building (SASB), the Dean of Students provides support services for all students and assists with transitions or other challenges students may be having in and out of the classroom. Contact their office at 919-966-4042 or via e-mail at dos@unc.edu or visit their office at https://deanofstudents.unc.edu.

V. Course Policies

1. Classroom behavior policy

A. Constructive discussion is encouraged in this class and requires a degree of mutual respect, willingness to listen, and tolerance of opposing opinions. Respect for individual differences and alternative viewpoints will be maintained at all times in this class.

B. Disruptive behavior is not permitted in this class. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to the following: talking or texting over other members of the class, leaving class early without informing, eating in class, sleeping, doing assignments for other classes, receiving beeper or phone calls during class, checking emails, browsing social media, and engaging in other activities that detract from the classroom learning activities.

C. When your fellow students or we are talking, we would not recommend you to walk out of the classroom without informing us why you are leaving. If you want to go to the bathroom, when other members of the class are talking, you might want to raise your hand and inform us. If you feel uncomfortable to tell us before the class or have some personal reasons (e.g. health related reasons), please feel free to talk to us.

D. You are permitted to use laptops/tablets during class for note-taking and other class-related work only. Those using laptops/tablets during class for work not related to that class must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.

E. All cell phones, smartphones, and other electronic devices (e.g., iPods) must be turned off (or on vibrate) and hidden from view during class time. Except in emergencies, those using such devices must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.

2. Late assignment policy

A. You can submit your paper(s) late without penalty, as long as you ask me, via email or in person, for an extension. Extensions will only be given in cases of illness or family emergency. A doctor's note or a note from your academic advisor is required to verify the illness or family emergency. Late paper submitted without explicit acknowledgment of an extension will not be graded.

B. Work that is done in class (including group work) cannot be made up for, outside of class, again except under the circumstances of illness, family emergency, or excused absence. A doctor's note or a note from your academic advisor is required to verify the circumstance.

VI. Grading Policies

We adhere to a strict policy of blind grading. This means that the papers that you hand in should have only your PID number.

We rely on the standards set by the registrar in assigning letter grades to work. You can find the explanation of letter grades here:

http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/

А	95–100 %	С	73–76 %
А-	90–94 %	C-	70–72 %
B+	87-89 %	D+	67–69 %
В	83-86 %	D	63–66 %
B-	80-83 %	F	below 63 %
C+	77-79 %		

VII. The Honor Code

The honor code applies to everything that you—and we—do at this university, including our use of outside sources in our research and writing. Our work in this class will conform to the principles and procedures defined in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance (http://instrument.unc.edu/). The research that we do this semester, whether primary or secondary, print or online, formal or informal, will require careful documentation on your part. We will review citation guidelines early and often throughout the semester. The need to cite your sources applies to all your work, including drafts as well as final versions of your papers. If we suspect you of plagiarizing all or part of paper, even unintentionally, we are required to report the offense to the Honor Court.

Note: We take UNC's honor system and student integrity very seriously. It is unacceptable to turn in the same paper for more than one class. Papers already turned in for other classes are not eligible to be turned in for this class.

VIII. Students with Disabilities

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ensures that no qualified person shall by reason of disability be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of, any program or activity operated by the University. In compliance with UNC policy and federal law, qualified students with disabilities are eligible to receive "reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to education opportunities, programs, and activities" (http://www.unc.edu/depts/lds/faculty-policies.html). If you anticipate such accommodations, please notify me as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Additionally, you may seek out student support services at the Department of Disability Services (DDS) (http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/) and through the Learning Center (http://learningcenter.unc.edu/)

IX. Non-Discrimination/Diversity Policy

We encourage and welcome diverse backgrounds, experiences and viewpoints in this class. This university does not discriminate against its students or employees based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. The University's policy states that sexual orientation should be treated in this same manner. In this class, we will strive to maintain an open atmosphere with shared respect for all differences. We encourage and welcome diverse backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints in this class.

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

X. Course Schedule

<u>This schedule is subject to change</u>. Some readings may take us longer to cover and comprehend than others, and we will adjust the schedule accordingly. When there are changes to this schedule, you will be informed on Sakai. *If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to check Sakai for any alterations in readings and/or due dates for assignments*.

SECTION: PREPARATION

Week 1: INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

Readings	Syllabus
Class	1. Introduce the course and syllabus
Activities	2. Get to know each other
	3. Watch 2 short videos and then discuss your language
	experiences
Assignment	Forum post

SECTION 1

EXPLORING THE PHENOMENA AND THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

Learning Goals:

- 1. Examine our personal language experiences;
- 2. Identify basic concepts, compare competing approaches, and analyze arguments;
- 3. Match personal language experience with theoretical investigations;
- 4. Evaluate and construct your own arguments.

Week 2: INTRODUCTION

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A Revolution in Linguistics

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Readings	1. Noam Chomsky on the Evolution of Language: A	
	Biolinguistic Perspective by C.J. Polychroniou (8 pages)	
Class	1. Lecture 15-20 minutes	
Activities	2. Discussion	
Assignment	Forum post	

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Overturning the Revolution

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Readings	1.	Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis (SEP)
	2.	(Optional) How Language Shapes Thoughts by L. Boroditsky
Class	1.	Lecture 15-20 minutes
Activities	2.	Watch clips of the movie, Arrival
	3.	Discussion on the basis of the movie and the readings
Assignment	Forum	post

Week 3: THE INNATENESS AND INDETERMINACY OF HUMAN LANGUAGE

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Language as Human Instinct

Readings	1. Chapter 4 of <u>The Language Instinct</u> by <i>S. Pinker</i>
Class	1. Lecture 15-20 minutes
Activities	2. Group Discussion
Assignment	Forum post

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The Indeterminacy of Language

Readings	1. Radical translation (a thought experiment) by W. V. Quine
Class	1. Lecture 15-20 minutes
Activities	2. Group debate on Quine's argument
Assignment	Forum post

Week 4: THE RELATIVITY OF LANGUAGES

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Cross-Linguistic differences in Spatial Representations

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Readings	1. Ch 2 Frames of Reference from <u>Space in Language and</u>
	Cognition by S. Levinson
Class	1. Lecture 15-20 minutes
Activities	2. Group Discussion
Assignment	Forum post

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Cross-Linguistic differences in Temporal Representations

Readings	1. How We Make Sense of Time by K. Cooperrider and R. Núñez
Class	1. Lecture 15-20 minutes
Activities	2. Group Discussion
Assignment	Forum post and Paper 1 is due

Week 5: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Readings	1. Ch 2 of Don't Sleep, There Are Snakes: Life and Language in the Amazonian Jungle by <i>D. Everett</i>
Class	1. Lecture 15-20 minutes
Activities	2. Group discussions
Assignment	Forum post

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Translating Language and Culture

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Readings	1. Ch 13 Translation of Classical Chinese poetry of by <i>V</i> . <i>Pellatt and E</i> . <i>Liu</i>	
	2. Watch an <u>animation</u> of Classical Poetry (both in Chinese and English)	
Class	1. Lecture 15-20 minutes	
Activities	2. Group Discussions	
Assignment	Forum post	

SECTION 2: HOW DOES THE WAY WE USE LANGUAGE AFFECT OUR INTERACTIONS WITH THE WORLD?

Learning Goals:

- 1. Describe various foundational approaches and texts of information science
- 2. Distinguish the way the information science conceptualizes the use of language
- 3. Contrast the ontological and constructivist approaches to organization
- 4. Identify and analyze the information needs of various types of users
- 5. Create an organizational system to satisfy a given information need

Week 6: THE ACT OF ORGANIZING

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Organizing

Organizing			
Readings	1. "As We May Think" by Vanevar Bush 1945		
	2. TBD selection from <i>The Intellectual Foundation of Information</i> <i>Organization</i> by E. Svenonius		
Class	1. Group Discussion		
Activities			
Assignment	Forum post: Give an example of how categorization differs from other types of organizing activities. How does the language of		
	categories enable and restrict the potential uses of the information in		
	your example?		

	1: Organization as Construction	
Readings	1. TBD selection from <i>Women</i> , Fire and Dangerous Things by G. Lake	
	2. Selections from <i>Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences</i>	
	by Bowker and Star.	
Class	1. Card sort activity	
Activities	2. Group Discussion	
Assignment	Forum post: Give an example of a socially of constructed	
	organizational system. How does this organizational system guide a	
	certain perception of the world? How does it differ from other ways	
	of organizing the world into pieces?	

Week 7: ORGANIZING AS ONTOLOGY

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Classification 2: Organizing as Ontology

Readings	1. Bates, Marcia J. 1999. "The Invisible Substrate of Information			
	Science." Journal of the American Society for Information Science 50 (12):			
	1043–50.			
	2. Read preface and skim contents of <u>A Classification and Subject</u>			
	Index for Cataloguing and Arranging the Books and Pamphlets of a			
	Library by M. Dewey.			
Class	1. Library visit.			
Activities	2. Group Discussion			
Assignment	Forum post: Describe an organizational system you encountered in			
	the UNC Library or on its website. What was the effect of this			
	organizational system on your ability to use its resources? How did			
	the system affect you?			

Th Organizing and the Web

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Readings	1. "The Semantic Web" by T. Berners-Lee et. al.		
	2. "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" by Alan Turing in <u>The</u>		
	Mind's Eye, Hofstadter and Dennett, Eds.		
Class	1. Ontological classification		
Activities	2. Group Discussion		
Assignment	Forum post: Give an example of an ontological organizational system that is not a library or website (be creative!). Identify the unique aspects of your example in relation to the examples we've seen so far in class.		

Week 8: ORGANIZING AS SPEECH ACT

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System As Speech

Readings 1. TBD Selections from How to Do Things With Words by J.	
	2. Feinberg, Melanie. 2011. "How Information Systems

	 <u>Communicate as Documents: The Concept of Authorial Voice</u>." Journal of Documentation 67 (6): 1015–37. 3. (Recommended) "Minds, Brains and Programs" by John Searle in The Mind's Eye, Hofstadter and Dennett, Eds. (esp. P 386 onwards); 	
Class	1. Rhetorical Analysis Activity	
Activities	2. Group Discussion	
Assignment	Forum post: Write about a time that an organizational system you	
	interacted with 'performed' a speech act that affected you.	

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Interface as Language

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Readings	1. "Improving Our Ability to Improve: A Call for Investment in a	
	New Future" by D. Englebart	
	2. Video:" <u>The Mother of All Demos</u> ", video demonstration by D.	
	Englebart, 1968.	
Class	1. Interface Explorations	
Activities	2. Group Discussion	
	Be prepared to discuss in class:	
	how interfaces impact what's possible with systems	
Assignment	Forum post: Creative organizational systems	

Week 9: ORGANIZING FOR PLURALITY

T Organizing for World Changes

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Readings	1. TBD selection from The Structure of Scientific Revolutions: 2nd Edition	
	by T. Kuhn	
	2. "Searching as Learning" by Pertti Vakkari.	
Class	1. Organization as Language Learning Activity	
Activities	2. Group Discussion	
	Be prepared to discuss in class:	
	Analogy of language learning in the design process to language	
	learning in the search process.	
Assignment	Forum post: What vocabulary or language did you have to learn to	
	complete this activity? How are you different now that you can	
	understand and speak this language?	

Th Information Needs

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Readings	1. Hjørland, Birger. 2002. "Domain Analysis in Information Science:		
	Eleven Approaches - Traditional as Well as Innovative." Journal of		
	Documentation 58 (4): 422–62;		
	2. Mai, Jens-Erik. 2010. " <u>Classification in a Social World: Bias and</u> <u>Trust.</u> " Journal of Documentation 66 (5): 627–42.		
Class	1. Domain Analysis Activity		
Activities			

	2. Group Discussion			
	Be prepared to discuss in class:			
	how the differences emanate from the needs of different			
	communities.			
Assignment Forum post: Either describe an organizational system for				
	domain or invent one. Show how this system has been tailored to its			
	community, especially the language elements or categories it employs.			

SECTION 3: HOW DO WE ACQUIRE AND LEARN LANGUAGE?

Learning Goals:

- 1. To compare and contrast the role of language in three major psychological theories;
- 2. To explore the limitations and advantages of each perspective;
- 3. To situate language within a broader conversation about learning;
- 4. To consider how classroom language impacts learners;
- 5. To define disciplinary language in advance of next week's field experience;
- 6. To develop a framework for observing a learning situation from a chosen perspective;
- 7. To apply educational perspectives to an observation.
- 8. To apply educational perspectives and collected data to answer an empirical question

Week 10 LANGUAGE AS A TOOL FOR LEARNING

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Skinner, Vygotsky, and Piaget

Readings	1. Sign up for one of the following readings:		
	1. Cognitive perspective: Hofstadter, D. R. (2000). Analogy as the		
	core of cognition. In J. Gleick & J. Cohen (eds.), The Best		
	American Scientific Writing 2000. Ecco Press		
	http://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/hofstadter/analogy.html		
	2. Social-constructivist perspective: Selection from Thomas, R. M.		
	(2005). Comparing theories of child development (6th edition).		
	Belmont CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning (on Sakai)		
	3. Behaviorist perspective: Chapter 1: Skinner, B. F. (1957). Verbal		
	Behavior.Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.		
	2. Optional if you are interested, watch		
	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4KuS08TRsE, "The Neuroscience		
	of Language and Learning" by Karen Froud)		
Class	1. Discussion		
Activities	2. Jigsaw groups to discuss the three articles, followed by a brief		
	lecture on the major psychological approaches.		
Assignment	Forum post		

Th	An alternate per	spective: neurobiological basis
	Readings	1. Skim the two articles you did not read for Tuesday's class.
		2. Review Ch 2 The Origin of Concept by S. Carey
	Class	1. Discussion
	Activities	
	Assignment	Forum post

Week 11 CODE SWITCHING

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Language, culture, and learning

Readings	1. Brown, J. S., Collins, A., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition	
	and the culture of learning. Educational Researcher, 18, 32-42.	
Class	1. Discussion	
Activities		
Assignment	1. Final paper progress report #2 due Thursday!	
	2. Forum post	

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N avigating multilingual classrooms

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Readings	1. <u>"3 Ways to Speak English" by Jamila Lyiscott</u>
	2. Full text of California Proposition 58 on bilingual education
Class	1. Discussion to analyze assumptions and arguments in each text
Activities	
Assignment	Forum post

Week 12 Language in action

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The "language of the science classroom"

Readings	1. Lee, O., Quinn, H., & Valdés, G. (2013). Science and language for	
	English language learners in relation to Next Generation Science	
	Standards and with implications for Common Core state standards	
	for English language arts and mathematics. Educational Researcher,	
	<i>42</i> (4), 226. doi:10.3102/0013189X13480524	
Class	1. Discussion	
Activities		
Assignment	1. Develop at least three questions about language and learning that	
	you might want to investigate during our field experience	
	2. Forum post	

Th	Preparing for a	Field Experience
	Readings	1. Chp. 4 of An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and

	Method by James Paul Gee	
Class	1. Discussion	
Activities	2. In groups: rank-order your questions and select your top-three	
	choices overall. Recognize that these choices may be modified as you	
	analyze your data.	
	3. In pairs: Develop a field note template that you will use during	
	our observation on Tuesday.	
Assignment	1. Field note template	
	2. Forum post	

Week 13 Field Experience

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Field Experience: Observe a Learning Situation in Action

Readings	1. Chp. 5 of An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and	
	<u>Method</u> by James Paul Gee	
Class	1. We will be meeting at the Morehead Planetarium (tentative) to	
Activities	observe a learning situation in action.	
Assignment	1. Summarize your data	
	2. Forum post	

Th Reflecting on the Field Experience

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Readings	1. Your own data collected on Tuesday	
Class	1. Share observations	
Activities	2. Discussion	
	3. In partners: How can you use your data to answer your research	
	question? How do the major perspectives illuminate your data, or	
	how does your data illuminate the perspectives? Develop an outline	
	for Paper #3	
Assignment	1. Forum post	
_	2. Paper #3 is due by 5 pm on Monday!	