

**SYLLABUS**  
**ANTH 4500.001- LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**  
**FALL 2017**

Dr. Jara Carrington  
Class meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays  
3:30-4:50  
Meeting location: BLB 260

Email: jara.carrington@unt.edu  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-11:30;  
Thursdays 2:00-3:30 or by appointment  
Office: Chilton Hall 308C

**Overview of the Class:**

Welcome! I hope that you will find this course both challenging and rewarding. In this course, we will examine how language enables human beings to interpret, inhabit, and remake the social world. In particular, we will address the inherently social and cultural aspects of language. We will learn central concepts in linguistic anthropology, and orient ourselves to various approaches to the study of language. Course materials will enable us to examine language form and language use in a variety of cultural settings. We will also analyze the relationship between language and thought, and study how language is used to establish group membership and social systems of value. Further, we will apply the knowledge we gain to close examination of contemporary issues in language and culture; including language loss and revitalization and the relationship between language and culturally constructed categories of gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity. We will also study, and get a chance to practice, the methodologies that linguistic anthropologists and scholars of language in other disciplines utilize when looking at the relationship between language and culture.

**Course Objectives:**

- Understand and evaluate key concepts and theories about language and culture
- Become familiar with methodologies used by linguistic anthropologists and other scholars of language
- Apply key concepts and theories to examine issues of language and culture in your daily lives
- Understand and evaluate the relationship between language, ideology, and cultural constructions of social difference

**Required Readings:**

There is one required text for this course, "*Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*" 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, by Laura M. Ahearn. This book is available at the UNT Bookstore. Please note this is the SECOND EDITION of this book.

All other readings listed on the course schedule will be found in the Readings folder on our coursepage in Blackboard Learn.

**Course Expectations:**

This course requires considerable reading and engagement with new and sometimes challenging materials. I do not expect you to agree with course materials in order to do well in this course, but I do expect you to approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion. Comments that are disrespectful to your classmates and/or myself will not be tolerated.

Each class period, I will expect you to:

- Have completed the readings
- Pose questions for clarification or extension of points
- Participate actively in discussion and debate

**Late work:** I do not accept late assignments unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor's note, and/or otherwise have received my approval.

**Extra Credit:** Extra credit can be earned at any point during the semester. I will suggest several opportunities in class, and I am relatively open to creative ideas from you. Options to earn extra credit include: analysis of a relevant movie/documentary, attending a talk/lecture on campus and writing a summary, a brief critical discourse analysis about a particular current event, or developing a creative piece such as poetry or artwork. You must get approval from me ahead of time for your choice, so check with me before you do the work.

**Electronics in the Classroom:** Please turn off your cell phone prior to coming to class. Students may use laptop computers to take notes only; students checking email, using Facebook, etc. will be asked to turn off their computers and will not be allowed to use their computers in subsequent classes.

**Academic Honesty:** The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic "F" in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

**Academic Accommodations:** The University of North Texas is committed to providing accommodation for all students with disabilities. If you have or acquire a disability that may affect your participation in class, I will strive to accommodate your needs. To ensure that the necessary accommodations are made, be sure to contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (located in Sage Hall) as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. They will work with both of us to ensure proper accommodations are made. If

you need accommodations, please remember that reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Office of Disability Accommodation. Note that students need to obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**NOTE:** The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of the syllabus. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and on the course webpage.

<b>Evaluation</b>	
Attendance	10%
Class Participation	5%
Reading Responses	25%
Midterm Exam	20%
Speech Event Project	20%
Final Exam	20%

**I. Attendance (100 POINTS):** Attendance will be taken on ten days throughout the semester. Attendance checks will be random and unannounced. Students will earn 5 points if they are in class. Students who are absent will not be given the opportunity to earn these points unless they have a documented excuse.

**II. Class Participation (50 POINTS):** This class relies on the intellectual commitment and active participation of all students. In order for the course to be effective, all students must have the reading assignments completed and ready for in-depth discussion for each class. Importantly, you need to bring assigned readings to class each day as we will refer to and utilize them throughout our meetings. You should take notes regarding lectures and classroom discussions because these notes, alongside your marginalia/notes on the readings, will come in very handy for the current event presentation, the speech event paper and, *especially*, preparing for the midterm and final exams.

### **III. Reading Responses (250 POINTS)**

Each student is required to hand in a total of 10 responses to any of the required readings that are listed on the syllabus schedule **EXCEPT** those from the textbook by Ahearn. To be clear, you will not get points for writing a reading response to a textbook chapter. Each response is worth a total of 25 points. Reading responses are due by the start of class on the day the reading you have chosen is assigned. Which readings you choose are entirely up to you, but they will take some time so I do not recommend waiting until the end of the semester to do them all.

Reading responses are part summary, part analysis and should demonstrate me that you have read and critically analyzed the text. Each response should be 2-3 paragraphs and describe **IN YOUR OWN WORDS** the author's main thesis, supporting arguments, and the source(s) of data

that the author used to build their argument. In addition the response must include at least **one analytical observation** (i.e. a critical analysis of the author's argument, using the reading's ideas to make sense of a current event, and/or connecting the reading to other course topics and/or readings), and **one insightful discussion question** for each reading. Note: "I thought this article was interesting" is neither analytical nor insightful.

Reading responses should be turned in to the appropriate Reading Responses folder on Blackboard. Place the author's name, year of publication, and title of the chapter or article at the top of each Reading Response. If I have to guess what reading you are responding to, you will not get credit for that response.

#### **IV. Examinations (Each exam is worth 200 POINTS)**

There will be two examinations for this class, a midterm and a final. These exams will consist of short essay questions that will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of, and ability to apply, course content. Course content includes assigned readings, lectures, discussions, videos, and presentations. These exams will be administered outside of class, through Blackboard, and will be open-note and open-book. Please note that this benefit comes with increased expectations on my part, and thus proper preparation for the exam is key to doing well. I will provide study guidance one week before each exam.

#### **V. Speech Event Paper (200 POINTS)**

Your objective will be to record, transcribe, and analyze a speech event of your choosing using course concepts and themes. You will turn in a 5-7 page paper about this speech event using the detailed guidelines that will be handed out in class and posted on Blackboard.

**\*A Note on Paper Formatting: All required papers are to be double spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all sides. In-text quotes and references should be properly cited using whatever format you are most familiar with (i.e. MLA, APA, Chicago).**

#### **Dates To Remember**

Your personal Reading Response dates

10/6-10/12: Midterm Exam

11/30: Speech Event Papers Due

12/8-12/14: Final Exam

#### **Course Schedule**

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

8/29: First day, no assigned readings

8/31: Ch. 1- Ahearn- The Socially Charged Life of Language (pgs. 3-32)

**Week 2: Linguistic Relativity and Categorization Schemes**

- 9/5: Ch. 5- Ahearn- Language, Thought, and Culture (pgs. 87-116)  
Hill, Jane (2017) A Linguist Walks into a Mexican Restaurant
- 9/7: Whorf, Benjamin Lee (1956) The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language *in* Language, Thought, and Reality

**Week 3: Linguistic Relativity and Categorization Schemes**

- 9/12: Lucy, John A. (1997) Linguistic Relativity. Annual Review of Anthropology 26:291-312
- 9/14: Brown, Roger and Albert Gilman (1960) The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity

**Week 4: Describing Participant Roles and Speech Functions**

- 9/19: Ch. 3- Ahearn- The Research Process in Linguistic Anthropology (pgs. 52-68)  
Jakobson, Roman (1960) Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics 350-360
- 9/21: Goffman, Irving (1979) Footing. Semiotica 25: 1-29  
Hill, Jane and Ofelia Zepeda (1993) Mrs. Patricio's Trouble: The Distribution of Responsibility in an Account of Personal Experience 197-225

**Week 5: Describing Participant Roles and Speech Functions**

- 9/26: Austin, J.L. (1975) How to Do Things with Words (Lecture 1)  
Grice, H.P. (1975) Logic and Conversation 41-58
- 9/28: Rosaldo, Michelle (1982) The Things we do with Words: Ilongot Speech Acts and Speech Act Theory. Language in Society 11:203-237

**Week 6: Speech Communities**

- 10/3: Ch. 6- Ahearn- Communities of Language Users (pgs. 119-135)  
Muehlmann, Shaylih (2008) Spread Your Ass Cheeks: And Other Things that Should not be said in Indigenous Languages. American Ethnologist 35(1):34-48
- 10/5: Zentella, Ana Celia et al. (2007) Language and Dialect Contact in Spanish New York: Toward the Formation of a Speech Community

**Week 7: MIDTERM EXAM**

**Week 8: Code, Style, and Register**

- 10/17: Ch. 7- Ahearn- Multilingualism and Globalization (pgs. 136-155)
- 10/19: Agha, Asif (2003) The Social Life of Cultural Value. Language and Communication 23:231-273

**Week 9: Genre, Performance, and Power**

- 10/24: Ch. 9- Ahearn- Performance, Performativity, and the Constitution of Communities (pgs. 176-200)
- 10/26: Basso, Keith (1988) Speaking with Names: Language and Landscape among the Western Apache. Cultural Anthropology 3(2): 99-130

**Week 10: Language Ideology**

- 10/31: Woolard, Kathryn and Bambi Schieffelin (1994) Language Ideology, *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23:55-82
- 11/2: Lippi-Green, Rosina (2012) Teaching Children How to Discriminate: What We Learn from the Big Bad Wolf *in English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States* (pgs. 101-129)

**Week 11: Critical Discourse Analysis**

- 11/7: Briggs, Charles (2005) Communicability, Racial Discourse, and Disease. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34:269-91
- 11/9: Fairclough, Norman (1995) Discourse Representation in Media Discourse *in Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (pgs. 54-69)  
Chavez, Leo (2008) The Latino Threat Narrative *in The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation* (pgs. 21-43)

**Week 12: Language, Power, and Social Difference: Constructing Gender and Sexuality**

- 11/14: Ochs, Elinor (1992) Indexing Gender in Rethinking Context 335-358
- 11/16: Kulick, Don (1992) Speaking As a Woman: Structure and Gender in Domestic Arguments in a New Guinea Village. *Cultural Anthropology* 8(4): 510-541

**Week 13: Language, Power, and Social Difference: Constructing Gender and Sexuality**

- 11/21: Selection from Ch. 10- Ahearn- Language and Gender (pgs. 203- top of 211)  
Cameron, Deborah and Don Kulick (2003) Talking Sex and Thinking Sex: The Linguistic and Discursive Construction of Sexuality *in Language and Sexuality* (pgs. 15-43)
- 11/23: **NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 14: Language, Power, and Social Difference: Constructing Race and Ethnicity**

- 11/28: Hill, Jane (1998) Language, Race, and White Public Space *American Anthropologist* 100(3): 680-689
- 11/30: Debenport, Erin (2011) As the Rez Turns: Anomalies Within and Beyond the Boundaries of a Pueblo Community. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 35(2): 87-109  
**SPEECH EVENT ANALYSIS PAPERS DUE**

**Week 15: Topics in Language and Culture: Language Loss and Language Revitalization**

- 12/5: Hill, Jane (2002) "Expert Rhetorics" in Advocacy for Endangered Languages: Who is Listening and What do they Hear? *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(2): 119-133  
*Suggested:* Nettle, Daniel and Suzanne Romaine (2000) Where Have all the Languages Gone? *in Vanishing Voices* 1-23
- 12/7: No Readings Required

**Week 16: FINAL EXAM**