

**BPRO24500, LING 27500/37500, ANTH 27705/47905:  
LANGUAGE AND GLOBALIZATION**

*Spring 2005*

**Instructors:**

*Salikoko S. Mufwene*, Dept. of Linguistics, Classics 314C, [s-mufwene@uchicago.edu](mailto:s-mufwene@uchicago.edu),  
702-8531, Office hours: Mo/We 3:00 - 5:00 PM, and by appt.

*William Wimsatt*, Dept. of Philosophy, Gates-Blake 512, [wwim@midway.uchicago.edu](mailto:wwim@midway.uchicago.edu),  
702-8598, Office hours: by appt.

**TA:** *Stephanie Kuzmack*, Dept. of Linguistics, [kuzmack@uchicago.edu](mailto:kuzmack@uchicago.edu).  
Office hours: TBA

**Course description** (as published in the University catalogue):

*Globalization* has been a buzz word in our lives over the past few decades. It is also one of those terms whose varying meanings have become more and more challenging to characterize in a uniform way. The phenomena it names have been associated with important transformations in our cultures, including the languages we speak. Distinguishing myths from facts, this course will articulate the different meanings of *globalization*, anchor them in a long history of socio-economic colonization, and highlight the specific ways in which the phenomena it names have affected the structures and vitalities of languages around the world. We will learn about the dynamics of population contact in class and their impact on the evolution of languages. There are no special prerequisites, though readings and assignments will be calibrated at different levels for graduate and undergraduate students.

**Textbook:**

Abram de Swaan. 2001. *Words of the world: The global language system*.

(This is our main textbook insofar as language is concerned. If we cover a chapter per week, we will have read the whole of it this quarter. Its table of contents basically provides the weekly basic readings for the course, to be complemented by other assignments as we quarter evolves.)

**Recommended texts:**

Manfred B. Steger. 2003. *Globalization: A very short introduction*

(Every student should have read the whole book by the middle of the quarter. It provides much of the background to our discussions in class.)

John Tomlinson. 1999. *Globalization and culture*.

(Chapters 1, 2, and 4 are particularly relevant to discussions in this class.)

Jacques Maurais & Michael A. Morris, eds. 2003. *Languages in a globalizing world*.

(Students in linguistics may be particularly interested in the case studies discussed in some of the chapters.)

**Other references on reserve in the Regenstein Library** (They cover topics that will enrich class discussions and may inspire some term papers):

HD72.J687 Alberto Alesina et al. 2003. "Fractionalization." *Journal of Economic Growth* 8, 155-194.

P40.J685 Jan Blommaert. 2003. "A sociolinguistics of globalization" *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7, 607-623.

JV6021.C64 Robin Cohen. 1997. *Global diasporas: An introduction*

PE2751 .C79 David Crystal. 1997. *English as a global language*

P40.5.L33D35 Andrew Dalby. 2002. *Language in danger: The loss of linguistic diversity and the threat to our culture*

HM101.A1C86 Simon During. 2000. "Postcolonialism and globalization: Towards a historicization of their inter-relation." *Cultural Studies* 14, 385-404.

HD72.J687 James D. Fearon. 2003. "Ethnic and cultural diversity by country." *Journal of Economic Growth* 8, 195-222.

PE2751.R63 Robert Phillipson. 2003. *English-only Europe? Challenging language policy*

P40.8 .S58 Tove Skutnabb-Kangas. 2000. *Linguistic genocide in education, or worldwide diversity and human rights?*

HF1418.5.S75 Joseph E. Stiglitz. 2002. *Globalization and its discontents*

JV51 .Y68 Robert J. C. Young. 2003. *Postcolonialism: A very short Introduction*

### **Course Requirements:**

Participation in class discussions is essential, as it can bear on a student's final grade. Every student must submit an acceptable term paper (about 15 double-spaced pages for undergraduates, 20 double-spaced pages for graduate students) to pass the class. The topic of the paper must be approved by one of the instructors. Topics arising from class discussions or from any of the references are perhaps the easiest or more realistic ones to handle in a quarter. All students are also encouraged to participate in discussions led by the TA and often attended by one of the instructors on a day and at a time to be specified in class.