

Course Outline for ANTR 4

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Effective: Fall 2013

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

ANTR 4 — LANGUAGE AND CULTURE — 3.00 units

This introductory course serves as a foundation for understanding language from an anthropological perspective, addressing such core questions as how, what, when, where, why and with whom we communicate. This course surveys three core areas in linguistic anthropology--structural linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax, as well as the biocultural basis of language; historical linguistics: origins and evolution/change, dialects, and language families; and sociocultural linguistics: language acquisition in cultural context, emphasizing the relationship between language and culture, and issues of language conservation and loss.

3.00 Units Lecture

Strongly Recommended

- Eligibility for ENG 1A -

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering this course, it is strongly recommended that the student should be able to:

A. -Eligibility for ENG 1A

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. Explain the anthropological approach to language and communication.
- B. Analyze and exemplify how language and culture are acquired and interrelated.
- C. Identify the structural properties of language.
- D. Analyze non-verbal communication cross-culturally.
- E. Describe the biocultural origins and development of language through time.
- F. Describe the ways in which beliefs about languages and speakers have social consequences.
- G. Describe factors and consequences of language change (such as loss) over time.

V. CONTENT:

- A. Characteristics (definitions) of human language
- B. Structural linguistics (phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax)
- C. Nonverbal communication
- D. Biological basis of language
- E. Historical linguistics (language change/evolution over time, language families)
- F. Sociocultural linguistics (the relationships among language, identity, and power including language variation)
- G. Language acquisition and socialization
- H. Language conservation and loss

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Research** - Student papers.
- B. Textbook reading assignments; additional reader or handouts will be assigned
- C. **Discussion** - Class and group discussions
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** - Presentation of audio-visual materials
- E. **Projects** - Group and/or individual research projects.
- F. **Lecture** - Presentation of background information and explication of reading assignments.
- G. **Classroom Activity** - Simulations, discussions, etc.
- H. **Demonstration** - Pronunciation, syntax, etc.

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Lectures 1. Language origins and the biological basis for language, the theories about the evolution of human language, the anatomy and physiology of speech sounds, how language is acquired by children, and what universals are found in language use, and comparisons of communication systems with language systems. 2. Ethnoscience/ethnosemantics and how meaning and world view are seen through categorization 3. The relationship between language and culture such as review of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and of theories about language and worldview; 4. How social biases are revealed in language use in various social contexts including linguistic etiquette, gender relationships and sexual bias, code switching (between ethnic identities or between superior/subordinate), B. Reading assignments 1. Read Language, Culture, and Communication chapter on "Societal segmentation and linguistic variation." 2. Read the Ottenheimer text "Language in Action" 3. Read the Farb handout titled "In other words" C. Homework 1. Read Ottenheimer text chapter on language in action answer the following questions: a. Describe how ethnography of communication was a new approach to understanding meaning in its cultural context. b. How is Chomsky's original definition of "linguistic competence" considered too narrow a definition to describe how real speakers use language? Give an example from your own experience of how setting and individuals' competent language use shows that multiple meanings for a single word are possible (depending on social context). c. What are the seven basic areas of research in an ethnography of speaking suggested by Hymes? Describe one of the seven areas in your own words and give an example from your own experiences. D. Class and group discussions 1. Class discussion topic: Have you ever heard, or used, or were the target of a derogatory term meant to describe or place you in a particular social hierarchy or context? How did this language usage situate you in the social hierarchy? 2. Group discussion topic: Give an example of code switching you do much of the time and describe what social setting triggers it. Now that you have studied the social function of code switching, can you name a case from your own life where a code switch done by you or someone else was unexpected or a surprise because it placed you in a social context you had not anticipated? E. Audio-visual materials 1. Power point notes in lecture and posted to Blackboard for review. F. Research project 1. Students collect data from outside speech events or situations with some collection permitted from written sources. Students will be required to record or transcribe each with the intent to both label the type of speech event observed and if applicable to also analyze whether the event observed instantiates cultural meaning in regard to power, gender, race, other social context. The final paper will be a description of the speech events collected but also will outline whenever the speech event observed or the written discourse analyzed is a case where the language used perpetuates social structure or the social power of one group over others, or reinforces or perpetuates cultural identity within the community observed. Observations about language competency, conversation style, political or gender relations, class, race, or embedded language ideologies are expected.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Quizzes
3. Research Projects
4. Papers
5. Projects
6. Group Projects
7. Class Participation
8. Home Work

B. **Frequency**

1. Midterm and Final Examinations
2. Quizzes on homework assignments
3. End-of-term evaluation of research project

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Ottenheimer, Harriet Joseph *The Anthropology of Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. 3 ed., Cengage, 2012.
2. Ahearn, Laura *Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. 1 ed., Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
3. Bonvillian, Nancy *Language, Culture, and Communication: The Meaning of Messages*. 6 ed., Prentice Hall, 2010.
4. Salzmann, Zdenek, James Stanlaw and Nobuko Adachi *Language, Culture, and Society: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. 5 ed., Westview, 2011.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: