

1. Name of the activity

Americanization and the construction of American identity

2. Audience for the activity

Anyone interested in learning about how American identity was constructed through texts produced in the United States during the first two decades of the 20th century, and how this process of identity construction continues in the present day

3. Competencies to be acquired

- Develop an awareness of how ideologies about language, race, and ethnicity were instantiated in written and spoken texts produced during the Americanization period in the U.S.A. (roughly 1914-1924)
- Critically examine language policies promoted during the great wave of immigration, roughly 1880-1924, that marginalized non-English languages in the public sphere and in public and private educational institutions
- Consider the role that academics played in promoting theories of Americanism and Americanization that reflected a very particular idea of who and what the ideal 'American' should be
- Learn techniques of Critical Discourse Analysis that can be applied to the current sociopolitical context in Spain and Catalonia with regard to the role that language(s) play(s) in the development and furtherance of national identity(ies)

4. Program of activities

8 sessions, 2.5 hours per session

General content for each session:

1. Introduction of the topic of the course
2. Explanation of principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)
3. Background on the Americanization movement in the U.S., 1914-1924
4. Analysis of sample texts using techniques of CDA
5. Analysis of language policies and effects on various non-English-speaking groups
6. Current situation in Spain analyzing contemporary texts brought to class by students

5. Methodology

Each class will consist of a combination of presentation by the instructor and class discussion and debate; in addition, students will work with data provided by the instructor and develop skills in applying techniques of CDA to their own selected data (texts, speeches, opinion pieces, clips from television and radio broadcasts, magazine articles, books, etc.) that they will bring to class. The goal is for students to gain an understanding of some of the ways that language has been used to construct particular views of nationism and national identity, focusing on how this was accomplished in the U.S. context in the early decades of the 20th century, and then applying the skills of text analysis they have learned in the course to the Iberian context, past and present.

6. Course summary

This course introduces students to a period of U.S. history during which high levels of immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, along with American involvement in the war in Europe, prompted a strong negative reaction against 'foreign' languages, cultures, and ideas that culminated in an official Americanization movement sponsored by the federal government and carried out in all the various states. To better understand exactly how particular and often narrow ideas on Americanism and American identity were developed and promoted, I will share research I have conducted that looked at period texts (including articles, pamphlets, books, speeches, etc. produced in the Americanization era) and, using the techniques of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), I show how national identity became solidified and directly tied to the exclusive use of English over all other languages spoken at that time, including languages that had existed in North America long before the establishment of the United States as a country. The relevance of those findings to the current situation in the U.S. will be explored, and the relevance of CDA as a tool to investigate the situation in Spain and Catalonia will be explored.

6.1 Proposed timetable

Monday and Wednesday, November 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28 (2.5 hours each session)

6.2 Total hours

20

7. Brief cv

Thomas Ricento, Ph.D., is Professor and Research Chair, Emeritus in the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary, Canada. Previously, he was Professor in the Department of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies, University of Texas, San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A. His M.A. is from the University of Southern California and his Ph.D. is from UCLA. He is the editor of the following books: *Language policy and planning: Critical concepts in linguistics* (4 volumes, Routledge, 2016); *Language Policy and Political Economy: English in a Global Context* (Oxford University Press, 2015); *An introduction to language policy: Theory and method* (Blackwell, 2006; Chinese translation, the Commercial Press, Beijing, 2016); *Ideology, politics and language policies: Focus on English* (John Benjamins, 2000); co-editor of *Language Policy and Political Theory: Assessing breaches, building bridges* (Springer, 2015); *Language and politics in the United States and Canada: Myths and realities* (Routledge, 1998). He has published research on language policy, politics and ideologies in *Language Policy*, *TESOL Quarterly*, *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *Discourse & Society*, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *Critical Multilingualism Studies*, and *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, among other journals. He is founding co-editor of the *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* (Routledge), serves on the Editorial Advisory Boards of 6 international journals, and has been a visiting professor/researcher at universities in Aruba, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Germany, Spain, and Switzerland. He was twice a Fulbright Professor (Colombia and Chile) and has been awarded research grants from the Russell Sage Foundation (USA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (USA), and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada), among other funders. In 2013, his co-authored article (with Andreea Cervatiuc) 'Curriculum Meta-Orientations in the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada Program', published in the *Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education* (2012), won the TESOL Award for Distinguished Research. He won the 2018 American Association for Applied Linguistics Book Award for his book *Language Policy and Political Economy* (Oxford University Press). He is founder of the international research conference Multidisciplinary Approaches in Language Policy and Planning held annually since 2012 in Canada. His research and publications in recent years have focused on the integration of refugees in Canadian society, especially with regard to the linguistic and cultural barriers they face. **Full CV available at:** http://werklund.ucalgary.ca/educ_info/profiles/thomas-ricento