BBI 3301 INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE AND CULTURE
SEMESTER 2013/2014

Assessment

For this course you will be assessed in the following ways:

Mid semester Test : 30% covering topics 1 - 3
Final Test : 40% (covering topics 4 - )

Assignment 1: 15%
Assignment 2 : 15%

Test Format

Both the tests will have objective and subjective items. The subjective items will require you to provide short answers.

Assignment Questions

Assignment 1

Introduction

"Many ethnographically oriented researchers have been interested in the role of narratives or stories in interaction" (Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert and Leap, 2000). They could provide a valuable source of information on the encoding of life experiences such as who and what are held as important, thus their beliefs and values.

Focus

This assignment focuses on children narratives as an example of the above discourse.

Task

Interview two children of any age group, a female and a male on a similar topic. From your analysis, describe the differences or similarities found in the narratives that would illustrate the value and belief system that have been inculcated in children.

Describe the framework used for your analysis clearly. Use Labov's work as a starting point. Include three other more recent references to support your analysis.

Your interview data can be just single sessions lasting for about 10 - 15 minutes. Ensure that the interviewees are able to speak in English. Transcribe the data using a system that you will select.
Assignment 2

Introduction

The objective of this assignment is to analyse miscommunication as a result of cultural differences and disadvantages faced by ethnic-minority workers. Analyse the transcript provided below and explain the workplace communication that took place. The scenario is further elaborated below.

Scenario

The transcript is a brief extract from a job interview. The applicant is Asian with near native speaker competence in English. He is being interviewed by N for a job as a driver/conductor with a transport company.

The analysis

Below are some guidelines for you to follow in the completion of Assignment 2.

- The analysis should be situated in a discussion on asymmetrical talk. Give a brief write up about the pioneering work by Gumperz and his associates (1982a, 1982b).
- Cite two more new references from 2005 onwards to show work done on workplace communication.
- Relate the readings to your analysis of the given transcript.
- End your essay with three recommendations on how problems arising from such asymmetrical talk can be resolved.

Assignment Format

- Use Arial, font size 11, 1.5 spacing.
- The essay should not exceed eight (8) A4 pages including references.
- The transcripts are not counted as contributing pages. They are to be attached as appendices.
- Use relevant headings and subheadings in your writing to organize your information.

Deadlines

Submission dates: Assignment 1 on week 7 Assignment 2 on week 10

All assignments are to be submitted through your PJJ centres with an attached copy sent to your lecturer through e-mail: shchan@upm.edu.my. Please use the following notation as the subject heading in your email: BBI3301 Assign 1 XXXXX (matric number). Change to Assign 2 for the second assignment.

NOTE: Plagiarism is a serious offense. Assignments that are plagiarized will not be graded.
Transcript for Assignment 2

N: ... What do you think I.— Buses is going to offer you that R— don’t offer you?
B: Well, quite a lot of things, for example like um... Christmas bonus.
N: Uh huh.
B: So many things, holidays and all that. Well, we get holidays in R— but you er... get here more holidays than you get in R— (laughs).
N: All right. OK... Before you actually went to R— four years ago you were in Africa.
B: Yes.
N: And that was where, Kenya?
B: No, Malawi.
N: Malawi, and you were doing what there?
B: We had our own business there. I was working in a shop, it’s a grocery shop.
N: What made you decide to sell up and come to England?

B: Well um you know it’s just like what happened in Uganda (PHONE) could happen there, come to this country you know and settle myself.
N: Did you find it easy to settle here?
B: Not quite, I was alone here, I had no relations and nobody...
N: You came over totally cold, nowhere to go...
B: Yes.
N: Nowhere to live.
B: I was looked after by the government. I’m alright now.
N: OK. You’re been driving for two and a half years.
B: Yes.
N: You obviously don’t drive in the job you’re doing. What sort of driving experience have you had?
B: In this country?
N: Um hum.
B: I’ve got um light goods vehicle driving licence and I’ve... I don’t think done nothing wrong.
N: What sort of vehicles have you driven?
B: Well, Cortinas.
N: Basically car experience rather than vans or anything larger...
B: Yes.

(Roberts et al. 1992: 44-5)