

Linguistic diversity here and now, 500-1000 words, due Monday, Feb. 11

This assignment asks you to look around you for languages other than English that are being used and to think about how and why they are being used.

The assignment is simple:

- Find examples of languages other than English being used either in Madison or elsewhere in the state (some of that can be done online). 3-5 pictures would easily be enough, but two might work if they are rich enough. You can do this with literal signs but you can also draw on other kinds of public presence of languages — radio broadcasting, things engraved on buildings, and so on. You can even look at places where languages are used, like this project: <https://languagecapitalproject.wordpress.com/> . This material is everywhere and I've given a couple of examples on the next page.
- Describe the examples you have, in terms of where they are (context), what they say (content, if you know or can find out) and who you think the intended audience is.
- Explain what the purposes of these examples are, as far as you can tell. In some cases they are historical signs that have endured (e.g. churches with German or Norwegian engraved in stone), sometimes they serve real communication (e.g. bus instructions (below) or warnings about eating fish from local lakes written in Spanish and Hmong, p. 144 of Wisconsin Talk), and sometimes they are for commercial or tourist purposes (German in the Rathskeller, Swiss German signs in New Glarus, Norwegian signs in Westby, example below). Some may be more complex, like our sign from St. Vincent De Paul on Willy St, with English, Spanish, Hmong and Ho-Chunk. Some are just hard to understand, like the picture about 'thinkers' on the next page ... I know some of the languages (besides English) on that door and they all have serious mistakes.

50 points

