ANTH/IS/LING 414 WI: *Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*

**Location and times:**  Kuykendall Hall 306, MWF, 10:30-11:20 am

**Instructor:**  Emanuel J. Drechsel, Professor  
Interdisciplinary Studies, Hawai‘i Hall 110  
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**Office Hours:**  After class or by appointment at my office in Interdisciplinary Studies on Monday afternoon, Tuesday, or Thursday  
(For appointments, please call Interdisciplinary Studies at 956-7297!)

**Contents:**

This class examines the relationships of language to culture and society from a broadly defined anthropological perspective, and focuses on the following major themes:

- **Nature of language and culture as contrasted with other forms of communication and behaviors**
- **Language and thought** (with special attention to linguistic and cultural constraints on “the human mind,” including the question of linguistic relativity)
- **Language as a means of social identity** (including relations between language on the one hand and age, gender, “race” or ethnicity, prestige, power, and additional social factors on the other)
- **Various topics of a specifically sociolinguistic nature** (such as the role of language in socialization and education, first-language acquisition versus second-language learning, bi- and multilingualism, literacy, etc.)
- **Language change and its sociocultural dimensions** (including sociocultural implications of historical-linguistic reconstructions, language contact, and language death)

ANTH/IS/LING 414 will additionally pay some attention to the sociolinguistic situation of the Hawaiian Islands, which includes an examination of not only the relationships of Hawaiian to immigrants’ languages, but also the history of “Pidgin” or Hawai‘i Pidgin-Creole English as part of a review of pidgins and creoles.

This class also is writing-intensive, thus addresses issues of good writing throughout the semester, and promotes it as a tool of learning fundamental course materials. ANTH/IS/LING 414 is restricted to a maximum of 20 students to ensure regular interactions between the instructor and students by means of written feedback to writing assignments and individual conferences.

**Prerequisites:**

Basic understanding of cultural anthropology and its fundamental concepts required; basic understanding of linguistic concepts encouraged but not required
Requirements:

To guarantee success, this class presumes not only interdisciplinary cooperation, but depends on the active participation and regular contributions by every class member. For this purpose, ANTH/IS/LING 414 specifically requires:

- **Regular, timely attendance of classes and active participation in discussions.** Excessive absences will weigh negatively in your final grade, and will bring about the regular use of attendance sheets. As a courtesy to your fellow class members, please turn off all electronic devices, including pagers and cellular telephones! Notebook computers are permissible for taking notes, however. Please remember also to keep your voices low within university facilities, and use your electronic devices only outside of the classroom building.

- **Two mid-term exams and a final,** consisting of essay questions to examine your overall understanding of readings and class discussions. The precise format of these exams is open to discussion within obvious limits. If you miss either mid-term exam *for a good reason,* you will have an opportunity to make it up outside of class at a follow-up date to be agreed. You cannot however make up the final exam or for that matter take it earlier than on the scheduled date and time.

- **One informal interview about your research** with the instructor at his office in Interdisciplinary Studies, Hawai‘i Hall 110, after submitting a detailed outline or first draft of your paper, i.e. preferably by mid-April (see Tentative Course Outline below). For appointments, please call Interdisciplinary Studies at 956-7297.

- **Four writing assignments** on an anthropological-linguistic topic of your choice to help promote your learning of relevant course materials by academic writing and to consist of the following four assignments (including minimal formal requirements):
  
  - **Title, abstract, key words, and list of ten references:** Keep the title of your essay concise but descriptive. Offer an abstract of 150 to 200 words following the format of abstracts used in academic and especially social-science journals. Look for samples in class, and be sure to add relevant key words! In your list of references, you must include no less than five (5) non-electronic entries. Internet resources are acceptable only as entries in addition to the minimum of five regularly published books and articles!
  
  - **Detailed outline of your paper:** Incorporate not only the paper’s title, abstract, and key words, but also subtitles as headings of your paper’s subdivisions and one-sentence summaries for each of these sections to offer an indication of your line of argumentation! Let the organization of your essay make your argument. Be sure that all these items are consistent with each other, and make revisions when necessary! Again remember to offer as much information with as few words as possible.
  
  - **First draft of your paper:** Length of no less than 2000 words with a concise but descriptive title, an abstract and accompanying key words, an introduction, clearly identified middle sections (including subtitles), a preliminary conclusion, and a list of applicable bibliographic references with no less than five (5) non-electronic entries in addition to any texts used in this course. Include further revisions as you develop your essay.
Expanded, revised version of your first draft: Length of no less than 4000 words with a concise but descriptive title, an abstract and accompanying key words, an introduction, clearly identified middle sections (including subtitles), a conclusion, an acknowledgement of those who contributed to your paper in some fashion, and a list of applicable bibliographic references with no less than ten (10) non-electronic entries and with no fewer than five (5) books in addition to any texts used in this course.

NOTE: For deadlines, see the schedule below! Please observe also that any unexcused late submission will weigh negatively in my evaluation. No writing assignment accepted by electronic transmission for reasons of insufficient internet safety!

Success in selecting a suitable topic requires considerable planning in advance in order to meet the deadlines for submission of your writing assignments, whence I strongly suggest that you first confer with me to assure sufficiency of appropriate resources, especially regarding any poorly documented topics. Please remain aware that, as you develop your research paper, you may find a need to revise it substantially, which is very much part of these exercises and will help improve your skills in research and writing. Feel free to consult with me early in the semester and regularly if you need assistance.

Write in a formal but non-pompous style (see Appendix), and follow the in-text, author-date referencing style of The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th or later edition, and include specific page numbers unless your reference applies to the entire book or article that you are citing (see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html and further information to be made available in class)! To help reduce unnecessary waste, I welcome your papers in a single-spaced format and two-sided printing. Alternatively, you can use clean “waste” paper; but please make sure that the backside does not include any personal or other sensitive information. Preferred font: Times New Roman Size 12 for easy reading!

Grade Distribution:

The mid-term and final exams will amount to 10% and 20% of your final grade for a total of 40%. The interview with me about your paper will count 5%. The remaining 55% of your final grade will come from your writing assignments: 5% for your title, abstract, and list of references and for your outline each; 15% for your first draft of no less than 2000 words; and 30% for your expanded revision of no less than 4000 words.

NOTE: Any student who fails to submit an acceptable first or final draft as part of his or her assignments in a timely fashion will automatically receive a grade no higher than a D-, which will have the effect of denying him or her WI credit for this class.
Texts:


There will be select additional readings on language and culture through time as evident for language change and contact, of which some will become available in class and others are accessible online.

Major Course Objectives:

- An appreciation of the interdisciplinary relationships between linguistics on the one hand and cultural anthropology (ethnology), archaeology, and physical anthropology on the other, in short what is the first branch of anthropology to Boasians, by introducing anthropology and other social-science students to linguistics as well as by serving as a spring-board to the study of extralinguistic domains for students of language and languages
- A critical understanding of linguistic anthropology as an academic discipline as well as its methodological and theoretical foundations, including a culture-sensitive appreciation of language that specifically draws on ethnological and other anthropological principles of analysis of "the other"
- An improvement of critical thinking skills in linguistic anthropology and wider social science
- A development of basic research and organizational skills on an acceptable anthropological-linguistic topic by systematic revision and in a semi-formal written presentation, useful for purposes other than just academic one

Tentative Schedule of Topics, Reading Assignments, Exams, and Deadlines for Submissions (subject to revision as necessary):

8-12 January Course Description; Definition and Scope of Linguistic Anthropology; Methods of Linguistic Anthropology (Salzmann, Chpts. 1 and 2)
(15 January Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
17 and 19 January “Nuts and Bolts” I: Sounds and Their Description and Analysis (Salzmann Chpt. 3)
22-26 January “Nuts and Bolts” II: Words, Sentences, and Beyond (Salzmann, Chpts. 4 and 5)
29 Jan.-2 Feb. Origin and Evolution of Language (Salzmann, Chpt. 6)
5 February  
5 February  

First mid-term exam

7 and 9 February  
Acquiring First and Second Languages (Salzmann, Chpt. 7)

12-16 February  
Language, Thought, and Culture: The Question of Linguistic Relativity (Chpt. 12)

(19 February  
Holiday: Presidents’ Day)

21 February  
Title, abstract, key words, and list of references for your paper due

21 and 23 February  
Language and Cognition (Salzmann, Chpt. 11)

26 February-2 March  
Language, Gender, and Identity (Salzmann, Chpt. 13)

5 March  
Detailed outline of your paper due

5-9 March  
Language, Class, Ethnicity or Nationality, and Identity (Chpt. 14)

12-16 March  
Language through Time I: Language Culture Change (Salzmann, Chpt. 8)

19 March  
Second mid-term exam

21 and 23 March  
Language through Time II (section of Edward Sapir’s classic essay “Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture: A Study in Method” or some comparable reading)

(26-30 March  
Spring Recess)

2-6 April  
Language Variation and Contact I (Salzmann, Chpt. 9; Drechsel “Speaking ‘Indian’ in Louisiana”)

9-13 April  

16 April  
First draft of your paper due

16-20 April  
Ethnography of Speaking and Communication (Chpt. 10)

23-27 April  
Portraits of “The Whiteman” (Basso’s booklet)

30 April and 2 May  
Linguistic Anthropology in a Globalized World (Chpt. 15)

Monday, 7 May,  
4:00 p.m.  
Expanded revision of your paper due at Hawai’i Hall 110

Friday, 11 May,  
9:45-11:45 a.m.  
Final examination
Appendix: A Few Suggestions for Good Writing:

- Give yourself plenty of time for writing your papers. Do not wait until the weekend or evening before an assignment is due, for very few people can “whip it out just like that” and do a good job. Good writing relies on substantive information, the collection of which in turn requires a considerable amount of planning, research, and careful documentation. You should also commit quite a bit of an effort to editing and revising your writing for both content and form.

- Carefully organize your thoughts. Good organization is the prime essence of clear expression. Make your writing flow by developing a foundation for your arguments in early sections and by incorporating transitions between your ideas. Avoid getting lost in details; instead focus on essentials, and illustrate your arguments with selected but revealing examples. Give structure and depth to your writing by pruning, winnowing, and consolidating your text. Incidentally, what we know by the derogatory term of “rehashing” constitutes a valuable skill that you will find useful in other circumstances.

- Be concise, and avoid wordy or pompous expressions, which however does not mean a simplified or casual style as if you were writing for children or in texting. Use a quasi-formal style appropriate to professional authorship as employed in academic writing, which permits a fairly free use of subordination to clarify complex relationships of your subject. Always write in complete sentences; incomplete sentences lack an essential element, which usually leave the reader dangling in doubt or confusion.

- For a general rule, keep in mind that a sentence should begin with old or implicit information, and end with new one. Give your readers something that they already know or can assume before you introduce them to new ideas. New information at the beginning of a sentence has the dramatic effect of surprise usually of little use in academic writing. By observing this suggestion, you can often make your writing flow much better and solve the problem of transition at the same time.

- Usually, it is a good practice to refrain, whenever possible, from using passive constructions, which make cumbersome reading and – counter to widespread misconception – do not constitute a more objective form of expression. Active constructions, in which the grammatical subject and the actor are identical, render your writing not only more concise, but also livelier. Thus, change a passive sentence like “Washoe was given an apple by Jane,” into an active construction such as “Washoe received an apple from Jane.” or “Jane gave an apple to Washoe.” depending on what you wish to present as old and new information!

- Distinguish between essential, restrictive and non-essential, non-restrictive relative clauses, which permit a delightful semantactic differentiation in English not possible in so many other languages. Keep in mind the divergent implications of a restrictive relative clause as in “Washoe received an apple that was red.” and the analogue non-restrictive construction in “Washoe received an apple, which was red.” To distinguish them, note the use or absence of a comma as well as the different relative pronouns!

- Pay attention to appropriate punctuation. Whereas there are few hard rules in English, again keep your readers in mind; insert a comma where you can expect them to take a pause for breath taking, when reading your text. Apply extra care in replacing a comma with a semicolon. In general, it is safer to use the semicolon as a weak period separating two complete, independent sentences that reveal a closer semantic relationship to each other than either does to the preceding or following text. The semicolon as a kind of comma is appropriate only in extensive listings, including subordination within single items.

- Be consistent in your use of pronouns, tenses, numbers, etc., and watch out for subject-verb disagreements and other conflicts in grammar. Also, make an effort to use scientific or technical terms correctly; “linguistics” is not the same as “language.” Moreover, check your spelling, not only with respect to obvious typographical errors but also in regard to words and phrases with another meaning pronounced alike yet spelled differently; for instance, “it’s” differs from “its” grammatically and semantically. Contrast foreign terms or examples in another language by applying quotation marks (“...”), underlining, or preferably italics.

- When documenting a source, use the format of referencing used in our principal readings, including page numbers unless the entire source supports your argument. For the documentation of an internet source, give the document’s title, the name of the source, its full address, and the date (e.g. “The WWW Virtual Library: Graphic Literature (1.0),” DIE ZEIT, http://www3.zeit.de/zeit/tag/vl-gl/index.html, 26 August 1999). If in doubt about how much referencing to incorporate, do more than less; keep in mind your reader who wants to pursue your leads. Remember also that citing another author’s writing without proper documentation is plagiarism!