

CUNY HUNTER COLLEGE
ANTHROPOLOGY
INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS
FALL 2011 ANTH 151 – Section 001
Prof. Valentina Pagliai
Syllabus

Class Meeting: TF 12:45PM-02:00PM Where: HW 511
Office Hours: TF – 11:30am-12:30pm Office: HN 716
E-mail: vpagliai@yahoo.com
Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/profile.php?id=100000203451385>

Course Description:

Language plays a very important role in our everyday life. Not only is linguistic behavior the central focus of many social settings, but it is also on linguistic evidence that we base many of our evaluations of the world around us. Yet attitudes towards language and the ways in which we use language are highly dependent on social and cultural factors. This course provides an introduction to the field of linguistic anthropology: the study of language use in its socio-cultural context from anthropological perspectives. It focuses on the social significance of language by addressing such questions as: To what extent does language shape our thoughts and identities? How does language influence the way we think? Do all children follow the same language acquisition patterns within a society or across cultures? How do languages develop and change? What are the differences between language and dialect? What is the relationship between language and ethnicity? Do women speak differently from men? How do we study language use in its socio-cultural context? Why is Ebonics controversial? Should we do anything about disappearing languages? Is English going to be the world language? Etc. Becoming aware of how linguistic communication shapes, and can be shaped by, culture, inter-personal and group relations, and power dynamics is an important learning experience. In our increasingly globalized world, we face more opportunities and need for intercultural communication, and a deeper awareness of the historical and cultural foundations of language can help both to reduce prejudice and to increase understanding and cooperative interaction. Linguistic anthropological works serve the larger society by providing deeper understanding of the sociocultural and linguistic diversity, which in turn influence policy discussions and decisions, e.g. the English only movement in the U.S., bilingual education, and language right and revitalization.

Course Materials:

All required readings will be made available on Blackboard. To register for the CUNY Blackboard, go to <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/icit/trc/gaweek/bbStudentHelp.shtml> The course materials will also include videos, videoclips and web pages; many of them will be linked to the class's facebook page. To access them, you must create a facebook account at <http://www.facebook.com/> and join the class' Facebook, which is called "Pagliai Anthro Courses." Please do not use your personal Facebook account but create a new one for the class. You can do that by using an alternative e-mail address. Beware: If you opt to use your personal Facebook account, be aware that your personal information may become available to the class.

Course Format and Requirements:

The class will combine lectures, film viewing, and class or group discussion. Attendance is highly recommended since lectures will include material covered in the tests and not included in the readings. You are expected to have completed the readings ahead of the class for which they are assigned. Course grades will be determined as follows:

Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	35%
Assignment #1	5%
Assignment #2	10%
Assignment #3	10%
Participation	10%
Total	100%

Grade Equivalencies are:

A+ = 97-100;	A = 94-96.75;	A- = 90-93.75;	B+ = 87-89.75;	B = 83-86.75;
B- = 80-82.75;	C+ = 77-79.75;	C = 73-76.75;	C- = 70-72.75;	D+ = 65-69.75;
D = 60-64.75;	F = 0-59			

Assignments: are due at the beginning of the class session. They will be graded down 1 point for each day that they are late (including weekends). The first assignment will be an exercise in structural linguistic analysis (you will learn how to do it in class). Assignments #2 and #3 are group projects and you will do them partly in class and partly afterwards with your peer group.

Exams: will include a mixture of true/false questions, definition questions, multiple-choice questions, list questions and similar. Questions may be on the readings, lectures, clips and videos, class discussions and materials from websites seen in class.

Make-Up Policy: Only students who have a legitimate reason and with official written documentation will be permitted to make up an exam. Proper documentation is required and if granted permission, you must take the make-up exam on a day agreed upon with the instructor. I will not change any grades or give any make-up assignments after the end of the semester, unless we have previously agreed to an incomplete.

Peer Groups: The class will be divided in Peer Groups that will work together through the course. Peer groups will work together in class when required, discuss together, do Assignments #2 and #3 together, etc. Peer groups also contribute part of the participation grade (see below).

Participation: The grade given for participation will include the following:

- **Attendance:** You are expected to be in class when lesson starts. Lateness will be noted and lead to a lower participation grade. Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.
- **Participation to class discussions (7%):** this is fundamental and your contribution will be noted and appreciated. Contributions must be relevant to the topic under discussion. They should be grounded in the readings. Everybody is expected to participate actively to class and to do so in a respectful manner that allows each of your voices to be heard. This may include asking questions and answering questions asked by other students or by the professor, sharing information relevant to the course's topic (including web-pages, news or videoclips that can be shared on the class' facebook page) proposing questions for discussion and discussing them, etc.
- **The grade that you will receive from your Peer Group. (3%)** In the final exam there will be a question asking you to grade the other students in your peer group.

Readings: should be done timely by the class for which they are assigned.

Writing: All assignments (and the exams in part) will require you to write and they will be graded, among other things, for the clarity of exposition and readability. If you feel that you may need help with writing, Hunter College offers services to help you. Check out the Hunter's Writing Center here: <http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu>

HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic

Integrity Procedures.

Semester's Outline:

The following schedule provides information on how the semester is broken down into topic units, and provides a list of required readings for each class. You are expected to have completed reading assignments ahead of class. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class.

I: INTRODUCTION: The study of Language

		Topics	Readings
1	8/26 F	Introduction to the Course: What is language, communication, meaning.	
2	8/30 T	The structure of language.	- Bonvillain, "The Form of the Message," pp. 7-30.
3	9/2 F	The structure of language: exercises - Assignment #1 distributed.	- Language Files: excerpts.
4	9/6 T	Language and Context – Discourse Analysis and the Ethnography of Communication	- Cameron, from "Working with Spoken Discourse," pp. 47-67.
5	9/9 F	What's in a greeting?	Youssof & Al "Greetings in the Desert."

II: BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

6	9/13 T	Language acquisition and socialization - ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE	- Ferguson, "Baby Talk" pp.103-114.
7	9/16 F	Nature or nurture? The cross-cultural perspective	- Ochs, "Cultural Dimensions of Language Acquisition" pp. 430-436.
8	9/20 T	Socialization among peers.	- Reynolds "Socializing Puros Pericos (Little Parrots)" pp. 82-102.

III: LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND THOUGHT

9	9/23 F	Language and Cognition: Whorf's Study of the Hopi Language and Culture	- Whorf "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language," pp. 197-215
10	9/27 T	Linguistic Ideologies	- Irvine and Gal "Linguistic Ideologies and Language Differentiation" (excerpts) - Cody, "A Language by Women, for Women" pp.1-4 (web). - Miller, "Much Ado about Nushu" pp.1-4 (web).
11	10/4 T	Literacy Practice and Culture	- Duranti and Ochs, "Literacy Instruction in a Samoan Village" 213-231.
12	10/11 T	Class Discussion (and Assignment #2): English the colonizer?	- Excerpts from Thiong'o, Ashcroft, Mazrui, Pennycook & Mitchell.

IV: LANGUAGE IN SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT

13	10/14 F	Varieties of American English. Language and Dialect - Movie shown: American Tongues. - ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE	- Lippi-Green, "The Standard Language Myth" pp. 52-62.
14	10/18 T	Speech communities, Social class, social dialects, registers	- Preston, "Some Plain Facts About Americans" pp. 398-401.
15	10/21 F	Language discrimination and racism	- Excerpts from Labov, "Academic Ignorance and Black Intelligence." - Rickford, "Suite for Ebony and Phonics," pp. 160-167. - Additional excerpts TBA.
16	10/25 T	Review	
17	10/28 F	MIDTERM EXAM	
18	11/1 T	Language and Social Identity	- Schilling-Estes, "Redrawing Ethnic Dividing Lines," pp. 357-358.
19	11/4 F	Bilingualism and code-switching	- Zentella "Returned Migration, Language, and Identity," pp.81-98.
20	11/8 T	Do women and men speak differently? - Short movie shown: "Regarding Madhumitha"	- Brief excerpts from Lakoff, Tannen and Uchida, etc.

V: LANGUAGE AND CHANGE

21	11/11 F	Language Origins and Historical Linguistics. - Movie shown: The Language of the Body by Desmond Morris	- Wade, "Early Voices" pp.1-7 (webpage).
22	11/15 T	Language Origins and Historical Linguistics: continued.	- The Austronesians (Lingua Franca) pp.1-5 (website).
23	11/18 F	English as Global Language. - Movie shown in class: "New Year's Words," from the Story of English Series.	
24	11/29 T	Historical Linguistics: Pidgins and Creoles	- Bickerton, "Creole Languages" pp. 59-69.
25	12/2 F	Sign Languages and their socialization. - Short Movie shown: Silent Children, New Language"	Wolkomir, "American Sign Language" pp.1-5. - Osborne, "A Linguistic Big Bang" pp.1-10.
26	12/6 T	Endangered Languages	- Hinton, "Language Loss and Revitalization in California: Overview," pp. 216-221.
27	12/9 F	Groups' in-class Project: saving a language (Assignment #3)	- Some links to websites will be made available in advance.
28	12/13 T	Conclusion & Review ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE	

FINAL EXAM: December 16, 11:30-1:30pm. In class.			
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