

Culture & Communication

Instructor: **Dr. Angela M. Nonaka**
Course #s: ANT 307 (Unique #30025) / LIN 312 (Unique #40660)
Dates/Times: M-W-F 1~2 pm
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Course Description

The ability to learn and use language is a quintessentially human characteristic—one that distinguishes *homo sapiens* from other animal species. Language is simultaneously generated through and generative of social life; the former is a primary resource that we humans use in both the structuring and accomplishment of the latter. These dynamics form the subject of study of linguistic anthropology.

This course is an introduction to linguistic anthropology. It is impossible in a single semester to provide a complete overview of all topics that linguistic anthropologists address, so this course covers selected topics, the selection of which is aimed to illustrate how linguistic anthropologists go about doing their work: the range of topics they examine, the kinds of questions they ask, the types of approaches and methods they utilize, and the sorts of conclusions they reach.

‘Holism’ is one of the hallmarks of anthropological inquiry, and this course takes a holistic approach to the study of language. By the end of the term students should have gained a sense of how linguistic anthropology works as a profession and where it converges with or diverges from other domains of anthropology as well as other disciplines engaged in the study of culture and communication. More specifically, class members will learn to distinguish different definitions of and approaches to ‘language’ and recognize their respective implications. In this course, emphasis is placed on the study of language diversity and language use cross-culturally. Students will develop skills in investigating and understanding the role that language plays in the construction of culture and ways of thinking, for example, in producing commonly shared linguistic and cultural ideologies and practices. Finally, students will be given the opportunity to take the theories and concepts they learn in class and begin applying them to the ‘real world’; that is, students will begin developing basic skills in ethnographic observation, transcription and analysis.

Class Philosophy & Expectations

This class is an intellectual community to which we all belong and are accountable. **Welcome! ☺** Community is an interactive, co-constructed space. Your attendance, preparation, participation, and dedication—like mine—are crucial to the success of our mutual educational endeavor this semester.

All communities have members, activities, goals, rules, etc. To foster a positive classroom environment and facilitate learning, members of our little community are expected to be prompt: to arrive on time, to keep scheduled appointments, to communicate with the professor in a reasonable and timely fashion, to meet deadlines for readings and assignments, etc. Community members are expected to be civil to and respectful of fellow students as well as the instructor. As a courtesy to your fellow community members, please turn off all cell phones, blackberries, ipods, instant messaging and computer chat functions, etc. while class is in session. (For additional information, see the section of “Course-Related Etiquette.”)

Community is created, nurtured and maintained, and like learning, it takes genuine and sustained effort—a readiness and willingness to be present, prepared, and engaged. This course will be as interesting, fun, challenging, and rewarding, as we make it. So again, welcome & let’s get started!

Readings, Films, Lectures, & Attendance

Readings & Films:

Readings should be completed BEFORE class!

--Some course readings are available on blackboard.

Films should be viewed in or before class.

--Films are available at UT's audio-visual (Fine Arts) library. Beware: Films cannot be put on reserve. Other instructors often use the same films. Avoid procrastination. View required films in a timely fashion.

A few resources for this class are available on the internet or on reserve at the PCL Library.

➤ For specific information about required readings and films, see the weekly schedule outlined below.

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to adjust reading assignments to facilitate the course learning objectives. In such instances, students will be alerted in advance of any changes and their implications for related assignments.

Assignments:

Assignments must be turned in ON TIME, in accordance with the schedule outlined in this syllabus, not excluding changes announced subsequently in class or posted on the class electronic Blackboard.

Assignments will NOT be accepted electronically.

➤ For specific information about various course assignments, see the weekly schedule outlined below.

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to adjust assignments to facilitate the course learning objectives. In such instances, students will be alerted in advance of any changes and their implications for course evaluation and grading.

Organization & Integration of Readings & Assignments:

Be aware that readings and assignments are back-loaded in this class—a fact that is only good or bad depending on how you manage your time! Students must plan ahead, avoid procrastination, and complete all readings and assignments in a timely fashion—an approach that will serve you well in all your courses.

➤ The number of readings and assignments increases as the semester progresses. The course is intentionally designed this way for two reasons. First, students in this class have diverse educational interests and experiences, so it is necessary to lay a common foundation shared by the whole group to promote subsequent discussion, participation, and learning. Additionally, by the end of the semester you will have learned new information and skills that you do not currently possess and therefore that cannot be applied or evaluated earlier in the term.

Lectures & Attendance:

Those who attend class regularly are almost always more successful in this class. Your presence and participation (e.g., your concentrated attention and effort) are critical to learning and mastery of the information and ideas presented in this course. So do yourself a favor and attend class.

Much of the information you are responsible for will be provided in lecture. Powerpoint lectures will NOT be posted on the web or distributed to class members. Learning to listen carefully and take notes effectively are critical skills for university-level education. If you have not done so already, it your responsibility to hone and master these skills ASAP.

Evaluation & Grading

This course incorporates various instructional activities, learning assignments, and grading techniques, such as: lectures and films; readings and hands-on experience; individual and group work; in-class and out of class assignments; written reports and objective (e.g. multiple choice, T/F) tests. The class is deliberately designed this way because diverse instructional activities, multiple learning assignments, and varied grading techniques enrich educational experiences and maximize learning outcomes for the most number of students.

Requirements:

There will be two exams: one early in the quarter and the other on the last day of class. You are responsible for mastering information from lectures, readings, and all other sources provided in the course (e.g., films, guest speakers, etc.). If you must miss class on the day of an exam, see the policies outlined below in the section of the syllabus entitled, “Grading Policies.”

Each student is also responsible for completing a series of fieldwork assignments that simulate ethnographic fieldwork observation, that build on one another, and that expand in complexity as students’ skills and knowledge develop.

The remainder of your course grade is divided between miscellaneous assignments.

Assignment		% of Grade		(Projected) Due Date	
Exam #1		20%		Mon. 9/27	
Exam #2		20%		Fri. 12/3	
Fieldwork Assignments	#1	40%	5%		Wed. 9/8
	#2		5%		Wed. 9/22
	#3		10%		Fri. 10/15
	#4		20%		Fri. 12/3
	Greetings Analysis Quiz		10%		Fri. 11/5
3-Round Transcription Exercise	#1	10%	2.5%		Wed. 11/10
	#2		2.5%		Fri. 11/12
	#3		5%		Mon. 11/22

Grading Policies

Academic Honesty:

Although I encourage you to study and learn collaboratively, you are expected to do your own work and acknowledge use of anyone else’s work or ideas. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: (1) copying another student’s work or letting another student copy your work; (b) copying passages or ideas directly from another source and passing them off as your own, that is, without properly referencing them; (c) inappropriate use of blackberries, cell phones, computers, etc. when taking in-class tests, etc. When scholastic dishonesty is suspected, I am required to notify you and possibly turn the matter over to the Dean of Students office. Penalties for academic dishonesty include a failing grade on the assignment or in this course and possible expulsion from the university. If you have specific questions about these issues, contact the Office of the Dean of Students in FAC 248.

Special Needs:

If you have any special needs associated with any learning or physical disability, please see me. Before course accommodations can be made, you may be required to provide documentation from the Office of the Dean of Students—Services for Students with Disabilities. The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 512-471-6259 (or for TTY 512-471-4641).

Official Written (Medical) Excuses:

If you are unable to complete any course requirement due to a medical or another type of genuine emergency, please contact me as soon as possible to apprise me of the situation, and consistent with university policy, please be prepared to provide an official written excuse (e.g. from the UT health center, a doctor, the police department, etc.).

Incompletes:

Incompletes are not given, save in rare, documented instances of unavoidable hardship.

Grade Deductions for Late or Missed Assignments:

In the absence of a formal excuse (see specifications above), missed or late assignments incur a grading penalty—i.e., a grade of zero (0) or lowering by one letter grade.

Religious Holidays:

If you need to miss a class or a deadline in order to observe a religious holiday anytime during the semester, the university requires that you let me know in writing two weeks before the absence.

Course-Related Etiquette

The Golden Rules

1. Be reasonable.
2. Use common sense.
3. Treat others as you want to be treated.

Communicating with the Instructor:

Remember that you are but one of many students (both undergraduates and graduates) that the instructor mentors, all of whom believe his/her issue(s) to be of paramount importance. Alas, however, there are just 24 hours in a day.

--Emails can be sent instantly, but responses, especially thoughtful ones, take time. Keep this in mind.

Students are responsible for managing their schedules in such a way as to communicate with the instructor in an organized and timely fashion.

--Phone messages should be left with the Department of Anthropology. (Regrettably, due to UT budget cuts, the instructor has no voice mailbox for her office phone.)

Turning in Assignments:

There are reasons for deadlines, both pedagogical and practical and ones. Honoring due dates is important and makes an impression (a favorable one) on the instructor, who in turn has grading deadlines.

--Late or missed assignments require a formal excuse and will incur a grading penalty.

--Assignments will NOT be accepted electronically.

Turning off Personal Telecom Devices in Class:

When you come to class, personal telecommunication devices (e.g., cell phones, beepers, blackberries, iphones, instant messaging computer chat programs, etc.) should be turned off! Research demonstrates that multi-tasking is not conducive to listening and learning. Rapt attention and active participation, by contrast, facilitate learning. Our classroom community meets for just 50 minutes, 3 times per week. Those 3 sessions are ours together—precious pedagogical time during which I give you my full attention and effort and during which you must do the same.

Requests for Letters of Reference:

If you ask the instructor for a reference, you must do so at least 2 weeks in advance, preferably even earlier.

If the instructor agrees to write on your behalf, then be prepared to provide all necessary supporting materials (e.g. reference form, statement of purpose, resume, transcript, info about the organization or opportunity to which you are applying) ASAP. Remember that you are not the only student asking for references and that drafting a letter of recommendation takes considerable time.

Learning Resources on Campus

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://www.uwc.utexas.edu/>

TutoringServices: <http://www.lifelearning.utexas.edu/index.html>

Library-based Resources: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu>

Weekly Calendar of Course Activities & Assignments

The instructor reserves the right to adjust readings and assignments to facilitate course learning objectives. In such instances, students will be alerted in advance of any changes and their implications for course evaluation and grading.

Week 1

Wed. 8/25 Introductions, bureaucratic housekeeping, charting a path for the semester

Fri. 8/27 Definitions: What are 'language,' 'culture,' 'communication,' & 'anthropology'?

Week 2

Mon. 8/30 Language: A Quintessentially Human Characteristic

Readings: What is language? (Fromkin 1993)

Wed. 9/1 Universal Grammar and the Human Language Faculty/Capacity

Readings: Components of Language (O'Grady et al. 1997)

Fri. 9/3 Language: Grammatical System(s)

Readings: Overview of Linguistics (Nunberg & Wasow)

Week 3

Mon. 9/6 NO CLASS (LABOR DAY HOLIDAY)

Wed. 9/8 Language Typologies and Historical Linguistics

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Fieldwork observation #1 (mapping exercise)

Readings: Linguistic Diversity & Language Classification

Readings: Historical Linguistics (Hock)

Fri. 9/10 GUEST SPEAKER, Emiliana Cruz = Introduction to Linguistics of Chatino

Readings: Indigenous Languages in Mexico (Emiliana Cruz)

Week 4

Mon. 9/13 Discussion of Ethnographic Fieldwork: Review of Round I and Planning for Round II

Wed. 9/15 Pre-Anthropological Views of Linguistic and Cultural Diversity

Fri. 9/17 Emergence of Anthropology/Linguistics as an Academic Discipline

Readings: What is Anthropology? (Swartz & Jordan 1976)

Week 5

Mon. 9/20 Trends in linguistic Anthropology through WWII—Part I

Readings: Linguistic Models (Swartz & Jordan 1976)

Readings: "Language" (Hoebel 1972)

Wed. 9/22 Trends in linguistic Anthropology through WWII—Part II
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Fieldwork observation #2 (establishing context and taking field notes)
Readings: Anthro Formative Period 1910-1940 (Blount 1995)

Fri. 9/24 GUEST SPEAKER, Eric Campbell = Language Endangerment
Readings: Last Words (The New Yorker)
Readings: UNESCO-Language Vitality and Endangerment

Week 6

Mon. 9/27 ***IN-CLASS EXAM #1***

Wed. 9/29 FILM: “Do You Speak American” part I
Readings: Supplemental resources available at PCL reserves and online at: <http://www.pbs.org/speak/>

Fri. 10/1 FILM: “Do You Speak American” part II
Readings: Supplemental resources available at PCL reserves and online at: <http://www.pbs.org/speak/>

Week 7

Mon. 10/4 FILM: “Do You Speak American” part III
Readings: Supplemental resources available at PCL reserves and online at: <http://www.pbs.org/speak/>

Wed. 10/6 Review and discussion of PBS film series, “Do You Speak American?”
Readings: Terminology (PBS video, "Do You Speak American?")

Fri. 10/8 Discussion of Ethnographic Fieldwork: Review of Round II and Planning for Round III

Week 8

Mon. 10/11 Post-WWII Developments in the Study of Language
Readings: Ling Anthro: History, Ideas Issues (Duranti 2001)

Wed. 10/13 Sign Language Linguistics and Deaf Communities
Readings: Variation in Sign Languages

Fri. 10/15 Ban Khor and Ban Khor Sign Language: Ethnographic Case Study
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Fieldwork observation #3 (new field notes and analysis paper ~5 pages)
Readings: Endangered Sign Languages (Nonaka 2004)

Week 9

Mon. 10/18 Speech Act Theory
Readings: Speech Act Theory / Austin
Readings: Speech Acts /Searle

Wed. 10/20 Ethnomethodology
Readings: What is Ethnomethodology? (Garfinkel 1967)
Readings: On Face-Work (Goffman 1955)

Fri. 10/22 Grice's Maxims
Readings: Grice's Maxims

Week 10

Mon. 10/25 Conversation Analysis
Readings: Conversation Analysis Review
Readings: Telephone Conversation (encyclopedia entry)
Readings: Sequencing in Conversational Opening (Schegloff 1968)
Readings: Participation (Goodwin & Goodwin 2004)

Wed. 10/27 Greetings—Part I
Readings: Greetings (Duranti 2001)

Fri. 10/29 Greetings—Part II

Week 11

Mon. 11/1 Coffee Shop Talk, Interactions, and Activities—Part I
Readings: Coffeetalk: Starbucks (Gaudio 2003)
Readings: Barista Rants (Manning)

Wed. 11/3 Coffee Shop Talk, Interactions, and Activities—Part II
Readings: Respect in Service Encounters (Bailey 1997)

Fri. 11/5 ***IN-CLASS QUIZ (analysis of greetings)*** + Planning Fieldwork: Round IV

Week 12

Mon. 11/8 Transcription: Methods and Theories
Readings: Transcription as Theory (Ochs 1979)
Readings: Transcription Conventions (Atkinson & Heritage 1984)
Readings: Sample Transcript

Wed. 11/10 Levels of transcription
ASSIGNMENT: Bring completed first-pass transcription to class for analysis and revision.
You got water (0:11) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHpAeGqhzdw>

Fri. 11/12 Micro-transcription
ASSIGNMENT: Bring completed micro-transcription to class for analysis and revision.
You got water (0:11) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHpAeGqhzdw>

Week 13

Mon. 11/15 Language Ideologies: Case Study I
Readings: Ideology (Errington 2001)
Readings: Language Ideologies (Woolard 1998)
Readings: Humor (Beeman 2001)

Wed. 11/17 Language Ideologies: Case Study II
Readings: Introduction to Ebonics (Smitherman 2000)
Readings: Suite for Ebony & Phonics
Readings: Hip Hop Nation Language

Fri. 11/19 Language Ideologies and Coffee Shop Talk—Part I

Week 14

Mon. 11/22 Language Ideologies and Coffee Shop Talk—Part II
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Final Revised Transcript
Data clip on Youtube: "Jen Moon is worst Starbucks employee ever" (1:05)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBj-kZQiD58&NR=1>

Wed. 11/24 Fieldwork day (individual fieldwork observation and analysis for final fieldwork paper)

Fri. 11/26 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY)

Week 15

Mon. 11/29 Final Fieldwork Paper Checklist-Review

Wed. 12/1 Review Session

Fri. 12/3 ***IN-CLASS EXAM #2***
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Fieldwork observation #4 (map, field notes, analysis paper 5~10 pages)

(NOTE: NO FINAL EXAM is scheduled for this class.)