

Northern Illinois University
Department of Anthropology

Anthropology 435/Geography 435X

Space in Language and Culture

Fall 2003 T-TH 2:00-3:15 p.m., SB 206

Instructor: Dr. Giovanni Bennardo

Office: 200C Stevens Building

Hours: T-TH 12:15-1:15 and/or by appointment

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This course explores the relationship between humans and space. In particular, the course addresses the mental organization of spatial knowledge and highlights universal patterns that generate cultural and individual realizations of that knowledge. We will also examine how culture shapes ways of organizing and using space in daily and ritual behavior. Special emphasis will be devoted to linguistic diversity and how different languages express spatial relationships by using different parts of speech.

Required Texts:

- (i) Giovanni Bennardo (2002). *Representing Space in Oceania: Culture in Language and Mind*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics, ANU.
- (ii) Stephen C. Levinson (2003). *Space in Language and Cognition: Explorations in Cognitive Diversity*. Cambridge: CUP.
- (iii) Yi-Fu Tuan (1974). *Topophilia: A study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. New York: Columbia University Press.

The course is divided in three parts as follow:

Part 1: Topophilia:

Topophilia; Perception and Space; Culture and Environment; World Views and Space; Cosmos and Landscape; The Ideal City; Suburbia. (weeks 1-5)

Part 2: Space in Language and Cognition:

Western Spatial Thinking; Frames of Reference; Linguistic Diversity; Diversity in Mind; Language and Thought. (weeks 6-12)

Part 3: Space in Oceania:

Language and Space; Space in Mind; Space and Culture. (weeks 13-15)

Week I:

(August 26) Goals of the Course. Requirements. What is Topophilia?

(August 28) The senses; Common Psychological Structures.

Readings:

(i) Tuan: Chapter one, pp. 1-4

(ii) Tuan: Chapter 2-3, pp.5-29

Week II:

(September 2) Ethnocentrism and Space

(September 4) Culture and Environmental Attitudes; Environment and World Views

Readings:

(i) Tuan: Chapter 4, pp. 30-44

(ii) Tuan: Chapter 6-7, pp.59-91

Week III:

(September 9) Topophilia and Environment
(September 11) Cosmos and landscape; The Ideal City

Readings:

- (i) Tuan: Chapter 8-9, pp. 92-128
- (ii) Tuan: Chapter 10-11, pp. 129-172

Week IV:

(September 16) City Life Styles
(September 18) American Cities

Readings:

- (i) Tuan: Chapter 12, pp. 173-191
- (ii) Tuan: Chapter 13, pp. 192-224

Week V:

(September 23) Suburbia
(September 25) Review

Readings:

- (i) Tuan: Chapter 14, pp. 225-244
- (ii) Tuan: Chapter 15, pp. 245-248

Week VI:

(September 30) Western Spatial Thinking **MIDTERM 1 (Take Home) DUE (turn in database)**
(October 2) Frames of Reference

Readings:

- (i) Levinson: Chapter 1, pp. 1-23
- (ii) Levinson: Chapter 2, pp. 24-56

Week VII:

(October 7) Linguistic Diversity 1
(October 9) Linguistic Diversity 2

Readings:

- (i) Levinson: Chapter 3, pp. 62-94
- (ii) Levinson: Chapter 3, pp. 95-111

Week VIII:

(October 14) Absolute Minds
(October 16) Diversity in Mind 1

Readings:

- (i) Levinson Chapter 4, pp. 112-169
- (ii) Levinson: Chapter 5, pp. 170-192

Week IX:

(October 21)) Diversity in Mind 2
(October 23) Language and Thought 1

Readings:

- (i) Levinson: Chapter 5, pp. 192-215
- (ii) Levinson: Chapter 7, pp. 280-300

Week X:

(October 28) Language and Thought 2
(October 30) Putting it All Together

Readings:

- (i) Levinson: Chapter 7, pp. 300-324

Week XI:

(November 4) Review

(November 6) **MIDTERM 2 (In-Class)**

Week XII:

(November 11) Oceania: Language and Space 1

(November 13) Language and Space 2

Readings:

(i) Bennardo: Chapter 1-2, pp. 1-46

(ii) Bennardo: Chapter 3-5, pp. 47-104

**By now, topic and preliminary bibliography for Final Paper
must have received approval by me**

Week XIII:

(November 18) Space in Mind 1

(November 20) Space in Mind 2

Readings:

(i) Bennardo: Chapter 6, pp. 107-157

(ii) Bennardo: Chapter 7-8, pp. 159-197

Week XIV:

(November 25) Space and Culture 1

Readings:

(i) Bennardo: Chapter 9, pp. 201-213

Week XV:

(December 2) Space and Culture 2

(December 4) Review

Readings:

(i) Bennardo, Chapter 10-11, pp. 215-246

(ii) Bennardo, Chapter 12, pp. 249-260

Final Exam, Tuesday, December 9, 2-3:50

Final Paper Due Monday, December 8 by 4:30 p.m.

Contributions of Students to Class:

This course takes the position that students who have not read the assignments before class will not fully profit from in class activities. The lectures, discussions, and other class activities will augment and expand on the material presented in the assigned readings. Reading assignments are included in the specific content of the week they refer to, but must be read before the first Tuesday lecture of that same week (except for first week!).

During the first part of the semester, students are required to prepare a database from the content of their readings (Tuan's book). The construction of this database will obtain several goals: transform the content of the readings in an easily accessible format, provide the springboard for classroom discussions, create the background out of which the first midterm will be constructed. The database will be handed in (and evaluated) by the students together with the first take-home midterm.

During the semesters all students will be required to give a short presentation about an assigned reading. A summary of this reading must be handed in before class. Similarly, other two summaries will be handed in before class about other two assigned readings. All together, three summaries are required of three assigned

readings (including the one about which the student will give a short presentation). A list of readings with dates will be handed out the first day of class for signing in (students may have to work in couples).

Active participation is expected, encouraged, and also evaluated as part of your final grade.

Grading:

The second midterm and the final may have similar formats. They include (among others) definitions, short answers, and a short essay. The last class (or part of it) before any exam will be devoted to a review of the material covered and to be tested. During this class a study guide will be handed out. Students are urged to study constantly throughout the semester. It is very difficult to catch up on ideas that will become increasingly more complex as the semester proceeds.

No late assignment will be accepted. Absences may lower your grade and will be excused only by handing in written medical proof.

Plagiarism (the presentation of the ideas or writings of another as one's own) will be penalized. When one uses an idea (or writing) of another, it must be credited in citation. If the student copies words directly, they must be in quotation marks.

Requirements for the Class:

1. Attendance and Participation (**50 pt., 10 %**)
2. Three summaries and short presentation (**40 pt., 8%**)
3. Midterm 1 (and database) (**100 pt., 20%**)
4. Midterm 2 (**110 pt., 22%**)
5. Final (**100 pt. 20%**)
6. Final Paper (**100 pt., 20%**)

Grading scale (in %, points, letters):

100-90	(500-450)	(A)	79-70	(399-350)	(C)
89-80	(449-400)	(B)	69-60	(349-300)	(D)
			59-0	(299-0)	(F)

Have a great time!

PLEASE READ AND KEEP THIS SYLLABUS FOR REFERENCE