

LINGUISTICS 5800
Conversation Analysis
FALL 2017
Tues/Thurs, 12:30-1:45 (KTCH 1B84)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Interaction is the primary, fundamental embodiment of sociality... 'the primordial site of sociality'...The organization of interaction needs to be—and is—robust enough, flexible enough, and sufficiently self-maintaining to sustain social order at family dinners and in coal mining pits, around the surgical operating table and on skid row, in New York City and Montenegro and Rossel Island, and so forth, in every nook and cranny where human life is to be found.

—Emanuel A. Schegloff (2006)

Although everyday conversation is commonly conceived of as random and chaotic—overrun with false starts, hitches, pauses, misunderstandings, topic shifts, and the like—in reality conversation is the product of a highly systematic and organized machinery. This course aims to unpack some of the orderliness of this machinery by providing an introduction to the theory and method known as Conversation Analysis (CA). The majority of our time will be spent tackling several of the fundamental features of human social interaction—e.g., turn-taking, sequence and preference organization, repair, and epistemics—including cross-linguistic and cross-cultural considerations. After laying this foundation, we will also briefly introduce how CA theory and method can be brought to bear on interaction in institutional settings (e.g., medical care, customer service, 911 calls, classrooms, etc.), as well as contribute to our understanding of the link between language and identity. Throughout our discussion, the empirical rigor of CA will be underscored, which we will argue offers a powerful lens through which to examine human sociality and engage in social theorizing.

As opposed to a lecture-only class, this course is designed to be as ‘hands-on’ as possible. That is, students will be expected to take what we learn in lecture and in the readings, and apply that knowledge to novel data they haven’t seen before. As such, ample time will be devoted to data-focused activities.

Note also that this course is the first of a two-semester sequence in Conversation Analysis.

Textbook: Rebecca Clift. (2016). *Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.
(Plus a few additional readings on D2L)

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Participation / Pop Quizzes	10%
Homework Assignments (x11, lowest dropped)	50%
Research Proposal	20%
Final Exam	20%

All grades will be posted in the D2L grade book as soon as they are available.

PARTICIPATION / POP QUIZZES (10%)

Students are expected to attend every day of class, arrive on time, prepare for class by doing the reading and homework assignments for that day, and participate actively in class discussions. This is **not** a course where simply doing the reading will sufficiently prepare you for homework assignments and exams; rather, CA requires that you ‘get your hands dirty’ and actually practice applying your knowledge to novel data. We will provide ample opportunities to practice these skills in class, but of course you must be in class in order to take advantage of them!

Each unexcused absence will affect your final grade. If you believe that an absence or a late arrival should be excused, communicate with the professors beforehand, if possible. These are some valid reasons for an excused absence: a serious illness; a death or other family or personal emergency; participation in an official University-sponsored activity (for which you should request a letter from your supervisor or coach); a religious holiday. **Maintain clear and open communication with the professors about any issues that interfere with your attendance or punctual arrival to class.**

Electronic devices (including laptops) are prohibited in class. We will typically provide a data handout to accompany our lectures. Notes are best taken on the handout and on paper, as we will be using symbols and notation that are not readily accessible in Word and other applications. If you feel the need to use an electronic device during class, please consult with the professors.

Brief, unannounced quizzes can occur at the professors’ discretion. Students should score 100% if they have attended lecture and completed assigned readings.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS (50%)

There will be **eleven (11) homework assignments** throughout the semester. These will primarily consist of data excerpts that you will analyze in accordance with what we have seen in lecture and in the reading. You may consult with other students in preparing the assignments, but each student must write up their assignment individually.

Grades for homework assignments will depend upon their completeness and correctness. **Your lowest score in the Homework category will be dropped**, making each of the ten remaining assignments worth 5% of your overall final grade.

Homework assignments must be turned in—**in hard copy—at the beginning of class** on the date they are due (see attached Course Calendar below). **No late homework will be accepted without documentation of an excused absence.**

FINAL EXAM (20%)

The final exam will assess your ability to apply knowledge from lecture and the readings to novel data, in the same way as you will be doing in in-class activities and homework assignments.

The final exam is scheduled for **Monday, December 18th, 4:30-7:00PM**, and will be **cumulative**.

No makeup exams will be scheduled without documentation of an excused absence.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL (20%)

For the final paper, graduate students will delve deeper into an area of their choosing by designing a concrete research proposal (10-12 pages, double-spaced). The proposal should not be just an exercise, but rather a sort of ‘empty shell’ for a publishable research article or conference paper. No matter what your topic, this will imply at least the following:

- (1) *Introduction*: What are you seeking to investigate, and why should your reader care?
- (2) *Review of the Literature*: What has been said about your topic/related topics? Have similar practices been analyzed previously? Has a related phenomenon been looked at in Language X, and now you want to look at it in Language Y? Whatever the case may be, the literature that you include here should situate your specific topic as interesting and as-of-yet unstudied. Write it so that when you’ve done your study, you can just copy-paste this whole section into your article.
- (3) *Preliminary Analysis*: In a single semester, you will likely not have time to create a full, systematic collection of your phenomenon. However, you should be able to locate and analyze a case or two, taken from naturally-occurring interactional data. The data can be your own (in any language!), but the professors can also direct you to additional data sources.
- (4) *Conclusions*: In what possible directions might your findings be taken? Be sure to incorporate some discussion of the ‘so what?’ of those findings.

We recommend that this be a research project that you **actually plan to complete** (e.g., during the second semester of this course). The structure of this final project, as an ‘empty shell’, is meant to significantly aid in the preparation of a publishable research article or conference paper.

Relevant due dates:

Tuesday, Nov. 11th: Turn in a brief (~1 page) summary of what you plan to do for your proposal, **PLUS** a list of relevant references (i.e., bibliography) that you plan to review as part of your proposal. This means that, **prior to this date**, you **must** have met with one/both of the professors to discuss your proposed topic and get recommendations regarding relevant literature. The summary of the proposal is worth 3% of the total 20% for the proposal.

Thursday, Dec. 14th: Turn in final proposal (last day of class).

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENT POLICIES

(1) Honor Code – All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/academic-integrity-policy) (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/academic-integrity-policy>). Violations of the policy may include plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. For details on these violations, students must go to <http://honorcode.colorado.edu/student-information> and read the links “What is a violation?” “Standards of Academic Integrity,” “Understanding and preventing plagiarism,” and “Citation guide and plagiarism information.” All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to non-academic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy is found at <http://www.colorado.edu/honorcode>

(2) Final Exams - Final exams are to be taken on the day determined by the university and the department. No excuse such as family meetings, employment, or travel will grant an exception to this. If you have three or more final exams on the same day, you are entitled to arrange an alternative exam time for the last exam or exams scheduled on that day. If you have two final exams scheduled to meet at the same time, you are entitled to arrange an alternative exam time for the later course offered that day or week. To be eligible to reschedule a final exam, you must provide evidence of either of these situations and make arrangements with your instructor no later than Friday, November 3, 2017. For the complete final examination policy, see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/final-examination-policy>

(3) Classroom Behavior - Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters provide the instructor with the student's legal name. They will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise them of this preference early in the semester so they may make appropriate changes to their records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior) at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior> and the [Student Code of Conduct](http://www.colorado.edu/osccr) at <http://www.colorado.edu/osccr>.

(4) Disability Services - If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your instructor a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. For exam accommodations, provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the Disability Services website (<http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students>). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability

Services website (<http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students/temporary-medical-conditions>) and discuss your needs with your instructor.

(5) Religious Observances - Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. See details at: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/observance-religious-holidays-and-absences-classes-andor-exams>. Please contact your Instructor during the first two weeks of class to let her/him know of any possible conflicts to make the necessary arrangements.

(6) Discrimination and Harassment - The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above-referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation is found at the [OIEC website](http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity). (<http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity>)

COURSE CALENDAR

Note 1: **Tuesdays** will generally be dedicated to lecture, while **Thursdays** will typically involve an in-class activity related to the content from Tuesday's lecture and the associated reading(s). Thursdays are also usually when readings are due, and so we will allot some time for discussion thereof. Students are thus encouraged to bring any questions they may have about the readings to class.

Note 2: **Readings** are listed on the day they are 'due'. So, for example, students should arrive to class on Tuesday, Sept. 5th with Chapter 2 already read.

Wk	Day	Topic(s)	Items Due
1	Tues (8/29)	Course Introduction (CR)	
	Thurs (8/31)	Origins of CA (CR)	
2	Tues (9/5)	<i>Lecture:</i> Transcription (BF)	Chapter 2 read by today
	Thurs (9/7)	<i>Activity:</i> Transcription (CR)	
3	Tues (9/12)	<i>Lecture:</i> Turn-taking (BF)	
	Thurs (9/14)	<i>Activity:</i> Turn-taking (BF)	Chapter 4 read by today Homework #1 DUE
4	Tues (9/19)	<i>Lecture:</i> Turn-taking, pt. 2 (BF)	
	Thurs (9/21)	<i>Activity:</i> Turn-taking, pt. 2 (BF)	Homework #2 DUE
5	Tues (9/26)	<i>Lecture:</i> Sequence/Preference (CR)	
	Thurs (9/28)	<i>Activity:</i> Sequence/Preference (CR)	Chapter 3 read by today Homework #3 DUE
6	Tues (10/3)	<i>Lecture:</i> Sequence/Preference, pt. 2 (CR)	
	Thurs (10/5)	<i>Activity:</i> Sequence/Preference, pt. 2 (CR)	Chapter 5 read by today Homework #4 DUE
7	Tues (10/10)	<i>Lecture:</i> Other Preferences (BF)	
	Thurs (10/12)	<i>Activity:</i> Other Preferences (BF)	Homework #5 DUE
8	Tues (10/17)	Review for Midterm (BF/CR)	
	Thurs (10/19)	Midterm Exam (undergrads only)	
9	Tues (10/24)	<i>Lecture:</i> Repair (BF)	
	Thurs (10/26)	<i>Activity:</i> Repair (BF)	Chapter 7 read by today Homework #6 DUE
10	Tues (10/31)	<i>Lecture:</i> Repair, pt. 2 (BF)	
	Thurs (11/2)	<i>Activity:</i> Repair, pt. 2 (BF)	Homework #7 DUE
11	Tues (11/7)	<i>Lecture:</i> Knowledge (CR)	Preliminary Proposal DUE
	Thurs (11/9)	<i>Activity:</i> Knowledge (CR)	Chapter 6 (pp. 195-211) read by today Homework #8 DUE
12	Tues (11/14)	<i>Lecture:</i> Institutional talk (BF)	
	Thurs (11/16)	<i>Activity:</i> Institutional talk (BF)	Heritage (2004) read by today Homework #9 DUE
13	Thanksgiving Break		
14	Tues (11/29)	<i>Lecture:</i> Identity (CR)	
	Thurs (11/30)	<i>Activity:</i> Identity (CR)	Chapter 6 (pp. 212-220) read by today Homework #10 DUE
15	Tues (12/5)	<i>Lecture:</i> Identity, pt. 2 (CR)	
	Thurs (12/7)	<i>Activity:</i> Identity, pt. 2 (CR)	Homework #11 DUE
16	Tues (12/12)	Review for Final Exam (BF/CR)	
	Thurs (12/14)	Review for Final Exam (BF/CR)	Research Proposals DUE

**This calendar is subject to change at the professors' discretion.*

Final Exam: Monday, December 18th, 4:30-7:00PM