

**Span. 239A**  
**Approaching the Other**  
Thursdays, 3:00-5:50 pm  
HH 344

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**Course Description**

The course will explore topics related to language, subjectivity, and recognition. Students will analyze and reflect on ethical categories that have to do with the self, discourse, and contact with others. The approach will be theoretical, with illustrative examples from literature, painting, prints, and video. How do humans give accounts of themselves to others? How do they build trust and confidence, or how do they destroy any possibility of contact and dialogue? How do they manage insecurity and fear? How do they meet strangers, how do they recognize each other? What is the relationship between the self and their inner truth? These are some of the questions that will guide the course.

Reading will concentrate on the following topics:

- a. Parrhesia (*Franc parler*)
- b. Recognition
- c. Subjectivity/subjection and language
- d. Trust and promises
- e. Frontier
- f. Translation

The course includes literary works from early modern Spain as well as more contemporary texts. Dialogue will certainly be open to other texts and cultural manifestations not included in the syllabus.

**Learning Goals**

Students will gain a solid knowledge of how to understand subjectivity and the ways in which it is manifested in literary representations as well as more theoretical works. One of the goals will be to develop a comprehension of how authors “write” subjectivity into characters and how they create scenes in which a constellation of forces determine agency or restrictions to action. Students will also acquire a deeper knowledge of fundamental terminology that would serve them well in their future research projects.

## Requirements

1. Please make sure that you come prepared for class discussion. It is expected that you participate actively and contribute with comments and questions. Students may be asked to send questions or comments prior to class meetings. The seminar is intended as a place of exploration, a venue for asking questions, postulate possibilities, active thinking. It should serve you as a way of reflecting on problems in your own areas of research.

2. Students will be required to make one formal presentation on an assigned reading, a second oral presentation on the topic of the final paper, and in addition they could also be assigned shorter response presentations on critical/theoretical texts. Students are encouraged to provide an outline of the presentation to fellow students. Presentations should be well-written and structured. The same should be done for article presentations. All oral reports should go beyond a simple summary: it is expected that you will bring critical comments, questions or doubts about the reading. Grade of oral presentations will be based on:

- a. Clarity of your oral delivery (around 8-15 minutes)
- b. Organization of your written report
- c. Your own response to the reading, with further questions for discussion, and a critique of what you read (especially expected of students at the Ph.D. level)

3. All students need to write a 6 page short paper (plus bibliography) by the 5th week on any topic of your choice that's related to the course. It is highly recommended that you discuss your topic with me before or during its writing. A final short essay of 6 pages is also required, with bibliography. Students may choose to expand the midterm paper into a longer one (12 pages).

The grade will be distributed as follows:

1. Minimum of 2 oral reports	25%
2. Attendance and participation	25%
3. Midterm paper	25%
4. Final Paper	25%

## Prontuario

### 11 de enero: Introducción al curso

J. Butler, "Introducción", *Mecanismos Psíquicos del Poder* (PDF)

Temas:

Sujeto y procesos de subjetivización: interpelación, dependencia, subordinación, potencialidad, regulaciones del yo, consciencia.

### 18 de enero: Subjetividad y Lenguaje

E. Benveniste, "Subjectivity in Language" (PDF)

J. Butler, "Introducción: De la vulnerabilidad lingüística", *Lenguaje, poder e identidad* (PDF)

Roberto Esposito, "Inmunidad, Comunidad, Biopolítica" (PDF)

Temas:

Relaciones del sujeto con el lenguaje  
Comunidad e inmunidad  
Vulnerabilidad

### 25 de enero: *Lazarillo de Tormes*

Judith Butler, *Dar cuenta de sí* (págs. 13-60; PDF)

Temas:

Mi vida compartida con otros  
Narrar(me)  
¿Quién soy? ¿Qué deseo ser?  
La mentira (estrategias de presentación)

### 1 de febrero: Lenguaje, Juramento, Confianza

Agamben, *El sacramento del lenguaje*

Luhmann, *Confianza* (PDF)

Novela *El Abencerraje*

Temas:

Confianza  
Juramento y promesas  
El yo en el lenguaje

**8 de febrero: Encuentros coloniales (Visita de Prof. Ivette Hernández)**

Clastres, "Etnocidio" (PDF)

A. Pagden, "The Problem of Recognition" (PDF)

A. Pagden, "Bárbaro" (PDF)

Temas:

Colón, Las Casas, Sepúlveda

Representaciones del otro, dominio e incorporación

Bárbaro, salvaje, humano

**15 de febrero: Sara Ahmed ("Encountering the Stranger", PDF)**

**Tarea:**

**Entrega del 1er ensayo escrito (no menos de 6 páginas)**

**22 de febrero: Reconocimiento**

Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition" (PDF)

Jessica Benjamin, *Bonds of Love* (Intro., Chapters 1 and 2, PDF)

Luis Negrón, *Los tres golpes* (PDF)

Temas:

Reconocimiento

Identificación

El extraño

**29 de febrero: Parresia (*Franc Parler*)**

Foucault, "What is Critique?" (PDF)

Foucault, *Discurso y verdad* (PDF)

Guevara (fragmento en PDF)

Temas:

Introducción al último Foucault

Cuidado de uno mismo

Parresia

Cómo hablarle al poderoso

**7 de marzo: Fronteras**

Valeria Luiselli, *Los niños perdidos* (PDF)

Artista JR (Arte fronterizo; enlaces a videos sobre Kikito)

Luis F. Avilés, "La hospitalidad lingüística y la crisis de la mediación fronteriza en *Los niños perdidos* de Valeria Luiselli" (<https://lalrp.net/articles/10.26824/lalr.354>)

Temas:

Frontera

Traducción

Diálogos posibles

**14 de marzo: Presentación oral del último trabajo escrito**

**Semana de Finales: 18-22 de marzo**

**Entrega del trabajo final**