

Cyber German: Electronic Language and Discourse in the German-speaking World

German 470 / Linguistics 485, Spring 2014
TThF 1:00 – 1:50pm

Prof. Hiram Maxim

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Modern Languages 214; Office hours TTh 2:00 – 3:00pm and by app't

Course description

In this upper-level writing intensive course conducted in German, students will examine in-depth the language used in electronic communication in the contemporary German-speaking world. The first half of the course will introduce students to the basic elements of discourse analysis, and then in the second half students will apply this methodology to German language communication in a range of electronic media (e.g., websites, email, discussion forums, chat, Twitter, social media). The focus of the analyses will be on both the specific linguistic features and the cultural meanings of language use in electronic communication. Analyses of analogous English-language online media and collaborations with a similar course in Spanish, CyberSpanish (SPN 410) will provide the basis for cross-cultural comparisons. The course will culminate in an independent research project in which students undertake a detailed analysis of a particular type of electronic communication.

No knowledge of linguistics or discourse analysis is required, but students must be familiar with the common tools for electronic communication and should be able to perform the following activities: use search engines; communicate online via email, chat, discussion forums, Twitter, social media; download images and texts. Students are encouraged to bring their laptops or tablets to class because there will be daily examination of electronic media in class.

Because there is no expectation that students have prior experience with discourse analysis, students will often work in pairs or groups in order to pool their knowledge and work together to practice discourse analysis on different media. Some of this collaboration will be done in and out of class using the collaborative function of Google Docs. Much of the readings about discourse analysis will be in English, but the all class discussions and assignments as well as the electronic media will be in German.

As a 400-level course, this class represents the highest level German language course that the German Studies Department offers. Whereas the discursive focus at Level 3 was on *explanation*, the emphasis at Level 4 shifts to *argumentation*. Students will work extensively on how to summarize others' opinions, formulate their own well-substantiated opinions, and respond to criticisms of those opinions. Through their analysis of electronic discourse, students will gather the evidence for constructing an argument, and they will also read secondary literature on electronic discourse in order to be exposed to and summarize other viewpoints.

Because this course fulfills one of the Continuing Writing Requirements for the GERs, students will complete a range of writing assignments that include short responses to the assigned readings, written analyses of electronic discourse, short written exercises that explore a particular aspect of electronic discourse, and the aforementioned longer independent research paper.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course students will be able

- to apply basic tenets of discourse analysis to understand how language is used in electronic media to make meaning;
- to describe the basic characteristics of different electronic genres;
- to summarize the views of others regarding the analysis of electronic discourse;
- to formulate a well-substantiated argument regarding the analysis of electronic discourse;
- to respond to counterarguments regarding the analysis of electronic discourse;
- to locate culturally significant issues in their analysis of electronic discourse and to contextualize these issues in terms of their larger social-historical dimensions;
- to describe their own language development and to demonstrate familiarity with the next steps in their language learning.

Disclaimer

In order to complete some of the course activities, students may need to establish interactions with German native speakers through different web tools (e.g., e-mail, chat rooms). Students are strongly advised to exercise caution and common sense during these electronic interactions and to follow these recommendations:

- Do not provide any sensitive information such as your real name, address, phone number or any other personal information;

- Do not to use your regular e-mail address (e.g. your Emory e-mail address) or personal social network account (e.g. your Facebook profile). Instead, you are encouraged to create alternative temporary accounts with a fictitious identity.

Be also aware that some web participants may use explicit language, express offensive or controversial opinions (“flames”), or talk about topics that are considered “taboo” in the US. Any student whose moral code or religious values or psychological sensibilities are likely to be offended by such behavior is strongly advised not to take this course.

Prerequisites

Completion of at least one course at the 300-level in German at Emory or permission of the instructor.

Materials

- Crystal, David. *Internet Linguistics: A Student Guide*. Routledge, 2011. ISBN 978-0415602716

- Johnstone, Barbara. Discourse Analysis. 2nd edition. Blackwell, 2008. ISBN978-1405144278
- Additional readings and materials available on the course Google site
- A dependable German reference grammar book

Assessment

1. Participation (20%). Attendance *and* participation are essential to your progress. You will be allowed a maximum of 3 absences for routine doctor visits and travel for non-emergencies, etc., during the semester without penalty. Beginning with the 4th absence, a penalty of -1% will be levied on the earned final grade for each class missed. The best policy to adopt is to **keep your instructor informed** if you miss any classes or assignments. Extended illnesses and family emergencies will be treated as exceptions, and absences for these purposes will be excused. Be prepared to show proof of the need for the absences, however, if your instructor asks for it. Varsity athletes can get excused with coaches' notification of announced absences but must, of course, do the required work.

Class Participation Criteria:

Grade	Criteria
A	always well-prepared and attentive always has a copy of the assigned reading in class often raises hand to volunteer an answer always tries to use German with classmates during partner work writes e-mails to instructor outside of class in German quickly finds a partner during partner work shows real resourcefulness and imagination when using the language always responds to and engages classmates in a respectful manner never checks facebook, e-mail, or text messages unrelated to course content
B	usually well-prepared and attentive sometimes does not have a copy of the assigned reading in class occasionally raises hand to volunteer an answer usually tries to use German with classmates during partner work quickly finds a partner during partner work writes e-mails to instructor outside of class in German completes exercises with some imagination and resourcefulness makes some effort to engage fellow students rarely checks facebook, e-mail, or text messages unrelated to course content
C	adequately prepared and attentive sometimes does not have a copy of the assigned reading in class rarely raises hand to volunteer an answer occasionally will use English with classmates during partner work sometimes writes e-mails to instructor outside of class in German slowly finds a partner during partner work responds and completes exercises with minimal imagination does not engage classmates beyond the minimum requirements for an assignment sometimes checks facebook, e-mail, or text messages unrelated to course content
D	usually unprepared usually does not have a copy of the assigned reading in class never raises hand to volunteer an answer makes little effort to participate or complete exercises sometimes uses English to speak with instructor or classmates during partner work rarely contributes during group work rarely writes e-mails to instructor outside of class in German sometimes fails to find a partner during partner work sometimes checks facebook, e-mail, or text messages unrelated to course content potentially disrespectful to other students
	makes no contribution to class whatsoever usually does not have a copy of the assigned reading in class

F	never raises hand to volunteer an answer uses English to speak with instructor or classmates during partner work fails to find a partner during partner work does not do in-class worksheets never writes e-mails to instructor outside of class in German regularly checks facebook, e-mail, or text messages unrelated to course content potentially disrespectful to other students
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2. Written responses to readings (30%). During the semester you will be responsible to responding in writing to different readings. These written assignments will consist of one of the following three activities: (1) discussion of the relevance of the reading for understanding electronic communication; (2) application of a component of discourse analysis to electronic discourse; or (3) summary of secondary literature.
3. Written analysis of electronic discourse (20%). During the 2nd half of the semester you will submit periodically a written analysis of specific electronic discourse.
4. Oral presentation of discourse analysis (5%). Once during the semester you will present your discourse analysis to the class.
5. Final project (25%). You will conduct a detailed analysis of a specific sample of electronic discourse and demonstrate your ability to apply the discourse analysis methodology introduced in class. You are encouraged to find a discourse sample that relate to your own academic interests. Intercultural projects, in which you contrast the use of German and English, are also welcome. The project consists of the following stages: proposal (10%); rough draft (30%); final draft of 8-10 pages (50%); presentation (10%) on Monday, May 5, 2014 at 8:00 – 10:30am.

Grade scale

A = 93-100 B+ = 87-89 C+ = 77-79 D+ = 67-69 F = 0-62
 A- = 90-92 B = 83-86 C = 73-76 D = 63-69
 B- = 80-82 C- = 70-72

When an assignment is graded with a letter, that letter will be transformed into a number in order to calculate your final grade.

 B+ = 88 C+ = 78 D+ = 68 F = 31
 A = 95 B = 85 C = 75 D = 65
 A- = 91 B- = 81 C- = 71
 Missed assignments = 0

Emory University Honor Code

The Honor Code of Emory College is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on quizzes and exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the instructor's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the instructor is entitled to move you to another seat during

examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

The central issue is that any work submitted to an instructor for evaluation should be one's own. Within the German Studies Department assistance is possible and even encouraged in two limited situations: online or in person. Online resources can be used for grammatical explanations (e.g., verb conjugations) or the translation of words, expressions, and phrases. **However, use of online resources to translate entire sentences or paragraphs is not permitted.** Seeking assistance in person should be limited to receiving suggestions, reviewing certain topics, and addressing revisions, but the ultimate production of the work to be turned in will rest with you.

- The Honor Code, a list of offenses and the Honor Council process may be found; http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor_code.html

Students with disabilities

Students with medical/health conditions that might impact academic success should visit Access, Disability Services and Resources (ADSR, formerly the Office of Disability Services, ODS) to determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Students who receive accommodations must present the Accommodation Letter from ADSR to your professor at the beginning of the semester, or when the letter is received.

Semesterüberblick

1. Woche

Di., 14. Januar	Einführung in den Kurs
Do., 16. Januar	Einführung in die Diskursanalyse (Johnstone K1)
Fr., 17. Januar	Einführung in die Diskursanalyse eines Mediums (Johnstone K6)

2. Woche

Di., 21. Januar	Einführung in das Internet als Medium (Crystal K1-2)
Do., 23. Januar	Elektronische Kommunikation (Ü: Johnstones Methode anwenden)
Fr., 24. Januar	Diskurs, Kultur und Ideologie (Johnstone K2; sprachliche Merkmale)

3. Woche

Di., 28. Januar	Übersetzung im Internet (Ü: Emory u. Uni Wien Webseiten)
Do., 30. Januar	Zusammenhang zwischen Sprache und Denken (Boroditsky)
Fr., 31. Januar	Geschlechtsbedingte Kommunikation (Ü: Uni Leipzig)

4. Woche

Di., 4. Februar	Die Sprachen des Internets (Crystal K5; Gee Anhang)
Do., 6. Feb	Werbung im Internet (Ü: Lufthansa-Delta, Discussion 2.16, p66)
Fr., 7. Feb	Diskursstruktur (Johnstone K3)

5. Woche

Di., 11. Feb	Die Struktur eines elektronischen Texts (Ü: Johnstone, S. 116-7, 121)
Do., 13. Feb	Intertextualität (Johnstone K5)
Fr., 14. Feb	Genre und Sprachwandel (Crystal K3-4)

6. Woche

Di., 18. Feb

Klassenbesuch Boroditsky: Methode ergänzen anhand ihrer
Forschung

Do., 20. Feb

die Merkmale eines Genres (Ü: Genre charakterisieren)

Fr., 21. Feb

Genre

7. Woche

Di., 25. Feb

Genre

Do., 27. Feb

Die Macht der Sprache (Johnstone K4)

Fr., 28. Feb

Diskursanalyse in der Praxis (Crystal K7)

8. Woche

Di., 4. März

Gemeinsames Workshop mit Cyber Spanish (SPN 410)

Do., 6. März

Regionalismus im Internet (Ü: J, S. 154)

Fr., 7. März

Implikatur und Intentionalität (Johnstone K7)

Frühlingsferien

9. Woche

Di., 18. März

Medienlandschaft –

Do., 20. März

Websites zum Thema Ukraine untersuchen

Fr., 21. März

Analyse der online Darstellung der Krim-Krise

10. Woche

Di., 25. März

Pittsburghese und Diskursanalyse (Johnstone Artikel)

Do., 27. März

Klassenbesuch mit Dr. Barbara Johnstone

Fr., 28. März

weitere Analyse der online Darstellung der Krim-Krise

11. Woche

Di., 1. April

Thilo Sarrazin

Do., 3. Apr

Diskussionsforen über Sarrazin

Fr., 4. Apr

Analyse der Diskussionsforen

12. Woche

Di., 8. Apr

Einleitung des Semesterprojekts

Do., 10. Apr

Uli Hoeneß

Fr., 11. Apr

Gemeinsames Workshop mit Cyber Spanish (SPN 410)

13. Woche

Di., 15. Apr

Tweets über Hoeneß

Do., 17. Apr

Analyse der Tweets

Fr., 18. Apr

Bushido

14. Woche

Di., 22. Apr

Netzumschau von Bushido mit Schwerpunkt Facebook

Do., 24. Apr

Analyse der elektronischen Kommunikation über und um Bushido

Fr., 25. Apr

Semesterabschluss

Mo., 28. Apr

Erste Version des Semesterprojekts

Mo., 5. Mai

Zweite Version des Semesterprojekts