CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

ANTHROPOLOGY 307, LINGUISTICS 312 (ANT 307, unique #31265; LIN 312, unique #41284)

Fall 2013

Class location: CLA 0.112 Tuesday and Thursday 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

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SAC 4.116 (Linguistic Anthropology Lab)

Office Hours: 12:30-1:30pm T/TH

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I. Rationale

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the fascinating world of human communication as it emerges within particular cultures and shapes habits, thoughts, and emotions. Students will be able to sharpen their skills and develop new skills in meta-level analysis of how people use language and other symbolic forms to maintain power or to express identity. Understanding how the everyday language people use is interpreted is an essential part of successful cross cultural communication. We look at both the principles of everyday communication and the many creative ways people use these principles in different cultures. Language shapes unique ways of thinking and of interpreting the world.

II. Course Aims and Objectives

Aims: This course builds new knowledge about cross cultural communication and about ideas people have regarding communication, by looking at a diverse range of cultures. Reading case studies and ethnographic accounts from communities in the Middle East, the U.S., Asia and elsewhere will be supplemented by readings from the textbook Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology, which covers general processes and concepts students can apply in their daily lives. Students will learn how to analyze communication in several analytical exercises.

Specific Learning Objectives: By the end of this course, students will:

• Through comparing and contrasting language practices in different world areas, gain new knowledge about the power of language to shape and spread ideas. Through reading about

- communication in different cultures, students will gain new appreciation for the range of communication forms cross culturally.
- Through studying and applying general principles of communication to cross cultural settings, students will learn what is general about human communication behavior and what is specific to culture.
- Through studying key principles underlying human symbolic behavior as it pertains to language, students will acquire knowledge about the role of symbolic behavior in creating and transmitting culture.
- Through studying the role of language attitudes and the role of societal rules about language use, for example, how children are socialized into patterns through language, students will be able to understand how language attitudes and ideologies shape behavior and judgments about behavior.
- By synthesizing from case studies, examples in lectures, and assignments, students will learn to apply their knowledge of communication to new situations.
- Through linking class materials with their own experiences, students will gain skills in shifting and sharing perspectives and their cultural contexts.
- Through class exercises, students will learn to collect language forms and analyze them.

III. Format and Procedures: The course is structured around lectures based both on the readings and on other materials the professor uses for illustration and teaching purposes. Students are encouraged to participate in discussions.

IV. Tentative Course Schedule: **This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

| Date | Main Topic(s) | Work to do at home Readings – to be completed <u>before</u> class | Evaluation |
|------------------|--|--|---|
| 8/29 | Introduction: syllabus/assignments/requirements | | |
| 9/3-9/5 | Key concepts: how signs work, the significance of icon, symbol, index/indexicality concepts, understanding multifunctionality, the "naturalization" of conventions and representations | McCloud, Scott, Understanding Comics (selections on Blackboard) Ahearn, Laura, Living Language, Chapter 1, The Socially Charged Life of Language | Observational Exercise Handed out 9/5 |
| 9/10- 9/12(I) | Methods in studying language: Participant observation, ethnographic fieldwork, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, Video card game | Ahearn, Laura, <i>Living Language</i> , Chapter 2, The Research Process in Linguistic Anthropology Abu-Lughod, Lila, <i>Veiled Sentiments</i> , Preface and Chapter 1, Guest & Daughter | |
| 9/17-9/19 | How does communication work? Cultural ideas about language, how others interpret how we talk | Keating, Elizabeth. Book in Progress, Chapter 4, The Language Problem Ahearn, Laura, <i>Living Language</i> Chapter 8, Performance, Performativity and the Constitution of Communities Basso, K. (1979) excerpts from | Observational Exercise Due 9/17 |

| | | Portraits of the Whiteman, Cambridge University Press (Blackboard) | |
|-----------------|--|--|---|
| 9/24-9/26 | Socialization or learning culture from an early age, learning culture together with language | Ahearn, Laura, <i>Living Language</i> , Chapter 3, Language Acquisition and Socialization | |
| | Language, thought and culture, the relation of language learned to patterns of thinking | Ochs and Schieffelin. Language Acquisition and Socialization: Three Developmental Stories and Their Im- plications, from <i>Culture Theory: Essays in</i> <i>Mind, Self, and Emotion</i> (on Blackboard) | |
| | | Ahearn, Laura, <i>Living Language</i> , Chapter 4, Language, Thought, and Culture | |
| | | Does Your Language Shape How You Think? - NYTimes.com, 8/26, 2010 (Blackboard) | |
| | | Comments on New York Times Article by Society of Linguistic Anthropology president (Blackboard) | |
| 10/1-10/3 | Language and identity, Part 1 | Ahearn, Laura, <i>Living Language</i> , Chapter 9, Language and Gender | |
| | expressions and negotiation of identity | Abu-Lughod, Lila, <i>Veiled</i> Sentiments, Chapter 2, Identity in | |
| | language and gender | Relationship; Chapter 4, Modesty, Gender, and Sexuality | |
| 10/8-10/10 | Language and Identity Part II Identity as shaped by others, | Keating, Elizabeth, Book in Progress, Chapter 5 The Identity Problem: Spoiled Identity (Blackboard) | |
| | identities in conflict | Bailey, Ben. Communication of Respect in Interethnic Service Encounters, <i>Language in Society</i> 26: 327-356 (Blackboard) | |
| 10/15- 10/17 | Language and power, agency, honor of the weak | Ahearn, Laura, <i>Living Language</i> , Chapter 12, Language, Power, Agency | Poetic language assignment handed out 10/15 |
| | | Smitherman, Geneva "The Chain Remain the Same" Communicative Practices in the Hip Hop Nation, <i>Journal of Black Studies</i> , Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 3-25 (Blackboard) | Out 10/13 |
| | | Abu-Lughod, Lila, <i>Veiled Sentiments</i> , Chapter 3, Honor and the Virtues of Autonomy | |
| 10/220 | Poetic Devices | Abu-Lughod, Lila, <i>Veiled Sentiments</i> , Chapter 5, The Poetry of Personal Life | |
| 10/240 | Midterm Exam (on materials from 8/29 to 10/17) | | Midterm Exam 10/24 |

| 10/29- 10/31 | Poetic Devices, continued | Abu-Lughod, Lila, <i>Veiled Sentiments</i> , Chapter 6, Honor and Poetic Vulnerability, Chapter 7, Modesty and the Poetry of Love | |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| 11/5-11/7 | Influences of Technology | Tufte, E. The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint. Graphics Press | Poetic language assignment due 11/5 |
| 11/12- 11/14 | Multilingualism and Global Communities | Antal, David, A Linguistic Odyssey, <i>Int'l J. Soc. Lang.</i> 133, 143-168 (Blackboard) Ahearn, Laura, <i>Living Language</i> , Chapter 6, Multilingualism and Globalization Barbara Bullock, Lars Hinrichs, and Almeida Jacqueline Toribio "World Englishes, code-switching, and convergence" The Oxford Handbook of World Englishes, Oxford U.Press (Blackboard) | |
| 11/19- 11/21 C | Language Policy Questions | Lane, Hoffmeister, Bahan, Journey into the Deaf-World, Chapter 7, Disabling the Deaf-World, Chapter 8, Educational Placement and the Deaf Child (Blackboard) | Language Journal Final Assignment, Rough Draft Due and discussed in class 11/19 |
| 11/26 | Review of Concepts and Themes Discussed in Class | | |
| 12/3 | Second Midterm (materials from 10/22 to 11/26) | | Second Midterm 12/3 |
| 12/5 | Conclusion; Summary | | |
| 12/8 | Final Assignment Due | | Final Assignment Due: language and symbolic behavior journal observations with analysis |

Feedback: During the course I will be asking for your feedback on your learning both formally and informally, including through an anonymous survey.

V. Professor's Assumptions: In language and in anthropological research the assumption is that all languages and cultures are equally rich and complex symbolic worlds and that there are no "primitive" cultures or languages. At the same time it is very common for people to disparagingly view other people's practices as primitive, peculiar or immoral, a situation that deserves our attention and reflection in a time of enhanced connection between cultures due to technology and globalization.

VI. Course Requirements:

Attendance and participation policy:

Class participation counts 10% of the final grade. The class participation grade is made up of: a) participating in discussions in class, b) emailing or giving to Prof. Keating *and* the T.A. (over the course of the semester) two newspaper, magazine, or internet articles concerning some aspect of language and culture with a paragraph written by you linking the article to themes and concepts in the class, c) emailing Prof. Keating *and* the TA (over the course of the semester) 2 links to YouTube videos which illustrate concepts discussed in class on language and culture with a paragraph you wrote linking the article to themes and concepts in class d) attendance at lectures.

No laptops, ipads or mobile phones or similar devices may be used by students during class period. Please take your notes with paper and pen/pencil. Although a great tool, laptops can compromise your attention and those seated around you and your responsibilities as members of the class group.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify the professor of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Course Readings/Materials:

(a) Required Books:

Abu-Lughod, L. Veiled Sentiments, University of California Press Ahearn, Laura. Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology, Wiley-Blackwell

(b) Also required reading: articles and chapters on the Blackboard site

Assignments, Assessment, and Evaluation

- (a) Two midterm exams count 40% of the grade (20% each)
- (b) Three written assignments count 40% of the final grade. There are two short written assignments (10% each), and one final assignment (20%).
- (c) Pop quizzes on reading count 10% (lowest two quiz grades will be thrown out).
- (d) Class participation counts 10% (see description below).

Assignments:

- (a) Late homework assignments will be downgraded one letter grade
- (b) Assignments must be turned in both digitally (on Blackboard) and by typewritten paper copy in class (single spaced text please).
- (c) Assignments are graded primarily on content and not on style of writing. Grade is based on amount of details included (rather than overgeneralizations) and depth of analysis (not just a cursory job). More information will be given at time of assignment.
- (d) Assignments and dates are subject to change check the Blackboard site.

Exams:

- (a) Make up exams are only allowed with a note from the doctor (after the exam), or pending a formal written appeal to the professor and TA (before the exam). Makeup exams are different exams.
- (b) There is no final exam, rather there is a final written assignment

The class participation grade is made up of:

(a) participating in discussions in class

- (b) two popular press articles: emailing or giving to the professor *and* the T.A. (over the course of the semester) two copies of newspaper, magazine, or internet articles concerning some aspect of language and culture with a paragraph showing how the article links to themes and concepts in class
- (c) two youtube links: emailing the professor and the TA (over the course of the semester) 2 links to YouTube videos which illustrate concepts discussed in class on language and culture with a paragraph linking the video to themes and concepts in the class
- d) attendance at lectures.
- **4.** Use of *Blackboard*: Blackboard http://courses.utexas.edu is used to distribute course materials, to communicate, to post grades, to submit assignments. Rely on this site for the most up-to-date information about the course (not the printed syllabus). You can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., if you are not familiar with it.

VII. Grading Procedures: Grades will be based on the following scale:

A 90-100

B 80-89

C 70-79

D 60-69

VIII. Academic Integrity

University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work.

You are encouraged to study together and to discuss readings and what is covered in lecture with other students. You can give "consulting" help to or receive "consulting" help from such students. However, this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by another student. Should copying occur, both the student who copied work from another student and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this Code can also be extended to include a failing grade for the course and University disciplinary action. During exams, you must do your own work. Talking or discussion is not permitted during the examinations, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any collaborative behavior during the examinations will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

IX. Other University Notices and Policies

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students: All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on

a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/utmail/1564.

Documented Disability Statement: Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

- Please notify the professor as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not
 accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper
 alternative text conversion, etc.).
- Please notify the professor as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).
- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Q drop Policy: The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231: "Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

Emergency Evacuation Policy: Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions or those of class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

