

Subject to revision for the Spring 2008 class

Anthropology Department
Brandeis University
Spring 2004

ANTHROPOLOGY 186b
Linguistic Anthropology
Janet McIntosh

Class: Tuesday and Friday 1:40-3:00, Brown 316
Instructor: Dr. Janet McIntosh, Brown 207
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Office Hours: Tuesday and Friday 9-10:00 am

Course Description:

This course offers students an advanced introduction to linguistic anthropology, the study of language in social and cultural context. We will focus on several interrelated questions, including: How do context and social interaction affect the meaning of an utterance? How are social relationships, including authority and subordination, reflected in and created by language use? What role does language play in cultural institutions such as religion, class, and race? Background in formal linguistics is not crucial to this class, but a taste for analytic philosophy and tolerance for dense theoretical readings will help you considerably in your understanding and enjoyment of this course.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Class attendance and participation. Participation in this class will require dedication, since I'll count on you not only to keep abreast of the readings but also to engage with them deeply, striving to comprehend *and* question them. For certain classes, individual students will bear responsibility for organizing and facilitating class discussions by summarizing readings, bringing several discussion questions to the table, and helping moderate discussions.
- 2) 6-8 page essay due on February 27th
- 3) 10 page essay due on the last day of class

Grading:

- Class attendance and participation: 35%. This grade will be established on the basis of faithful attendance and on the quality of your contributions to discussions and facilitation.
- First essay: 30%.
- Second essay: 35%.

Policy on Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory and will be factored into your grade (see above). Each student is permitted no more than two excused absences.

Required readings:

There are no books to purchase for this course. Course materials are (or will soon appear) on WebCT under “186b Readings”, unless otherwise noted.

SCHEDULE OF READINGSFriday January 16

Introduction to Class Materials

Tuesday January 20

-Saussure: *a foundational text to work with and against*

-Ferdinand de Saussure. 1959. Excerpts from *Course in General Linguistics*. New York: McGraw Hill. (Pp. 7-20; 65-70)

-Michael Agar. 1994. “The Circle” from *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation*. New York: Quill.

Friday January 23

-Dell Hymes *on the ethnography of speaking*

-Dell Hymes. 1995 [1974] *The Ethnography of Speaking*. In *Language, Culture, and Society*, ed. Ben Blount. Waveland Press, Inc.

Tuesday January 27

Conversations and Speech Act Theory

-*What happens in a conversation, beyond the mere exchange of information?*

-*What does it mean to say that language is a form of action?*

-Nancy Bonvillain. 1993. pp. 77-79 and 91-100 of “Contextual Components: Outline of an Ethnography of Communication”. In *Language, Culture, and Communication: The Meaning of Messages*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

-J. L. Austin. 1970. *Performative Utterances*. In J. Q. Urmson and O. J. Warnock, ed. *Philosophical Papers*. Oxford University Press.

Friday January 30

Speech Act Theory II

-Rosaldo on cultural differences in speech acts

-Duranti on when intention is or isn't important to meaning

-Michelle Rosaldo. 1982. The Things we do with Words: Ilongot Speech Acts and Speech Act Theory in Philosophy. *Language in Society*: 11.

-Alessandro Duranti. 1992. Intentions, Self, and Responsibility: An Essay in Samoan Ethnopragmatics. In Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine, ed. *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*. Cambridge University Press.

Tuesday February 3—No class; instructor is in Washington, D.C.

Friday February 6

Implicatures

-A great deal of “meaning” can't be located in the literal sense of utterances. Where, then, does it come from?

-Grice's “Conversational Maxims” and implicatures

-Nancy Bonvillian. 1997. Excerpt from “Communication”, pp. 107-110 only. In *Language, Culture, and Communication: The Meaning of Messages*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

-H. P. Grice. 1975. Logic and Conversation. In Peter Cole and Jerry Morgan, ed. *Speech Acts* (Syntax and Semantics 3). New York: Academic Press.

Tuesday February 10

Implicatures II:

-Elinor Ochs Keenan. 1974. The Universality of Conversational Postulates. *Language in Society*: 5.

Friday February 13

Footing and Participant Roles I

-How is conversation predicated on shifting “participant roles”?

-How are social relations reflected in and created by these?

-How can participant roles complicate a speaker's “meaning”?

-Erving Goffman. 1981. Footing. In *Forms of Talk*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

-Steven E. Clayman. 1992. Footing in the Achievement of Neutrality: The Case of News-Interview Discourse. In Paul Drew and John Heritage, ed. *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*. Cambridge University Press.

(Monday-Friday February 16-20: NO CLASSES; midterm recess)

Tuesday February 24

Footing and Participant Roles II

-James Herron. Unpublished ms. On the suppression of indigenous authority: Participation and bureaucratic intimacy in the Colombian Agrarian Bank.

-Judith T. Irvine. 1996. Shadow Conversations: The Indeterminacy of Participant Roles. In Michael Silverstein and Greg Urban, ed. *Natural Histories of Discourse*. University of Chicago Press.

Friday February 27—Deborah Tannen video in class; instructor will not be present (she's responsible for a conference at Tufts today) but attendance will be taken.

*****ESSAY 1 DUE in instructor's mailbox.**

Tuesday March 2

Framing and Collusion:

-How do people cooperate, or "collude" in ways even they do not understand, to create coherent conversation?

-R. P. McDermott and Henry Tylbor. 1995. On the Necessity of Collusion in Conversation. In Dennis Tedlock and Bruce Mannheim, ed. *The Dialogic Emergence of Culture*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

-Branca Telles Ribeiro. 1993. Framing in Psychotic Discourse. In Deborah Tannen, ed. *Framing in Discourse*. Oxford University Press.

Friday March 5

-Why does communication sometimes go awry when speakers come from different cultural backgrounds?

-How are contextual cues vital to the interpretation of reference?

-John J. Gumpertz. 1992. Contextualization and Understanding. In Alessandro Duranti and Charles Goodwin, ed. *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*. Cambridge University Press.

-Frank Gaik. 1992. Radio Talk-Show Therapy and the Pragmatics of Possible Worlds. In Alessandro Duranti and Charles Goodwin, ed. *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*. Cambridge University Press.

Friday March 8

Honorifics and Politeness

-Nancy Bonvillian. 1997. Pp. 81-89 of "Contextual Components". In *Language, Culture, and Communication: The Meaning of Messages*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

-Ronald Wardhaugh. 2002. "Solidarity and Politeness" in *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Blackwell.

Tuesday March 9th

Religion, Ritual, and Language I:

-Richard Bauman. 1974. Speaking in the Light: The Role of the Quaker Minister. In Richard Bauman and Joel Shertzer, ed. *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking*. Cambridge University Press.

-Webb Keane. 1997. From Fetishism to Sincerity: On Agency, the Speaking Subject, and their Historicity in the Context of Religious Conversion. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*

Friday March 12

Religion, Ritual and Language II:

-Susan F. Harding 1987. Convicted by the Holy Spirit: The Rhetoric of Fundamental Baptist Conversion. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 14, no. 1: 167-181.

Tuesday March 16

Religion, Ritual, and Language III:

-Maurice Bloch. 1974. Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation: Is Religion an Extreme Form of Traditional Authority? *Archiv. Europ. Sociol.*, XV.

-John W. Du Bois. 1992. Meaning Without Intention: Lessons from Divination. In Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine, ed. *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*. Cambridge University Press.

Friday March 19

Religion, Ritual, and Language IV:

-Robin A. Shoaps. 2002. "Pray Earnestly": The Textual Construction of Personal Involvement in Pentecostal Prayer and Song. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(1): 34-71.

Tuesday March 23

Language Ideologies in Politics

-Jane Hill. 2000. "Read My Article": Ideological Complexity and the Overdetermination of Promising in American Presidential Politics. In Paul V. Kroskrity, ed. *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities*. Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research Press.

Friday March 26

TBA

Tuesday March 30

Gender Matters I:

-How are gender differences constructed through language?

-Nancy Bonvillian. 1997. Language and Gender: English and English Speakers; and Cross-Cultural Studies of Language and Gender (Chapters 7 and 8). In *Language, Culture, and Communication: The Meaning of Messages*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Friday April 2

Gender Matters II:

-Elinor Ochs and Carolyn Taylor. 2001. The "Father Knows Best" Dynamic in Dinnertime Narratives. In Alessandro Duranti, ed. *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

-Scott Fabius Kiesling. 2001. "Now I gotta watch what I say:" Shifting constructions of masculinity in discourse. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11(2).

(Monday-Tuesday April 5-April 13: NO CLASSES; Passover and spring recess)

Thursday April 15th—WE HAVE CLASS: Brandeis Tuesday schedule

Class, Race, and Language I

READINGS:

-Bonnie Urcioli. 1996. Chapter 1, “Racialization and Language”; Chapter 3, “The Political Topography of Bilingualism”, and Chapter 4, “Good English as Symbolic Capital”, in *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class*. Westview Press.

Friday April 16—No class; Brandeis Monday schedule in effect

Tuesday April 20

Class, Race, and Language II

-Jane Hill. 1993. *Hasta La Vista, Baby: Anglo Spanish in the American Southwest*. *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol. 13(2).

-Cecilia Cutler. 2003. “Keepin’ It Real”: White Hip-Hoppers’ Discourses of Language, Race, and Authenticity. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 13(2).

Friday April 23

Vanishing Languages

-Earl Shorris. 2000. The Last Word: Can the World’s Small Languages be Saved? *Harper’s*, August 2000.

Tuesday April 30

****ESSAY II DUE IN CLASS****