

School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline

LALS 543, Language in the Workplace, Trimester 1, 2008

1. Course Coordinator and lecturer:

Dr Meredith Marra
VZ404
Ext. 5636
Office hours: Monday 12-1pm or by appointment
Email: Meredith.Marra@vuw.ac.nz
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals>



2. Modules:

There will be nine modules/classes starting on 5 March 2008. The hand in date for the second assignment (30 May) marks the end of the course. This course is taught by distance only.

3. Announcements:

Announcements will be posted and sent via the email address registered for Blackboard. There is also an MA noticeboard on floor 2 of the Von Zedlitz building near the kitchen.

4. LALS main office: VZ210, 2nd floor Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

5. Course Administrator:

Rachel Scholes, Postgraduate administration Tel: 463 5600, Fax: 463 5604
Rachel.Scholes@vuw.ac.nz

Web contact: www.blackboard.victoria.ac.nz

6. Content:

This paper will review research on language in the workplace, and discuss alternative methods of researching workplace interaction. The relevance of a number of theoretical models and approaches offered in the research literature, including politeness theory, social constructionism, critical discourse analysis, and conversation analysis, will be explored in relation to data collected in local New Zealand workplaces.

A range of features of workplace discourse will be examined, including management styles, humour, problematic talk and directives in the workplace. The influence of social factors such as gender and ethnicity will also be considered.

Material covered	Module begins
Researching language in the workplace - course overview	5 March
Methodology in workplace research	12 March
Problematic Talk at Work and CA	19 March
Workplace Meetings, Management style, and CDA	26 March
Social dimensions: Gender, ethnicity and social constructionism	2 April
<i>Preparation time for data assignment</i>	
MID-TRIMESTER BREAK	
Humour at work, Communities of practice	30 April
Politeness Theory: Directives and social talk at work	7 May
Implications and Applications	14 May
Project proposals presentation and discussion.	21 May

7. Objectives:

By the end of the course students should

- (i) be familiar with the topics covered in the course schedule;
- (ii) have acquired skills in analysing patterns of spoken workplace discourse;
- (iii) have demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between workplace discourse and the social context in which it occurs;
- (iv) have developed sociolinguistic research skills.

Objective (i) will be achieved by preparation for and participation in modules

Objective (ii) will be achieved by weekly tasks and the “data collection” assignment

Objective (iii) will be tested by the “data collection” and “research” assignments

Objective (iv) will be achieved through the “data collection” and “research” assignments

8. Expected workload:

In order to make satisfactory progress in this course you should expect to devote, on average, 15 hours a week to it. For each module this includes background reading and participation in the lecture/module, as well as weekly tasks and exercises. Some of this time is also allocated to the preparation of the two formal assignments which should also be spread across the course (Extra time has been assigned to assignment preparation within the course schedule). Your expected workload over the course should be approx 150 hours, although students aiming for a high grade will almost certainly require more time.

9. Readings:

Required:

Holmes, Janet and Maria Stubbe 2003. *Power and Politeness in the Workplace*. London: Longman.

In addition, a set of reading materials to be used in the course is available for purchase through Student Notes.

Data for the weekly task in module 3 will be uploaded to blackboard in WAV and MP3 format. If this is likely to be problematic, please let me know as soon as possible so that the data can be sent to you on CD.

Recommended:

Bargiela-Chiappini and Sandra J. Harris 1996. *Managing Language: the Discourse of Corporate Meetings*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Clyne, Michael 1994. *Inter-cultural Communication at Work. Cultural Values in Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drew, Paul and John Heritage (eds) 1992. *Talk at Work. Interaction in Institutional Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Koester, Almut 2006. *Investigating Workplace Discourse*. London and New York: Routledge.

Roberts, Celia, Tom Jupp and Evelyn Davies 1992. *Language and Discrimination: a study of Communication in Multi-ethnic Workplaces*. London : Longman.

Sarangi, Srikant & Celia Roberts (eds) 1999. *Talk, Work and Institutional Order. Discourse in Medical, Mediation and Management Settings*. Berlin, NewYork: Mouton de Gruyter.

Vicbooks has two locations - Student Union Building on Kelburn Campus and Rutherford House on Pipitea Campus (which stocks textbooks for Law and Commerce only). They distribute student notes (for Law (all stages) and Commerce from stage 2 upwards only) from the Pipitea shop and the student notes shop on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz

We can courier books to customers or they can be picked up from either shop the day after placing an order online.

We can be contacted by telephone

Kelburn 463 5515

Pipitea 4636160

Opening hours

8am - 6pm Mon - Fri (during termtime - we close at 5pm in the holidays)

10am - 1pm Saturday

10. Assessment requirements:

Assessment for LALS 543 consists of two written assignments:

- (1) Assignment 1: Data collection and discourse analysis (40%)
- (2) Assignment 2: A research proposal (60%)

There is no final examination

Please note – each piece of assessment requires a certain amount of background reading. Where you make reference to this reading in your work, please include the full citation in a reference list.

Data collection and Discourse Analysis:

NB Important ethical guidelines for carrying out this research will be discussed in the second module and are available in your Course notes

Record a small amount of data eg 15 minutes of talk from a workplace meeting (this can be broadly defined if necessary). Discuss your methodological design and any potential improvements you would make if repeating the exercise. (500-750 words approx)

Analyse this data adopting either a Critical Discourse Analysis or Social Constructionist framework. You will need to provide a copy of your recording for us to assess your work. (Preferred formats: standard audio cassette, CD, WAV file or MP3 file sent by email to lals-543@vuw.ac.nz) You may also want to include a transcription of part or all of your data using appropriate conventions (1000-1250 words approx excluding transcription provided in an appendix)

Due date: 28 April 2008

1500-2000 words (excluding references and appendix)

Assessment weighting 40%

Research:

Write a research proposal in the area of workplace communication.

Review relevant literature and identify an interesting research question. Describe the preferred methodology for collecting the data and provide a rationale for your choice. Describe the analytical approach which you would use. Discuss the potential implications of your proposed project for New Zealand workplaces. You may choose a specific workplace if you wish. (Note there is information on writing proposals in your Course Notes)

Due date: 30 May 2008

2500-3000 words (excluding references, appendices etc)

Assessment weighting 60%

See guidelines below for submitting assignments. Please keep a back-up copy of your assignments!

Students affected by illness or other personal circumstances should advise the course coordinator as soon as possible if there are any difficulties in completing written work, and preferably provide medical certificates or other documentary evidence. All reasonable efforts will be made to reschedule dates or provide substitute assessment tasks under such circumstances. Note that applications for aegrotat passes are possible if assessment tasks due in the last three weeks of the course are not completed because of illness or certain other personal circumstances, but only if "no alternative item of assessment could reasonably be substituted or extension of time granted".

N.B. Note that if no work is submitted for assessment before the last three weeks of teaching, there will be nothing on which to base an aegrotat consideration. Special assessment arrangements will be made if necessary for students with disabilities (see below).

Submitting Assignments and Tasks

Students may submit assignments electronically or by post. Please follow these guidelines when submitting your assignment:

Hardcopy submissions

Requirements for hardcopy documents:

- Type on one side of A4 paper
- Set margins to at least 2cm
- Set line spacing to 1.5
- Set font size to 12 point
- Include page numbers
- Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due
- Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the Reference section)
- Staple pages together
- Avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders unless necessary
- Avoid inserting individual pages in clearfile sleeves.
- Please provide TWO copies of each assignment

Posted assignments/tasks should be addressed to the course lecturer and sent to the following address:

School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
Victoria University of Wellington
PO Box 600
Wellington

Electronic Submission

Send assignments and assessment tasks as email attachments. Files should be sent to your course email address (i.e. lals-543@vuw.ac.nz)

Requirements for electronic documents:

- Save the file as one of the following: Microsoft Word (.doc), Rich Text Format (.rtf), WordPerfect (.wpd) or Adobe (.pdf)
- Send the assignment as a single file
- Set page size to A4
- Set margins to be at least 2cm
- Use 1.5 line spacing
- Use 12 point font size
- Include page numbers
- Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due
- Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the Reference section).

If your document contains **phonetic fonts**, you will generally need to post a hardcopy in addition to (or instead of) sending an electronic copy. Electronic copies should be sent as Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) documents. (Some word processing programs, such as WordPerfect, publish to PDF or, alternatively, you can create PDF files online at <https://createpdf.adobe.com/>.) A hard copy is also required because saving documents in pdf format does not guarantee that special fonts such as phonetic fonts, Arboreal, etc. and embedded line drawings etc. will arrive intact. Platform differences (Windows, Mac, Unix) and the nature of some fonts are typical causes of such problems.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

11. Penalties:

In line with school policy, assignments handed in after the due date may receive a reduced grade unless accompanied by a medical certificate or other evidence of exceptional circumstances. Also see the MA Handbook.

12. Mandatory Course Requirements (Terms):

Students should:

- participate in all modules as scheduled, present material on Blackboard as agreed, and complete all in-course written work by the specified dates
- let the lecturer know IN ADVANCE if they are unable to participate in a particular class

13. Communication of additional information:

Additional information will be posted on Blackboard and sent via the email address registered in Blackboard.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support