

Anth R5B: Linguistic Anthropology

Spring, 2014

INSTRUCTOR: Terra Edwards, terraedwards@berkeley.edu

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-5:00 pm

Location: 111 Kroeber Hall

CCN: 02558

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30-3:30, 315 Kroeber Hall

Course Description:

This course will introduce students to the field of linguistic anthropology. Part artist, part scientist, and part philosopher, the linguistic anthropologist addresses fundamental questions— How do the structures of language influence our perception of reality? What is thinking, and how is it mediated? How do people’s views of language contribute to and subvert social inequality? What is language, and how can it be differentiated from other sign systems? We will begin the course with a brief introduction to the broader field of anthropology and its relation to linguistic anthropology. We will then shift our focus to understanding how linguistic anthropologists use observations of specific practices to generate broader theories of language and culture. Throughout the course, students will engage directly with anthropological ideas in their own research and writing projects, which will be tailored to their interests, and motivated by their curiosities.

Students will leave this course with a strong foundation in academic and creative writing. They will also adopt a range of strategies for reading, listening, watching, and participating in intellectual exchange. Knowledge of a language other than English will be helpful, but is not required. There are no prerequisites. This course fulfills the second half of the University of California’s Reading and Composition requirement.

Student Learning Objectives:

- 1) To establish a foundation for enthusiastic academic writing.
- 2) To understand what makes linguistic anthropology unique as a mode of inquiry and way of interacting with the world.
- 3) To learn strategies for understanding difficult texts and actively engaging with them through reading, writing, and discussion.
- 4) To acquire strategies for observing and writing about first hand cultural experiences (known as “ethnographic” writing).

Assignments and Grading:

Participation	25%
Ethnographic Writing #1	5%
Ethnographic Writing #2	5%
Ethnographic Writing #3	5%
Academic Writing #1	5%
Academic Writing #2	10%
Academic Writing #3	10%
Academic Writing #4	10%
Homework Assignments (10 in total)	10%
Final Paper	15%

This course will focus on learning through discussion, workshop, and hands-on exercises. If you do not attend class, it will be very difficult to pass. Please note that 25% of your grade is based on your participation. Participation means that you come to class, having completed all of the assigned readings. I will clarify points from the readings, provide an opportunity to apply the skills that are introduced, prepare comments and thoughts to share with you, and facilitate discussion. However, I will not be repeating previous topics or summarizing the readings. Much of what we will learn to do in class is not written down and cannot be reproduced. Furthermore, the course is designed to be cumulative—what you learn in week 2 will build on what you learned in week 1. Therefore, missing class will put you at a serious disadvantage. I have highlighted classes where participation is mandatory. Missing these classes will cause particularly serious problems for your progress in the course, though missing any class will be a problem.

Attendance Policy: You are allowed one unexcused absence. Each additional absence will negatively affect your grade. Please do everything in your power to miss a class that is not marked “mandatory” on the syllabus. If you know you will be absent due to a scheduling conflict, please give me as much advanced notice as possible and arrange with a peer to provide you with notes from that day’s activities. Please arrive at class on time. If you are consistently late, it will reflect negatively on your grade. For more information concerning the attendance requirement and dealing with scheduling conflicts, see the UC [Academic Senate’s website](#).

The University also accommodates for student’s religious creed. However, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor in writing by the second week of the semester of any potential conflict and to recommend a solution, with the understanding that an earlier deadline or date of examination may be the most practicable solution. For more information visit: <http://students.berkeley.edu/uga/religion.stm>

Participation Policy: I expect that everyone will actively participate during class. This does not mean that you must speak often, but when you do speak, that you make thoughtful contributions. Thoughtful contributions require active listening, critical engagement with the texts, and active note taking in class. All of these activities, even if you rarely speak, will count as full participation. In addition, you are required to bring questions and comments about the course material to each session. Please keep your cell phones turned off in class, unless instructed to turn them on (which may happen on occasion).

Office Hours: These meetings can help clarify topics from the lecture, the readings, activities in class, or can be used for help with writing. Take advantage of them! You can also come to office hours to discuss anything related to thinking or to anthropology. If you cannot make the scheduled office hours, we can schedule to meet at a mutually arranged time. Please feel free to meet with me in small groups as well as individually.

Late Work: Work that is turned in after the due date will lose one full letter grade per 24 hours. There will be very little tolerance for late work.

Appealing Grades: If you are unhappy with a grade you have received and you would like to discuss it with me, please wait at least 24 hours and then either come to my office hours or email me about your concerns. Address the comments provided on your paper in your appeal.

Academic Honesty: All written work should be your own. Please do not use other students' papers or exercises for your assignments. If you cite an author or use his/her ideas, please cite properly. If you are unsure if you are citing properly, come see me. Plagiarized assignments will receive an F. For more information on what constitutes academic dishonesty, see the following link: <http://campuslife.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity/definition>

E-mail: Be advised that I sometimes only check my email once a day and that you should therefore expect to wait up to 24 hours to hear back from me. If you e-mail me on the weekend, please do not expect a response until Monday. Please limit email, if possible, and instead come to my office hours or talk with me before or after class.

Accommodations: If you are having problems that affect your ability to attend, participate, or keep up with the workload, please don't wait until before the exams or papers to ask for help, and please don't disappear. I may be able to help or direct you to someone else who can. If you require accommodation of any kind, whether it is a documented requirement or not, please let me know what you need and I will do all I can to accommodate you.

Readings:

There will be a reader available at Copy Central at 2576 Bancroft Way. Their phone number is 510-848-8649. It will be available by the end of the second week of the course. Please call them to confirm before going to pick it up. All readings that are not in the reader will be available on bspace under "resources".

(1) The following books will be required for the course:

Barry, L. 2008. *What it is*. Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1976 [1980]. *Witchcraft Oracles and Magic among the Azande*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Optional text: Barry, L. 1999. *Cruddy*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

(2) Selections from the following will be available in the course reader:

Boas, F. (1889). On Alternating Sounds. *American Anthropologist* 2, 47-54.

Boas, F. 1966[1911]. "Introduction," in *Handbook of American Indian Languages*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press (Reprinted from *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin*, 1911, 40 (1). Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution. PAGES 11-14 and 20-23.

Boroditsky, L. 2011. How Language Shapes Thought. *Scientific American* 304:3.

Craze, J. Forthcoming. Dreams are not made of Concrete. *Fourth Genre*.

Goffman, E. (1959). Introduction to *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday.

— (1964). The Neglected Situation. *American Anthropologist* 66, 133-136.

— (1981). Footing. *Forms of Talk* Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell.

Lippi-Green, R. (1997). Language Ideology and Language Prejudice. In *English with an Accent: language ideology and discrimination in the United States* London and New York: Routledge.

MacLeish, K.T. (2013). *Making War at Fort Hood: Life and Uncertainty in a Military Community*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Muehlmann, S. 2012. Rhizomes and Other Uncountables: the Malaise of Enumeration at the End of the Colorado River. *American Ethnologist* 39:14.

— (2013). *What Else Can I do with a Boat and no Nets?: Ideologies of Work and the Alternatives at Home*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Redfield, R. 1954. "Introduction," in *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday.

Sapir, E. 1949[1934]. "The Grammarian and His Language," in *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality*. Edited by D. Mandelbaum, pp. 564-568. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sapir, Edward (1995 [1927]). Language. In Ben Blount (ed.), *Language, Culture, and Society*. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland.

Schutz, Alfred and Luckmann, Thomas (1973). The Everyday Life-World and the Natural Attitude. *The Structures of the Life-World* pp. 3-15. Evanston: Northwestern University.

Stewart, Kathleen (1996). *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an "Other" America*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Whorf, B. L. 1995. "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language," in *Language, Culture, and Society*. Edited by B. G. Blount. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press.

Course Schedule

****Note:** all readings are to be completed BY THE DATE THEY ARE LISTED ON. If the schedule says “Thursday 1/23: Sapir (in reader)” that means you will have read Sapir prior to your arrival in class on Thursday 1/23. Assignments are to be completed by the date listed.

Part One

Week One: What is Linguistic Anthropology?

Tuesday 1/21: Lecture/Discussion. No assignments due.

Thursday 1/23: Sapir “Language” (available on bspace under “resources”)

Assignment: choose a field site that you will visit at least 5 times during the semester. Email me or come to office hours to discuss the suitability of the field site with the instructor before the end of week two.

Week Two: What is Ethnography?

Tuesday 1/28: Evans-Pritchard, Ch. 1 and 2, appendix IV.

Thursday 1/30: Muehlmann “What Else Can I do with a Boat and No Nets?” (on bspace)

Assignment: Answer the following questions (1 paragraph each): (1) What is the core problem that Evans-Pritchard is addressing? How does he use ethnographic evidence to address it? (2) What is the core problem that Muehlmann is addressing and how does she use ethnographic evidence to address it? Due 2/4, 3:30 pm.

Week Three: Ethnographic Writing Part I

Tuesday 2/4: Lynda Barry “What it Is” (first half)
Introduction to Ethnographic Writing—**Attendance Mandatory!**

Assignment: Visit your fieldsite for a minimum of one hour. Ethnographic Writing #1 (5 images), DUE 2/11.

Thursday 2/6: Lynda Barry “What it Is” (second half)

Assignment: Visit your fieldsite for a minimum of one hour. Ethnographic Writing #2 (Typification) Due 2/11.

Week Four: Ethnographic Writing Part II

Tuesday 2/11: Writing Workshop—**Attendance Mandatory!**

Assignment: Visit your fieldsite for a minimum of one hour. Ethnographic Writing #3 (Event) Due 2/13.

Thursday 2/13: Writing Workshop—**Attendance Mandatory!**

Assignment: Visit your fieldsite for a minimum of one hour.

Week Five: What is Theory?

Tuesday 2/18: Schutz (in reader). Theory Workshop—**Attendance Mandatory!**

Assignment: Using Schutz, reflect on an ethnographic event in theoretical terms. 1 paragraph. Due Tuesday 2/25. Further instructions will be given in class.

Thursday 2/20: Muhelmann “Rhizomes and Other Uncountables” (in reader), Theory Workshop—**Attendance Mandatory!**

Week Six: A Writer’s Life

Tuesday 2/25: Craze (in reader)

Assignment: prepare 5 questions for Joshua Craze for Thursday 2/27.

Thursday 2/27: Guest Lecture—Joshua Craze. Be prepared with Questions. **Note:** Start reading for next week early! There will be a lot.

Week Seven: Language and Thought

Tuesday 3/4: Boroditsky (in reader), Boas (in reader) “On alternating Sounds”, The “Introduction to Handbook of American Indian Languages” (in reader) (pages 11-14 and 20-23)

Thursday 3/6: Sapir—“The Grammarian and his Language” (in reader), Whorf—“The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language” (in reader)

Assignment: Answer the following questions (due Tuesday 3/11).

1. What is “objectification” for Whorf, and how does he use the term? Is there anything like objectification in Sapir? Boas? If so what? And how do Sapir and Boas’ concepts differ? Find one example of objectification in your ethnographic fieldnotes.

2. What is a thought-world for Whorf? Support your analysis with at least one direct quote. Do the people in your field site occupy a thought-world? If so, in what sense?

3. What is the microcosm?

4. Summarize two examples in the text where he links either habitual thought, the thought-world, or the microcosm to language. How are they related? What do these examples tell us about how Whorf

views the relationship of language to the external world?

5. **EXTRA CREDIT (optional):** Where did Newton get Newtonian space, time, and matter from (according to Whorf)? Why is this significant for thinking about how knowledge is generated?

Week Eight: Language and Interaction

Tuesday 3/11: Goffman “The Neglected Situation” (in reader)

Assignment: Synthesize Goffman with what we have learned so far about the relationship of language to the world around it. Use the prompt below. Due 3/13.

Questions: What is the “Situation” in Goffman? Do Boas, Sapir, or Whorf have a concept that corresponds to this concept? If so, what, and how is it different or similar to the “situation”? If they do not have a corresponding concept, , how might this limit the utility of their frameworks for thinking about what is happening in your fieldsite?

Thursday 3/13: Goffman “Footing” (in reader). Be prepared to discuss the relationship of language and interaction in this piece in class.

Assignment: (there are two parts to this assignment)

(1) *Option 1:* Record and Transcribe 3 minutes of spoken English. Turn in your transcript on 4/1. *Option 2:* Record and Transcribe 45 seconds of video recorded interaction between two speakers of English. Turn in your transcript on 4/1. *Option 3:* Write three images, which include at least one direct quote each. The quotes must be transcribed in real time, while you are in your fieldsite and must be very precise. Turn in your images on 4/1

(2) BRING A SHORT VIDEO CLIP OF AN INTERACTION SEQUENCE TO CLASS WITH YOU ON TUESDAY (3/18). Be prepared to use one or more concepts we have learned in class to analyze something happening in the clip in theoretical terms. Each person will introduce their clip to the class and give an informal presentation about what is going on. We will then engage in dialogue about alternative analyses.

Week Nine: Interactional Analysis

Tuesday 3/18: Interactional Analysis Workshop— **Attendance Mandatory!** Bring a video clip of a short interaction to class and be prepared to propose analyses, using concepts we have studied in the course.

Thursday 3/20: CLASS CANCELED

Week Ten: SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS

Tuesday 3/25: SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS

Thursday 3/27: SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS

Week Eleven: Language and Social Distinction

Tuesday 4/1: Lippi-Green (reader)

Thursday 4/3: Goffman, Introduction to “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life” (in reader)

Assignment: What is the relationship between language use and social distinction for Lippi-Green and Goffman, respectively? In what ways is each perspective useful in accounting for related phenomena in your fieldsite? 2 paragraphs, due 4/8. **Also:** Email me with a decision about your topic for your final research paper, or come to office hours to discuss.

Week Twelve: Language as an Integral Part of Social Life

Tuesday 4/8: MacLeish “Prologue” (in Reader), Research Workshop—**Attendance Mandatory!!**

Assignment: “Introduction” for final research paper due 4/10.

Thursday 4/10: Research Workshop—**Attendance Mandatory!!**

Assignment: “Event” for final research paper due 4/15

Week Thirteen: Research Projects

Tuesday 4/15: Stewart “The Space of Culture” (in reader)

Assignment: “Statement of Problem” for final research paper due 4/17

Thursday 4/17: Optional Reading: Cruddy by Lynda Barry

Assignment: “Methods” for final research paper due 4/22.

Week Fourteen: Research Projects

Tuesday 4/22: Optional Reading: Cruddy by Lynda Barry

Assignment: “Discussion” for final research paper due 4/24, DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE 4/24

Thursday 4/24: DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS—Revising Workshop—**Attendance Mandatory!!**

Week Fifteen: Final Papers Due

Tuesday 4/29: FINAL PAPER DUE BY 3:30—HARD COPIES TO MY MAILBOX ON 2ND FLOOR OF KROEBER **AND** ELECTRONIC COPIES VIA EMAIL.