LCD 144: Language and Social Diversity
Language, Life, and Identity in Barcelona
Queens College Study Abroad

Welcome to Barcelona! Barcelona is one of the most visited European cities due to its innumerable attractions including art, music, food, sports, nightlife, history, shopping, beaches, and especially incomparable architecture and an obsession with design. However, in this course you will go below the surface of life in Barcelona that tourists see using the filter of language, another local obsession.

Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, one of 17 Autonomous Communities in Spain, and one that is now undergoing a debate over its possible independence as a sovereign nation. At the center of Catalonian nationalism is the Catalan language, a member of the Romance family like Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and French. Catalan has enjoyed co-official status with Spanish in Catalonia since 1979, and it is the main language of schooling.

Therefore, virtually all Barcelonans can use both languages, although even in the same family it is possible to find quite different beliefs, attachments, and linguistic practices. Some Catalonians strongly prefer Catalan; others stick almost exclusively to Spanish; and still others express loyalty to both languages equally. In recent years, immigrants from around the world have brought their home languages including Latin American Spanish, Chinese, and Amazigh (the language of the Berbers) to name only a few. These add to the complications. Also, many, particularly young Catalans, are quite proficient in and fascinated by English, a language they associate with travel, popular culture, and a tool to improve their chances in a tough economy. Students in this course will certainly meet some of these!

In this course, you will learn about language, life, and identity generally by exploring all these various beliefs, attitudes, and practices in this amazing city. In addition to visiting urban sites, you will explore language on a long weekend trip to the Pyrenees Mountains. This trip includes stops in Southern France and nearby French Catalonia, where Catalan and the Occitan language have almost completely disappeared.

Learning Objectives: Students will explore Barcelona, learn about language, get to know local students at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra and develop the ability to combine classroom and experiential learning.

Class Meetings: at the Ciutadella Campus of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Assigned Readings
Meyerhoff, Miriam. 2011 “Being polite as a speech variable” Ch. 5 Introducing Sociolinguistics 2nd Edition Routledge. on Blackboard
Pennycook, Alastair. 2009. Linguistic Landscapes and the Transgressive Semiotics of Graffiti. In Elana Shohamy and Durk Gorter (Eds.) Linguistic Landscape Expanding the Scenery

Recommended Readings

Course Assignments
• **Participation: (25%)** Participation in class discussions of the assigned readings is at the heart and soul of this course so it is a crucial component of your grade. Attendance in class and on field trips, therefore, is mandatory.

• **Discussion Board: (25%)**: Done on Blackboard. For each day for which reading is assigned, you will post a 250-500 word analytical response to the day’s reading and the previous days discussion by 8 am on the day it is due. Please refer to the posting of at least one other student (unless you are the first to post). Late postings will receive no credit.

• **Linguistic Landscape: (25%)** In pairs, you create a linguistic landscape (for a brief overview see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic_landscape](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic_landscape)) of a neighborhood in Barcelona or nearby satellite city. Projects will be posted on Flickr, Tumblr, or Instagram.

• **Analytic Essays (25%)** Two essays that synthesize and analyze readings, observations, experiences, and class discussions, due at the end of weeks 2 and 4.