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
hmaxim@emory.edu; (404) 727-9234
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 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**
- 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A     | always well-prepared and attentive  
       | always has a copy of the assigned reading in class  
       | rarely raises hand to volunteer an answer  
       | often 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  
       | occasionally does not have a copy of the assigned reading in class  
       | occasionally raises hand to volunteer an answer  
       | occasionally 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  
       | 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  
       | rarely 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 |
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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>93-100</th>
<th>87-89</th>
<th>77-79</th>
<th>67-69</th>
<th>0-62</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>95</th>
<th>85</th>
<th>75</th>
<th>65</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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](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**
   Do., 30. Januar  Zusammenhang zwischen Sprache und Denken (Boroditsky)

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  Die Macht der Sprache (Johnstone K4)

7. Woche
Di., 25. Feb  Regionalismus im Internet (Ü: J, S. 154)
Do., 27. Feb  Implikatur und Intentionalität (Johnstone K7)
Fr., 28. Feb  Diskursanalyse in der Praxis (Crystal K7)

8. Woche
Di., 4. März  Gemeinsames Workshop mit Cyber Spanish (SPN 410)
Do., 6. März  Webseiten
Fr., 7. März  Webseiten

Frühlingssferien

9. Woche
Di., 18. März  Medienlandschaft –
Do., 20. März  Websites zum Thema Ukraine untersuchen
Fr., 21. März  mündliche Präsentation der Zeit Website

10. Woche
Di., 25. März  Johnstone Artikel
Do., 27. März  Klassenbesuch mit Dr. Barbara Johnstone
Fr., 28. März  Analyse der Websites

11. Woche
Di., 1. April   Thilo Sarrazin
Do., 3. April  Diskussionsforen über Sarrazin
Fr., 4. April  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