

COURSE SYLLABUS



LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY

IFSA Barcelona

US semester credit hours: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Course Code: AN310-06 / COM310-06

Course Length: Semester

Delivery Method: Face to face

Language of Instruction: English

Suggested Cross-listings: Anthropology, Linguistics

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the complex interplay of language and culture and the ways in which it impacts everyday practice. Language as a human condition will be investigated through an anthropological lens, using theory to understand the use of language and how it is a fundamental difference among peoples and communities. The course combines basic ideas of anthropology with those of linguistics, fostering students' understanding of how linguistic anthropologists study language, culture, and society. The course also brings in concepts from sociolinguistics to further develop student's awareness of how we acquire language, what it means for language to express meaning, what dialogue looks and sounds like within diverse cultures, how these questions relate to identity, and to explore attitudes and ideologies about varieties of language.

The Linguistic Anthropology course is designated as Writing Intensive.

COURSE DELIVERY

This course is delivered through a dynamic combination of lectures, discussions, and activities, which include an expert guest lecture, an observational field visit, in-class exercises, peer reviews, student presentations and a culminating learning symposium (The IFSA Linguistic Anthropology Symposium). Because this course is designated as Writing Intensive, a significant amount of written work is required. The course assignments are designed in building blocks, however, allowing for each step of the writing process to make sense sequentially and to be supported through course structure. Substantial course time is dedicated to ensuring that students are able to produce high quality written work at a comfortable pace.

Students are expected to read or view assigned resources in advance and be prepared to actively discuss them in class. In most meetings, the instructor will overview the topic and then facilitate a group discussion, drawing out relevant themes, following up on specific lines of inquiry, and prompting students' thoughtful engagement with the topic.

Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions (based on experiential learning theory) and to make cognitive connections between this course and others in IFSA Barcelona whenever possible (based on the philosophy of integrative learning).

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

COURSE SYLLABUS

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Understand and describe the basic tenets of linguistic anthropology theories
- Be able to apply linguistic anthropology theories to better understand issues of language in society
- Understand and describe the research and practice methods used by linguistic anthropologists
- Demonstrate facility with basic concepts of sociolinguistics, including issues of language acquisition, dialogue, and connections between language, identity, and ideology
- Become aware of the diversity and complexity of languages
- Strengthen oral presentation skills
- Strengthen critical writing skills
- Become familiar with resources available for further research on linguistic anthropology
- Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in IFSA Barcelona

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 - Introductions

What's in a name? In-class exercise. Building a community of learners.

Review of syllabus, student and instructor expectations, and discussion of associated learning plan goals.

Blum, chapter 13, Tom McArthur: "The Power of the World's Languages"

Ahearn, chapter 1: The Socially Charged Life of Language, and chapter 2: Gestures, Signs, and Multimodality.

Week 2 - Linguistic Anthropology Research: Theories and Methods

Ahearn, chapter 3: The Research Process in Linguistic Anthropology, and chapter 4: Language Acquisition and Socialization

Gilmore, chapter 1: Uweryumachini! A Language Discovered

Linguistic Anthropology, 2001 Elsevier Science Ltd. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Science*, 8899-8906.

http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/anthro/faculty/duranti/reprints/02ling_anth.pdf

Discussion topics: Which anthropological techniques could be used informally to help us better understand the issues of Catalan and Spanish language around us this semester, and how?

Week 3 - Language and Culture

Ahearn, chapter 5: Language, Thought and Culture, and chapter 6: Communities of Language Users

COURSE SYLLABUS

Gilmore, chapter 2 Herodotus Revisited: Language Origins, Forbidden Experiments, New Languages, and Pidgins

Discussion Topic: What kinds of evidence of language communities are you seeing in Barcelona so far?

Week 4 - Multilingualism and Globalization

Ahearn, chapter 7: Multilingualism and Globalization, and chapter 8: Literary Practices

Blum, chapter 20, John H. McWhorter: Most of the World's Languages Went Extinct, and chapter 21. Lindsay J. Whaley: The Future of Native Languages.

F. Xavier Vila, Josep Ubalde, Vanessa Bretxa & Llorenç Comajoan-Colomé. (2018). Changes in language use with peers during adolescence: a longitudinal study in Catalonia, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, DOI: [10.1080/13670050.2018.1436517](https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2018.1436517)

Faudree, Paja (2013) Singing for the Dead: The Politics of Indigenous Revival in Mexico. Durham, NC: Duke University Press (104-140)

Week 5 - Performing Language

Ahearn, chapter 9: Performance, Performativity, and the Constitution of Communities

Gilmore, chapter 3: Lorca's Miracle: Play, Performance, Verbal Art, and Creativity

→Field excursion: Guided observation of linguistic messaging through Barcelona street art

Week 6 - Gender, Language, and Power

Ahearn, chapter 10: Language and Gender

Blum, chapter 30, William M. O'Barr and Bowman K. Atkins: "'Women's Language' or 'Powerless Language'?", chapter 31, Janet Holmes: Women Talk Too Much

Week 7 – Gender, Language, and Power (continued)

Blum, chapter 32. Scott Fabius Kiesling: Power and the Language of Men, chapter 33, Deborah Cameron: Performing Gender Identity: Young Men's Talk and the Construction of Heterosexual Masculinity, and chapter 34, Elinor Keenan (Ochs): Norm-Makers, Norm-Breakers: Uses of Speech by Men and Women in a Malagasy Community

Discussion Topics: What signs of the impact of gender and power on language have you noted thus far in Barcelona? How does this compare to what you see in the United States?

Week 8 – Language, Race, and Ethnicity

Ahearn, chapter 11: Language, Race and Ethnicity

COURSE SYLLABUS

Gilmore, chapter 4 Kekopey Life: Transcending Linguistic Hegemonic Borders and Racialized Postcolonial Spaces

Deadline for Instructor approval of Final Paper Topics

Week 9 – Language Form, Development, and Change

Gilmore, chapter 5 Kisisi: Language Form, Development, and Change

Presentations on Proposed Final Paper Topics (see requirements below)

Week 10 – Language and Identity

→ Guest Lecture: Catalan Language as Identity, by Instructor of IFSA Barcelona's *Catalan Identity and Politics* course.

Peterson, Mark Allen. (2011). Connected in Cairo: Growing up Cosmopolitan in the Modern Middle East. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 97-134.

Basso, Keith. (1999). Wisdom Sits in Places. In *Senses of Place*, Keith Basso and Steven Feld, eds. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 53-90.

In-class exercises: Connecting our language to our identities.

Week 11 – Language Death and Revitalization

Ahearn, chapter 12: Language Death and Revitalization

Gilmore, epilogue

Review selected articles from the *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, <http://revistes.uab.cat/catJL>

Discussion Topic: What is the future of the Catalan language?

Week 12 – Personal Agency

Ahearn, Conclusion: Language, Power, and Agency

Submit rough draft final papers for peer review

Week 13 – Peer Review

Peer reviews due; return to writers

Week 14 – Final Papers Due

Preparations for the IFSA Linguistic Anthropology Symposium

COURSE SYLLABUS

Week 15 – Final Paper Presentations: IFSA Linguistic Anthropology Symposium

Review and concluding conversations. Future application of learning.

RESOURCES

Required:

Ahearn, Laura. (2017). *Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology (2nd ed.)*. UK: Wiley & Sons. – also available as e-book

Gilmore, Perry (2016). *Kisisi (Our Language): The Story of Colin and Sadiki (New Directions in Ethnography)*. UK: Wiley & Sons.

Provided:

Selected chapters from Blum, Susan (ed.). 2008. *Making Sense of Language*. NY: Oxford University Press.

Recommended:

Wardhaugh, Ronald (2010). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics (6th ed.)*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

EVALUATION METHODS

The course instructor will provide specific requirements and grading rubrics for individual assignments for the course. Your final grade in the course will be comprised of the following course requirements:

Class Participation – 10%

Storytelling Essay – 20%

Language Description Essay – 20%

Peer Review – 10%

Presentation on Proposed Final Paper Topic – 5%

Final Paper – 25%

Presentation on Final Paper – 10%

Timely Submissions

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

*Storytelling Essay **

For this assignment, review, compare and contrast two movies: The first movie must have been filmed in a language other than English and include English sub-titles; the second film must be an English language re-make of the first film. Compare and contrast the two. At a minimum, students must detail: 1) which films they chose (including original language, locations, directors, and years of production), 2) the basic story plot, and 3) how the change in language affected the storytelling.

COURSE SYLLABUS

(Be creative here.) Formatting requirements: Times New Roman 12-point font, 4 pages, double-spaced, MLA or APA style.

*Language Description Essay **

Research one officially recognized extant or extinct language from anywhere in the world (instructor will provide a list). Describe the origins and development of the language, its general syntactical structure, and the history of the language's spread. This paper should include an annotated bibliography with a minimum of five scholarly sources, at least three of which should be peer-reviewed journal articles. Formatting requirements: Times New Roman 12-point font, 6 pages, double-spaced, MLA or APA style.

Final Paper

The final paper should demonstrate your understanding of linguistic anthropology and application of linguistic anthropology theories to better understand an issue in language. Your critical analysis of a linguistic issue must be evident. Final Paper topics should be approved by the instructor one week prior to the Presentation on Proposed Final Topics (three minutes, describing your topic and reason for your interest). Ten-minute oral presentations summarizing your Final Paper content will be presented one week after submission of the Final Paper; visual aids are not required but are allowed. A rough draft of your Final Paper is due two weeks before the Final Paper submission deadline, to accommodate a peer review. All deadlines are noted in the Course Outline above. The Final Paper should include an annotated bibliography with a minimum of 12 scholarly sources, 8 of which should be peer-reviewed journal articles. Formatting requirements: Times New Roman 12-point font, 15 pages, MLA or APA style. Carefully consider all peer review feedback in the creation of or your final product. The Final Paper Presentations occur at the IFSA Linguistic Anthropology Symposium.

Peer Review

Directions for the Peer Review will be provided by the course instructor. Students will be placed in partners or teams for this activity. The following peer review tips come from the Carleton College, the University of Hawaii at Manoa and the University of Richmond:

- Before you even make your first comment, read the document all the way through.
- Make sure you leave enough time for you to read through, respond, and for your peer to edit his/her document with your comments before any deadlines.
- If you are provided with a feedback form to fill out and something is unclear, do not ignore the item but ask the instructor for clarification.
- Point out the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the document.
- Offer suggestions, not commands.
- Editorial comments should be appropriate and constructive. There is no need to be rude. Be respectful and considerate of the writer's feelings.
- Be sure that your comments are clear and text-specific so that your peer will know what you are referring to (for example, terms such as "unclear" or "vague" are too general to be helpful).
- As a reader, raise questions that cross your mind, points that may have not occurred to your peer author.

COURSE SYLLABUS

- Try not to overwhelm your peer with too much commentary. Follow the feedback form and the issues you are supposed to address.
- Be careful not to let your own opinions bias your review (for example, don't suggest that your peer completely rewrite the paper just because you don't agree with his/her point of view).
- Reread your comments before passing them on to your peer. Make sure all your comments make sense and are easy to follow.
- Avoid turning your peer's paper into your paper.

"As a peer reviewer, your job is not to provide answers. You raise questions; the writer makes the choices. You act as a mirror, showing the writer how the draft looks to you and pointing out areas which need attention."

- S. Williams, University of Hawaii at Manoa's Writing Program

**Selected assignments adapted from the Language and Culture course syllabus of David Markus, University of Florida*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA resident director as well as your home institution.

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