We constantly interact with people of different backgrounds. Most of us know little, however, about how our background affects the way in which we communicate or about how different forms of communication give rise to differing perspectives, beliefs, and ways of being. Communicative patterns often lie below our level of awareness. Consequently, communicative differences often result in drastic misunderstandings.

This class has three goals: 1) To make explicit the ways in which culture and language—and more broadly communication—are linked. 2) To gain a greater understanding of when and why communicative misunderstandings occur and how to overcome them. 3) To appreciate the range of communicative differences around the world and recognize that interacting with people from different backgrounds brings opportunities not only for misunderstandings but also for growth. Consequently, we will delve into linguistic anthropological theory, but we will do so with a focus on how these theories help us to understand, overcome, and appreciate communicative differences. The concepts that we will cover include: the nature of signs; linguistic relativity and the relationship between language and thought; multilingualism; the difference between linguistic and communicative competence; standard language and dialects such as African American Vernacular English; and the connections between language and power, race, class, and gender. On the applied side of the class, we will consider communicative differences in hospitals and healthcare, schools, employment and assessments of job performance, and interviews and social science research.

Required Texts:

Recommended Text:
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class or by e-mail and will be posted on Moodle.

Attendance and Participation: You are expected to attend every class, complete the reading ahead of time (including any supplements that I may add to the syllabus or announce in class), and participate in class discussions. If you miss class or are late to class more than twice you will be penalized and your grade will be adjusted according to the percentage of classes you missed. At any point in time I may assign a pop-quiz on the reading. Points on the quiz will count toward your participation grade.

Weekly responses: You will provide a two-page analysis (double spaced times new roman font size 12, 1 inch margins) of the readings each week, comparing the readings to something that you observe in your research (see below). This analysis is due every Monday except for when we do not have class Monday in which case it is due Wednesday.

Lead class: You are responsible for leading class once in the semester. You can choose how you would like to structure class, but you should make sure to help the class understand and discuss the readings for the day. You can simply present the readings, lead the class in discussion, and pose some interesting discussion questions. Or, you can do something else. You are responsible for 30 minutes, I will take over for the rest of the class period. Be sure to decide which class you want to lead by the second week of class.

Research paper and presentation: You, like the undergraduates, are expected to spend time each week with people of a different cultural background. The undergraduates will be reflecting on their experiences and connecting what they experience to the readings. You will do the same thing, but you are expected to write a research paper at the end of the semester on some aspect of the linguistic/communicative practices of the group you choose to study. I have a recording device that you can borrow for this purpose if you choose to analyze natural speech. Your final (and only) paper for the class is a 12-15 page research paper analyzing your findings and making an argument. Please be sure to come and talk to me about what type of argument you could make. You have a great deal of freedom in respect to this assignment. You will also present your findings to the class during the presentations at the end of the semester.

Grade Breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly response</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead class</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading scale:

- 90-100%  A
- 80-90%   B
- 70-80%   C
- 60-70%   D
- <60%     F
COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity
As a student at UNC Charlotte you are bound by the Code of Student Academic Integrity, the
Code of Student Responsibility, and the Noble Niner Code. It is your responsibility to read these
policies and abide by them. They are available at http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407. A first
violation of these policies will result in a zero for the assignment and disciplinary action. A
second violation may result in an F for the course and disciplinary action.

ANY use of someone else’s distinctive ideas or words is plagiarism. This includes
quoting a phrase or sentence from a published work or from a webpage, paraphrasing an author’s
ideas without citing them, or taking ideas or words from another student. To be safe, cite your
sources whenever you are using anyone else’s ideas and put all phrases and sentences borrowed
from another in quotes. If you are using ideas or words from one of the texts assigned for class,
you merely need to do parenthetical citations (e.g. Fadiman 114). If you are referring to a source
not assigned for class, be sure to include a bibliography at the end of your essay or journal entry.

Turnitin
As a condition of taking this course, all required papers may be subject to submission for textual
similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be
included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of
detecting plagiarism of such papers. No student papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com without
your written consent and permission. If you do not provide such written consent and permission I
may: (i) require a short reflection paper on research methodology; (ii) require a draft
bibliography prior to submission of the final paper; or (iii) require the cover page and first cited
page of each reference source to be photocopied and submitted with the final paper.

Weekly responses
You will turn these responses in at the beginning of class. I DO NOT accept electronic versions
of these journals, you MUST give me a paper copy.

Late Work
I take off 3.3% each day that an assignment is late (i.e., a 90% paper goes down to 86.7%). You
can always turn in an assignment late and receive this penalty, there is no need to ask me about
it.

Extensions and Excused Absences
I do not give extensions or excused absences unless:

1. You have a medical emergency. You must provide written proof (i.e. a doctor’s note).
   I may ask you to contact the Dean of Students office, and after they have verified
   your emergency have them contact me.
2. There is a death or medical emergency in your family. You must contact the Dean of
   Students Office for help and have them contact me.
3. You have a religious conflict. You must inform me by August 31st whether you will
   need a religious accommodation at some point in time in the course.

In respect to electronic assignments, it is your responsibility to complete them significantly
ahead of time such that you can deal with any technical issues. Technical problems will NOT
count as an acceptable excuse for late assignments.
**Students with Disabilities**
I am happy to work with students with disabilities. You must first consult with the Office of Disability Services and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations.

**If I am late to class**
If I am late in arriving to class, you must wait a full 20 minutes after the start of class before you may leave without being counted absent, or you must follow any written instructions I may give you about my anticipated tardiness.

**Canceled Meetings**
I encourage you to meet with me in office hours or to make an appointment. If you have made an appointment and then found that you cannot make it, you must cancel it twelve hours before our meeting. If you simply miss a meeting your participation grade will suffer.

**Cell phones and Internet**
The use of cell phones, smart phones, or other mobile communication devices is disruptive, and is therefore prohibited during class. Except in emergencies, those using such devices must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. Students are permitted to use computers during class for note-taking and other class-related work only. Doing otherwise will negatively affect your participation grade.

**Bad Weather**
I do not cancel class for bad weather. If the university is open, class is in session.

**Additional responsibilities**
- Work hard, think critically, and apply yourself
- Make an appointment with me if you are confused or having trouble with the class.
- Enjoy linguistic anthropology!
CLASS SCHEDULE

Introduction to Communication and Language

8/20 Introduction
   In class screening: *Lost in Translation*

8/22 Intercultural Conundrums
   Fadiman, pp. 20-31, 38-77, 78-92

8/27 Language and Communication
   Sapir, Language pp. 3-23

8/29 What is a Sign?
   Saussure, pp. 6-15
   Pierce, *What Is A Sign?*
   Assignment: Be sure to have picked out your intercultural site.

9/3 No Class

Linguistic Competence:

9/5 Linguistic competence and Linguistic Relativity
   McHale, What You Know When You Know a Language.
   Wilfred, Some Languages Have No Grammar.
   Lucy, Scope of Linguistic Relativity
   In class screening: Darmok

9/10 Linguistic Relativity
   Whorf, The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language.
   Levinson, Language and Cognition: The Cognitive Consequences of Spatial Description in Guugu Yimithirr

9/12 Language and speech communities
   Jackson, Language Identity of the Columbian Vaupes Indians.
   Hymes, Linguistic Problems in Defining the Concept of Tribe.

9/17 Nonverbal communication and Speech Communities
   Lane et al., The Language of the DEAF-World.
   Basso, “To Give up on Words”

9/19 Codeswitching: When is Communication Intercultural?
   Blom and Gumperz, Social meaning in linguistic structures
   Urcioli, The Political Topography of Bilingualism.
   In class: Hand out first essay assignment. Discussion of good essay writing techniques
9/24  Intercultural conundrums continued  
Fadiman pp. 140-153, 171-180, 210-224, 250-261

**Communicative Competence:**

9/26  What is meaning and what does language do?  
Malinowski, The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages.  
Austin, How to Do Things With Words. (Lecture 1).  
Heath 19-29

10/1  Communicative problems in the workplace  
Gumperz, Discourse Strategies. Ch 6 and 8.

10/3  Communicative Competence  
Hymes, On Linguistic Theory, Communicative Competence, and the  
Education of Disadvantaged Children.  
Heath 30-74

10/8  Recess – No Class

10/10  Standard Language  
Preston, Dennis. They Speak Really Bad English  
Heath 236-262

10/12  **Midterm grades posted (15-25% of your final grade has been determined by this time.)**

10/15  Classroom competence and African American Vernacular English  
Heath 73-112, 166-211  
Labov, Academic Ignorance and Black Intelligence.

10/17  Classroom competence cont.  
Heath 113-166, 211-235  
In class screening: Either Voices of North Carolina or The Road Less Travelled

10/22  Solutions  
Heath 265-369

**Metacommunicative Competence**

10/24  Reflexive Language  
Lucy, Reflexive Language and the Human Disciplines.

10/29  Interviews as an example of metacommunication  
Briggs Ch 1-2

10/31  Interviews and gaining metacommunicative competence
Briggs Ch 3-4
In class screening: Crosstalk (Film)

11/5 Solutions
Briggs pp. 93-111, 120-125

**Language and Power: Communicative misunderstandings or differences?**

11/7 Language Ideology
Irvine and Gal, Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation.

11/12 Power
Bourdieu, The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges.

11/14 Race
Hill, Language, Race, and White Public Space.
Bucholtz, The Whiteness of Nerds

11/19 Gender
Keenan, Norm-Makers, Norm-Breakers: Uses of Speech by Men and Women in a Malagasy Community.
Tannen, Talk in the Intimate Relationship

11/21 Thanksgiving Break – No Class

11/26 Gender cont.
Cameron Chapters 2, 3 and 5

11/28 Presentations

12/3 Presentations

12/5 Presentations

**12/10 Final Paper Due**

12/12 2:00-4:30 Wrap up presentations.