

**Research Methods in Language and Social Interaction**  
**COMM 664 – Fall 2011**

**Professor:** Dr. Leah Wingard

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**Class website:** <https://ilearn.sfsu.edu/login/index.php>

**Office Hours:** Wed 2-4/Th 12-2

(by appointment if necessary)

**Office:** Humanities 258

**Course Description**

Language and Social Interaction (LSI) is a perspective for studying communication that generally emphasizes the detailed study of face-to-face interaction in everyday settings. An LSI approach to studying communication assumes that naturally occurring interaction (e.g. that is not researcher prompted or controlled) is worthy of study for understanding the processes of communication. This approach also assumes that when we use language during communication, we are initiating courses of action. In this sense language use is the basis for social action and social organization. In this class each student will conduct a short research project by recording face to face interaction and analyzing a language practice or set of related practices used in that interaction. This course satisfies breadth area 7, "research methodology" in the Communications Studies majors.

**The primary learning objectives for this course are:**

- a) that you acquire a basic understanding of how different methodologies contribute to research of communication
- b) that you be able to use successful techniques for recording and processing instances of recorded interaction for research purposes
- c) that you be able to recognize a variety of structures that occur in interaction
- d) that you be able to produce an analysis of naturally occurring interaction.

**Grading** will be based on the following standard grading scale.

A 93 -100	B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9
A- 90-92.9	B 83-86.9	C 73-76.9	D 63-66.9
	B- 80-82.9	C- 70-72.9	D - 60-62.9

Please note that the grade of A is given for consistently excellent work that demonstrates an in-depth understanding of all course materials. B's are given for work that demonstrates instances of excellence with a very good understanding of course materials. C's are given for work that demonstrates a consistent satisfactory competence in course materials. D's are given for passing, but less than satisfactory and incomplete work, and missed assignments.

<b>Reading guides</b> (5 out of 6)	22%	(20 points each, 100 total)
<b>Other project related assignments</b>	24%	(110 points total)
<b>Exams</b> (2)	22%	(50 points each, 100 total)
<b>Final project</b>	22%	(100 points)
<b>Participation and attendance</b>	10%	(20 points attendance/20 participation)

**Reading Guides**

Reading guides are assigned for each topic we study and are designed to assist you complete class readings, process main ideas and study for exams. Reading guides must be downloaded from our Ilearn website. Reading guides will generally be graded according to credit/non-credit, but partial credit may also be given if it is clear that they are not answered in a thorough way. While you may work with others to discuss reading guides **answers on guides may not be**

**copied word for word. You must do your own work. Reading guides that are heavily copied will be considered plagiarized work** (see statement on plagiarism below). **Reading guides can only be turned in on the day they are due and on days in which you are present for at least half of the class.** Reading guides must be typed to get credit. I offer one chance to turn in an assignment on a day you can not be present in class due to unforeseen circumstances (such as illness, car trouble, family emergency). On one such occasion, you may send the assignment electronically by the end of the day with a brief explanation of your absence and I will count it for normal credit. Send documents as attachments in Word, RTF or PDF formats only. I can not open Word Perfect files. **Extra credit** will be given if you do all 6 reading guides. Once you have reached 100 points total on reading guides, you may earn up to 10 extra points toward your final grade on the last reading guide you turn in.

### **Project related assignments**

The following project related assignments are the “building blocks” of your final project. Specific guidelines will be given for each assignment. Assignments will vary in point value as follows:

Data collection questionnaire (10 pts)

Ethics certification (15 pts)

Activity log + topic of interest (25 pts)

Data Presentation and analysis of data segment and transcript for class (60 pts)

### **Exams:**

We will have two short exams that will test your knowledge and recognition of examples of key terms and data examples from class. You will need to bring a “Zeus” form and a number 2 pencil. Quizzes may generally not be taken early or made up except in the most extreme and documented circumstances.

### **Final project:**

Your final project will be a synthesis of the assignments listed above and will be comprised primarily of transcription and written analysis from your collected data.

### **Attendance and Participation:**

**Warning:** Do not take this class if you can not attend class consistently.

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class. You can let me know if you are not coming to class by e-mail but I make no distinction between “excused” or “unexcused” absences. I grant 4 “lates” at a maximum. After you have been granted 4 “lates”, any subsequent lateness will be considered a full “absence”. If you need to leave early, please tell me at the beginning of class. Leaving early for whatever reason will be counted as a ½ absence. I grant 2 absences or its equivalent in “lates” (4) for the semester with no penalty. Any absences or lates thereafter will result in a 2 point deduction per absence and a 1 point deduction per late.

**Participation** includes your fully engaged attention as exhibited by frequent contribution to class discussion, asking engaging questions and sharing data clips as examples with the class. Being willing to share your data or data collection site with others will be reflected very positively in your participation grade. Text messaging in class, using the lab computer or your own computer for work other than relevant to our class work will reflect negatively in your participation grade. Please show us all courtesy and turn cell phones off while in class.

### **Data collection:**

In this class you will be required to record at least 2 hours of naturally occurring interaction (more than 2 hours and up to 5 is best!). Data collection will take place between September 6<sup>th</sup> and September 27<sup>th</sup>. Data collection may only take place once your ethics certification has been turned in and your data collection site is approved by me. Although earlier is better, data must be collected at the absolute latest by the week of September 27/29<sup>th</sup> in order to have the data

digitized in time to complete the first data assignment using your data due October 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Required materials:**

- Everyday Talk: Building and Reflecting Identities (Available in textbook store, 1 hardcopy is on reserve at reserve desk in library)  
Author: Karen Tracy, The Guilford Press, 2002, ISBN 1-57230-789-7
- Earphones or earbuds are necessary for transcription and working in lab
- I highly recommend getting a flash drive for transporting data clips

**Accommodations:** Students with disabilities who need accommodations are encouraged to contact me early in the semester. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice / TTY 415-338-2472) or by email [dprc@sfsu.edu](mailto:dprc@sfsu.edu)).

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgement, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as his or her own. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an "F" grade. All instances of plagiarism in the College of Humanities will be reported to the Dean of the College, and may be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer for further action.

**Class schedule:**

The following pages contain a tentative schedule of the readings, topics, exams and due dates of assignments for this class. Changes to the schedule will be announced in class and the current schedule will be posted on the class website on Ilearn. It is your responsibility to know the current schedule.

Week and Date	Readings & Topics	Graded items
<p><b>Week 1</b> <b>Aug. 23/25</b></p>	<p>Tues: Introduction to class and syllabus discussion of site selection for filming Thurs: Discussion of filming ethics</p>	<p>Thurs: Student Information Sheet Due (download from Ilearn)</p>
<p><b>Week 2</b> <b>Aug. 30/ Sept. 1</b></p>	<p>Tues: Equipment use training Thurs: Theoretical foundations in LSI PDF: Tracy, K. – LSI: Its Institutional Identity...</p>	<p>Tues: Data collection questionnaire due</p>
<p><b>Week 3</b> <b>Sept. 6/8</b></p>	<p>Tues: PDF: Le Baron et al. - An Overview of LSI Research Thur: Text: Chap 1: Talk and Identity Text: Chap 2: Two Perspectives</p>	<p>Tues: Ethics certification due. Thur: Reading guide #1 (Filming in progress)</p>

<b>Week and Date</b>	<b>Readings &amp; Topics</b>	<b>Graded items</b>
<b>Week 4 Sept. 13/15</b>	Tues: Text: Chap 4: Speech Acts Thur: Text: Chap 7: Interaction structures	Thur: Reading guide #2 (Filming in progress)
<b>Week 5 Sept. 20/22</b>	Tues: PDF: Putchu and Potter Thur: discussion of activity logs	Thur: Reading guide #3 (Filming in progress)
<b>Week 6 Sept 27/29</b>	Tues: Exam 1 Thur: discussion of transcription	( <u>Last</u> filming week)
<b>Week 7 Oct 4/6</b>	Tues: Text: Chap 8 and 10 discuss assessments/ directives Discuss presentation guidelines – start sign-ups  Thur: Students meet individually with professor about topics instead of class	Thurs: Activity log + topics of interest due (bring two copies to meeting!!)
<b>Week 8 Oct. 11/13</b>	Tues: Introduction to lab use and Quicktime Students make clips for guide 4  Thurs: discuss guide 4 student examples of assessments and directives  Intro to stories/person reference/ word choice Chap 3, 9, PDF reading on MCD	Thurs: Reading guide #4 (Please send transcription electronically)
<b>Week 9 Oct. 18/20</b>	Tues: Further discussion of Chap 9 - Stories in discourse and Text: Chap 3 Person reference/word choice/formulations/MCD's Lab time/ Students make clips  Thurs: View discuss student clips of word choice/person reference/ word choice/MCD	Thurs: Reading Guide #5 due (Please send transcription portion electronically)

Week and Date	Readings & Topics	Graded items
<p><b>Week 10</b> <b>Oct. 25/27</b></p>	<p>Tues: Discussion of Gossip and Teasing</p> <p>Thur: Lab time/Students make clips</p>	<p>Thur: Reading Guide #6 due <b>(Please send transcription electronically)</b></p>
<p><b>Week 11</b> <b>Nov. 1/3</b></p>	<p>Tues: See student examples of Gossip and Teasing Discussion of final project guidelines</p> <p>Thur: Lab time</p>	
<p><b>Week 12</b> <b>Nov 8/10</b></p>	<p>Tues/Thur: Student data presentations</p>	
<p><b>Week 13</b> <b>Nov 15</b></p>	<p>Tues: Student presentations No class Thurs: Professor at NCA</p>	
	<p>Fall break – No classes Nov. 21 - 25</p>	
<p><b>Week 14</b> <b>Nov. 29/ Dec. 1</b></p>	<p>Tues/Thur: Student presentations</p>	
<p><b>Week 15</b> <b>Dec. 6/8</b></p>	<p>Tues: Student data presentations Thurs: Take exam 2 in last class</p>	
<p><b>Finals week</b></p>	<p>Final paper due Friday Dec 16<sup>th</sup> 4:00 Communication Studies office Humanities 282</p>	