LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND EXPERIENCE
Anthropology 683
Graduate Seminar

Professor: Philip Scher
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Tuesday: 5-7:50 pm
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COURSE OBJECTIVES:
This course examines the role of language and culture in the organization of human experience. Beginning with definitions of language and signs and debates about linguistic relativity, the course explores the way language use shapes cognition and practice in social contexts. In addition we will explore the basic theoretical principles that underlie the anthropological study of human language. This will include identifying distinctive characteristics of human language, clarifying the central role of reference in regimenting linguistic structure, the application of different types of anthropological models, the creation of social and cultural forms and the socio-cultural shaping of language and usage. There will be a significant amount of reading for the course and much of it will introduce potentially unfamiliar jargon. To help with this I recommend acquiring Key Terms in Language and Culture, by Alessandro Duranti (Blackwell Publishers). However this text is not required.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

All other readings for the course will be on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Class participation (including attendance and discussion): 10%
Students are expected to attend all lectures and participate in class discussions.
In-Class Presentation: 20% In-Class presentations will be given by all members of the class and will consist of presenting a day’s readings, producing a written handout and composing 3 questions for broad discussion. The questions must address major concepts or problems in the texts. You will evaluated on all three components, each bearing equal weight. If there is a small enrollment students may be asked to do this assignment twice.
Mid-Term Exam: 35%
Final Exam: 35%

PART ONE: Introduction to Language and Semiotics

Week 1: Introductory Lecture: What is Linguistic Anthropology?
Salzman, Zdenek:

Week 2: Semiotic Foundations/ The Nature of Signs

Weinrich, Uriel:

Mertz, Elizabeth:

Peirce, Charles Sanders:
Nd  “Division of Signs.” Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce: Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (eds.) Cambridge: Harvard University Press. (Online)

Parmentier, Richard:

Saussure, Ferdinand de
1965  Nature of the Linguistic Sign Course in General Linguistics.. in Blum

Benveniste, Emile:

Week 3: Linguistic Relativism/ The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

Tues:
Boas, Franz
1911  Introduction to the Handbook of American Indian Languages. (Online)

Sapir, Edward:


Hoijer, Harry

Whorf, Benjamin, Lee.
1956  The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language. In Blum p.43

Lakoff, George & Mark Johnson
Metaphors We Live By: in Blum p. 55

Benveniste, Emile.

**Week 4: Sapir/Whorf, Worldview and Subjectivity. Testing Sapir and Whorf: The Color Issue**

**Frake, Charles O.:**

**Berlin, Brent and Paul Kay**
Color Terms (Online)

**Conklin, Harold**

**Sahlins, Marshall**

**Lakoff, George.**

**Week 5: Exploring Subjectivity**

**Benveniste, Emile.**


**Mead, George H.**

**Ochs, Elinor and Lisa Capps**

**Borges, Jorge Luis:**
Nd “Borges and I.” (One page) Online

**MID TERM EXAM**

**Week 6: Doing Things With Words/ Verbal Interactions/Negotiation of Context in Discourse**

**Austin, J.L.**
Salzman, Zdenek

Goffman, Erving:
1981 Footing. In Forms of Talk. Reprinted from Semiotica. 25:3-29. Online

Tannen, Deborah and Cynthia Wallet

Labov, William
1973 “The Social Stratification of “R” in New York City Department Stores.” In Blum p. 333.

Week 7: Sociolinguistics/Ethnography of Speaking

Hymes, Dell:

Bauman, Richard and Joel Sherzer:
1975 “The Ethnography of Speaking.” Annual Review of Anthropology. Online

Irvine, Judith T.:

Keenan, Elinor.

Bauman, Richard

Schieffelin, Richard

Week 8: Language Socialization

Ochs, Elinor and Bambi B. Schieffelin
1984 Language Acquisition and Socialization: Three Developmental Stories and Their Implications. In Blum p. 71
Heath, Shirley Brice

Baquedano-Lopez, Patricia
Pragmatic s of Reading Prayers. In Blum. P. 115

Basso, Keith

Week 9: Gender, Power and Discourse

Gal, Susan:

Maltz, Daniel N. and Ruth A. Borker

Eckert, Penelope

Silverstein, Michael

Tannen, Deborah.

Sherzer, Joel
1987 “A Diversity of Voices: Men’s and Women’s Speech in Ethnographic Perspective.” In Language, Gender and Sex in Comparative Perspective. S.Phillips et al. (eds.) **On Reserve**

Week 10: Language, Ideology and Power/Standard Languages

Silverstein Michael:
1998 “Standardization and Metaphors of Linguistic Hegemony.” In The Matrix of Language. Brenneis and Macaulay (eds.) **On Reserve**

Bourdieu, Pierre:

Briggs, Charles L. & Richard Bauman:

Hill, Jane H.
1998  The Grammar of Consciousness and the Consciousness of Grammar. Online

Woolard, Kathryn A.

Williamson, Judith.
1985  “Woman is and Island.” Online

Keane, Webb
2003  “Public Speaking: On Indonesian As the Language of the Nation.” Public Culture 15(3): 503-530. Online

Final Exam TBA