

**Master of Arts TESOL Degree - Module 8**

**Module Notes:**

Make sure that you save your course-work by adding your full name to the end of the file name of this document, for example, with this module you would save it as:

ma-module8-tefl-558-culture-yourname

**We suggest that you do this now!** as you may complete Module 8 by adding your essays to this document, as you proceed through the module. To do this, go to File, Save As, then change the name of the file by simply adding your name to the end of the existing file name and save to a folder on your computer.

On completion of the module, simply return to the web page you downloaded it from, and use the ‘drop box’ to return it to us (page link below). Marking is done on an ongoing basis, but results will not be published until the end of the course.

<http://www.thetesoluniversity.com/ma-course-download.html>

Our essay marking of course work is based on many different points. These also include; originality of essay, sentence structure, punctuation, grammar and spelling. Take your time, and get it right!

While we fully support the use of the internet for research, when you find something on the internet or from a book, that fits the question for the essay, don’t just copy and paste it, read the article fully, then put it into your own words (you will most certainly learn a lot more this way!). Google.com is an amazing tool for all students, and you are sure to learn a lot along the way. Remember, our aim is to get you ‘classroom ready’

**TEFL 558—Language, Culture & Society**



**Course Description**

This course presents and elucidates the interconnectedness between language, culture and society. It is the aim of the course to direct student to an in-depth and critical discussion on the major issues related to language, culture and society. Issues like culture and language development, culture, language and verbal art, language and social relations, language and cultural identity, language, culture and thought, language variation as well as language change will be discussed.

**Course Goals**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

• demonstrate sound understanding of the interconnectedness between language, culture and society

• discuss critically the major issues considered in the course

• synthesize ideas, concepts and theories discussed in the course

• apply theories introduced in the course to the analysis of sociolinguistic phenomena in societies.

**Required reading:**

Salzmann, Z, C., Stanlaw, J.M. and Adachi, N. (2012). *Language, Culture, and Society: An introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. Westview Press.

Available for download at:

<http://users.silenceisdefeat.net/textbookliberation/vera/language.culture.and.society.pdf>

Alternative download link:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1TqU2Zf19_TVCCHdsRkKylgJ8CYCT1SlR>

**Academic Integrity**

All work submitted must be your own or must be properly documented. Collaborative work and work previously submitted in another class must be approved in advance.

**Assignment Descriptions**

Each student has to write an analytical paper that applies theories introduced in this course to discuss issues in relation to language, culture and society. Your paper should comprise 1,000 to 1,500 words, and can be no more than 1,500 words. Pick ***one***of the following for doing your analytical paper.

* Gossip - Collect naturally occurring samples (with a tape or digital recorder or well taken notes) of what you call gossip (based on some operational definition of your choice, such as "conversation about an absent third party") from family, friends, or roommates in conversations in which you are present but not participating.  Look for patterns that characterize this kind of talk, such as a set of possible openers (e.g. "can we talk?"; "I hate to gossip, but..."; "have I got something juicy for you, about..."), non-verbal behavior that could be indicative, and/or perhaps some elements of structure in the gossip, and other relevant aspects of the context (time, place, participants, message channel, message form, etc.).
* Our Changing World - Changes in our own culture (some brought about by technology) have transformed some of the ways that we communicate (the forms, styles, contexts, and amounts). Among other things we are experiencing blurring and breakdown of established rules, standards, categories, distinctions, and boundaries; new and augmented media for communicating ideas, for storing them and disseminating them.  Urban America includes media-saturated people on-the-move who must manage new, shifting, and multiple identities, multiple voicings of messages depending on place and context, and new technology that shapes and is shaped by our contemporary needs.    Pick a target group of people to interview about how they see changes in our culture (including technology) changing the ways that we communicate.  Take notes and distill their thoughts, then speculate on how their group membership may have influenced their perceptions and ideas.
* Select and visit a setting primarily oriented towards one ethnicity, nationality, or language (e.g. Lebanese, Greek, Czechoslovakian, German, Thai, Chinese, Japanese Latin American, Asian, Spanish, Arabic) such as a store, restaurant, bar, dance hall, or church.   Describe the setting, particularly from a communication standpoint.  Pay special attention to the organization of space, the individuals present and what they do, the languages spoken, other aspects of the setting related to its function (buying and selling, eating, drinking, dancing, worshiping etc), and communicative styles that you think might be related to the orientation or grouping that you selected.  Suggest some of the ways that the information contained in your description suggest cultural presuppositions that might impact communication between members of the chosen group and members of some other group that you know well.
* Persons traveling abroad are sometimes struck by communication problems that they encountered in particular societies, and some of them have written about these problems in books and articles.  For example, foreigners in the United States have had such experiences, and likewise some of them have written books, articles, or internet web pages describing difficulties in communication between themselves and Americans.   Pick a nationality (or ethnic group) and see what insights about communication problems that you can get from speaking with members of that nationality (or ethnicity), and collect these insights as the data for your project, presenting them as found and citing their source (in person, e-mail, and/or internet sites), then discuss aspects of the national or ethnic character that you can derive from these insights.   So long as the data is presented as found, you may have some latitude in making inferences and even speculating (so long as speculation is labeled as such).
* Do a Personal Linguistic Profile -  an individual linguistic profile of yourself, including such information as what languages you speak, how well, when you learned them, dialects you maintain in your repertoire, how and when you use them, linguistic peculiarities you may have, attitudes you have towards language.  Then do an auto-ethnographic data collection, including taking notes about your speech in a number of interactions, and then analyzing such things as how you perceive your speech, how others perceive it (ask your friends and family), what you think about your voice and what others might think about it, as well as other relevant criteria or parameters that you can think of.
* Pick a family member that you wish to understand better and pay careful attention to what they say and how they say it, making then a detailed analysis of what this person’s speech tells you about their life, motivations, attitudes, etc., as well as how the language data helps you to generally understand these things about the person.   This could entail in large part an individual linguistic profile of the person, which they may (or may not) wish to collaborate with you in producing.
* Pick a single occasion (e.g. wedding, concert, dinner, church service, etc.) and describe in some detail the language dimension of the event.  Apply one of the “ethnography of speaking” frameworks (the “speech act”) to the occasion and see how this can help you to better understand the nature of the occasion, the place of speech/language within it, and how language is used appropriately (or not) in the course of the ongoing occasion.

**You may start your essay below**