Language, Thought, and Reality: Language in Popular Media
Freshman Writing Seminar
LING 1100
Section 103

"... people know how to talk in more or less the sense that spiders know how to spin webs."
-Steven Pinker

Time: T/R 8:40am-9:55am   Instructor: Ashlyn Winship
Location: Morrill 102   Email: alw329@cornell.edu
Webpage: LING 1100 on Canvas   Office hours: By appointment

Course description:

Every human being uses at least one language to communicate. How are these languages represented in the media that we consume every day: the books we read, shows we watch, and video games we play? How do these representations affect the way we perceive these stories? This writing course will introduce students to several basic concepts of linguistics, such as speech sounds, dialect variation, and translation, by investigating books such as *Narnia* and *Treasure Island*; films about language, such as *Arrival* and *My Fair Lady*; and translation decisions in realms like foreign publishing, foreign film adaptation, and video game localization. Students will learn to analyze the ways in which these mediums make decisions about language use, and to analyze and critique these choices in their writing.

Course goals:

The goal of this course is to help you develop and strengthen your writing skills, as well as to facilitate your introduction to the field of linguistics. By the end of this course, you are expected to demonstrate competency in the following areas:

- ❖ Analysis of language use and representation in various types of media
- ❖ Responsible use of primary and secondary sources
- ❖ Preparatory writing strategies such as drafting, revising, and peer review, as well as careful proofreading prior to final draft submission
- ❖ Crafting and supporting original arguments and analyses in your writing

Materials:

<u>Required</u>:

- ❖ *The Language Instinct*, Steven Pinker (ISBN: 9780061336461)
  - ➢ This should be available through the Cornell bookstore. This is the only required text for this course; all others that you may see listed for this section of this course are optional.

<u>Optional</u>:

(Depending on the subjects you choose for certain papers in this course, especially Assignment 3, you may find it beneficial to have access to these texts.)

- ❖ *Treasure Island*, Robert Louis Stevenson (ISBN: 9780486275598)
- ❖ *Pygmalion*, George Bernard Shaw (ISBN: 9781416500407)

Grade distribution:

- ❖ **Participation: 15%**
  - ➢ "Participation" should be an easy 15 points in this course for you! As long as you engage in in-class activities and complete the weekly homework, you will receive the points. You will lose points for decisions such as refusing to participate in in-class activities or inappropriate use of electronic devices as outlined in the electronics policy below. You will also lose points for not completing your weekly writing activities or meeting with me for your conferences, as well as for each unexcused absence after your third (see below for details).
  - ➢ <u>Writing activities</u>: You will complete one short writing assignment per week, which you will bring to class handwritten on Tuesdays. These will be graded *for completion* (as part of your participation grade). They will usually be about a specific chapter of Pinker, but some weeks may be about other course material, which will be made available to you on Canvas. Failure to bring in your writing assignment each Tuesday will result in a participation deduction of 1% per missing summary.
  - ➢ <u>Conferences</u>: You are required to meet with me for 2 conferences during the semester. We will sign up for these in class ahead of the weeks in which conferences will be held. Failure to attend these meetings will also affect your participation grade.

> ➤ <u>Attendance</u>: You are expected to attend all class meetings and submit any and all make up work for class meetings you miss. <u>You are permitted *three* unexcused absences, no question asked</u>. If you miss more than your three permitted absences, your participation grade will be reduced 1% for each additional unexcused absence. Reasons for *excused* absences include health reasons, family emergencies, religious holidays, etc. If you cannot attend class for these reasons, please let me know you will be absent. <u>Also, please do not come to class if you are sick, experiencing Covid symptoms or have tested positive for Covid.</u>

- ❖ **Essay 1: 5%**
- ❖ **Essay 2: 20%**
  - ➤ Peer Review Day 1: 5%
  - ➤ Peer Review Day 2: 5%
  - ➤ Final Draft: 10%
- ❖ **Essay 3: 20%**
  - ➤ First draft: 10%
  - ➤ Final draft: 10%
- ❖ **Essay 4: 25%**
  - ➤ First draft (peer review): 10%
  - ➤ Final draft: 15%
- ❖ **Essay 5: 15%**

<u>Grading scale</u>:

Percentage	Letter grade		
94-100	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	60-66	D
80-83	B-	0-59	F
77-79	C+		

Late policy and extensions:

If you need an extension on an assignment, you must reach out to me at least three days before the assignment's deadline. If you do so, we will discuss the possibility and details of your extension. No deadline negotiations will happen after this period. You *will not* receive an extension for more than one assignment this semester.

If you turn in an assignment late, it will be deducted one-third of a letter grade for each day late (for example, if you would have received an A, but you turn it in two days late, you will receive a B+). **Please note**: No assignments will be accepted more than three days after the original due date, *no exceptions* (this includes granting of extensions).

A note on grading:

I reserve the right to determine your final grade in the course. If at any point in the semester you have a question about your grades, please reach out to me to schedule a meeting. Discussion of grades will happen in person, never over email.

Electronics policy:

You are allowed to bring laptops, tablets, phones, etc. to class with you for notetaking and/or assignment drafting purposes when appropriate. However, much of the in-class time in this course will be spent either working on writing activities with pen and paper, or in discussion with myself and your peers. During writing activities and discussions, you will not be using your laptops or tablets, and will be expected not to be on your phones. Inappropriate use of electronics will result in loss of participation points, which are otherwise free points - so be smart!

Cornell Writing Centers:

The Cornell Writing Centers (CWC) provide support for individuals at any stage of the writing process. It is a free resource available to everyone on campus—faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students—for nearly any kind of writing project: applications, presentations, lab reports, essays, papers, and more. Tutors (trained peers) serve as responsive listeners and readers who can address questions about the writing process or about particular pieces of writing. They can also consider questions of confidence, assignment expectations, critical reading, analytic thought, and imagination. All tutors have training in supporting multilingual writers, working with writers remotely online, and in supporting writers working

on application materials. The CWC welcomes walk-ins, but we also encourage writers to make appointments through our scheduling platform:https://cornell.mywconline.net/.

Accommodations:

Students with Disabilities: Your access in this course is important to me. Please request your accommodation letter early in the semester, or as soon as you become registered with SDS, so that we have adequate time to arrange your approved academic accommodations.

- Once SDS approves your accommodation letter, it will be emailed to both you and me. Please follow up with me to discuss the necessary logistics of your accommodations.
- If you are approved for exam accommodations, please consult with me at least two weeks before the scheduled exam date to confirm the testing arrangements.
- If you experience any access barriers in this course, such as with printed content, graphics, online materials, or any communication barriers; reach out to me or SDS right away.
- If you need an immediate accommodation, please speak with me after class or send an email message to me and SDS at sds_cu@cornell.edu.

If you have, or think you may have a disability, please contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion: sds_cu@cornell.edu, 607-254-4545, sds.cornell.edu.

CAPS resources:

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) at Cornell Health provides professional and confidential mental health care to help you "live well to learn well" here at Cornell. Their staff members come from diverse clinical and cultural backgrounds with expertise in responding to the wide range of mental health concerns faced by university students.

About their services: Currently, CAPS counseling staff are providing services in-person and through telehealth (Zoom). Phone appointments may be available, when needed. Their psychiatry staff are providing most services in person, with limited telehealth and phone appointments. Services are available to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students studying in Ithaca.

<u>Academic integrity</u>:

The full Code of Academic Integrity is available here:
https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/dean/academic-integrity/. The section of the code
regarding plagiarism is included in the next paragraph. Please read this carefully. You are
expected to conduct yourself according to the expectations of the full code at all times.

Representing another's work as one's own is plagiarism and a violation of this Code. If
materials are taken from published sources the student must clearly and completely cite the
source of such materials. Work submitted by a student and used by a faculty member in the
determination of a grade in a course may not be submitted by that student in a second course,
unless such submission is approved in advance by the faculty member in the second course. If a
student is submitting all or part of the same work simultaneously for the determination of a
grade in two or more different courses, all faculty members in the courses involved must
approve such submissions.

<u>Use of AI</u>:

I am interested in *your* writing. I am not interested in what ChatGPT or other LLMs have to
say, or how well you can prompt them to imitate what you might want to say. Generative AI
has its uses, but producing essays for this course is not one of them. Before each assignment, we
will discuss what you are allowed to use AI to do, but you will never be allowed to use it to
generate the content of an assignment. If you use AI to generate the content of an assignment
for this course, you will receive a 0 on that assignment. Additionally, use of AI to generate the
content of any assignments that you submit is plagiarism, and will be treated accordingly. Any
and all use of AI must be cited (include the LLM, version, prompt, and response - we will
discuss this in class).

<u>Land acknowledgment</u>:

Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogo̱hó:nǫ' (the Cayuga
Nation). The Gayogo̱hó:nǫ' are members of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an alliance of
six sovereign Nations with a historic and contemporary presence on this land. The
Confederacy precedes the establishment of Cornell University, New York state, and the United
States of America. We acknowledge the painful history of Gayogo̱hó:nǫ' dispossession, and
honor the ongoing connection of Gayogo̱hó:nǫ' people, past and present, to these lands and
waters.

Course calendar:

This is subject to change! Please consult Canvas for the most up-to-date version.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Work due
1: Aug 26 - 30	-Introductions -Syllabus -Intro linguistics -Language in storytelling **-Essay 1 out**	-Language in storytelling -What is plagiarism? -What is a summary? -Assignment 1 work session	-Read syllabus! -Answer intro survey!
2: September 2 - 6 *Labor Day: Sept 2*	-Tone & style	-Tone & style **-Essay 2 out**	**-Tu: WA 1** **-Th: Essay 1**
3: September 9 - 13	**-Peer Review Day 1** -Tone & style -Work session	**-Peer Review Day 2** -Tone & style -Work session	**-Tu: Essay 2 Part 1 for peer review** (bring printed copy, upload to Canvas); **WA 2** **-Th: Essay 2 Part 2 for peer review** (bring printed copy, upload to Canvas)
4: September 16 - 20	-Eye dialects & marginalized languages -Argumentative essay	-Eye dialects & marginalized languages -Argumentative essay **-Essay 3 out**	**-Tu: Essay 2, WA 3**
5: September 23 - 27	-Eye dialects & marginalized languages -Argumentative essay	**-Library workshop (meet in Olin 106G)**	-Tu: WA 4
6: September 30 - October 4	-Argumentative essay	-Argumentative essay	**-Tu: WA 5** **-Th: Essay 3 first draft for instructor review** (bring printed copy)
7: October 7 - 11	-Translation -Conferences	-Translation -Conferences **-Essay 4 out**	**-Tu: WA 6** **-Th: Essay 3**
8: October 14 - 18 *Fall Break: Oct 12 - 16*	FALL BREAK	FALL BREAK	-Relax!

9: October 21 - 25	-Argumentative essay	-Argumentative essay	**-Tu: WA 7**
10: October 28 - 1	-Translation	-Translation	**-Tu: WA 8**
11: November 4 - 8	-Work day -Conferences	-Peer Review Day	**-Tu: WA 9** **-Th: Essay 4 rough draft for peer review** (bring printed copy)
12: November 11 - 15	-Work day -Conferences	-Work day -Conferences	**-Tu: WA 10** **-Th: Essay 4**
13: November 18 - 22	-Review and reflection	**-Essay 5 out**	**-Tu: WA 11**
14: November 25 - 29 *Thanksgiving Break: Nov 27*	-Review and reflection	THANKSGIVING BREAK	**-Tu: WA 12**
15: December 2 - 6	-Review and reflection -Work day	Our last day of class (mini presentations!)	**-Tu: WA 13**
16: December 9 *Last Day of Class*	No class	No class	**-Mon Dec 9: Essay 5**