

Talking Evidence:

A linguistic/anthropological approach to evidence and evidentiality

ANTH 4022

Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota

(3 Credits)

Instructor: David Valentine

Modality: In Person

Class Times:

Office: 364 HHH Center

email: valen076@umn.edu

Class Location:

Class Dates:

Phone: 612.626.8692

Office Hours:

To our question, what happened to the steamer Evdokija, a Bulgarian first answered: *zaminala* 'it is claimed to have sailed,' and then added: *zamina* 'I bear witness; it sailed'

—Roman Jakobson, *Shifters, Verbal Categories, and the Russian Verb* (1957)

Course Description

This class brings together the linguistic concept of *evidentiality* with enduring debates about the nature of *evidence*—and associated concepts such as responsibility, intention, and authority—at a historical moment when what counts as “evidence” has itself become a political flashpoint. The course examines how these concepts are both used and theorized in anthropology, linguistics, history of science, philosophy, quantitative sciences, medicine, and law, but it foregrounds the anthropological insight that the production and evaluation of evidence—whether in ordinary conversation or in specialized fields of knowledge— is a *social practice*.

Evidentiality is a technical term in linguistics that simply describes the linguistic resources speakers have for simultaneously (a) indicating the source of the knowledge claims they impart in talk; and (b) conveying their evaluation of that knowledge. (Though we will see that linguists argue over the precise definition by citing different kinds of evidence!) As illustrated for Bulgarian in the example from Jakobson (1957) above, approximately one quarter of the world's languages have obligatory grammatical structures that reveal both the source of knowledge (and arguably, the speaker's evaluation of that knowledge). In most languages—including English and almost all other European languages—these relationships are expressed lexically (i.e. with additional words), for example in the English phrases *I saw that...*, *I think I heard that*, *It seems that...* *I believe that...* or even *It is* as well as by adverbs such as *allegedly*, *obviously*, *probably*, *presumably* or *likely*.

On the other hand, *evidence* has a far more wide-ranging reach. It has precise—if debated—definitions and criteria among specialists in relation to empirical scientific research, legal proceedings, and medical decision-making. But it also has ubiquitous vernacular uses for negotiating and evaluating causal relations, questions of responsibility, and matters of fact in day-to-day life and conversation. These uses arise out of histories of science and political formations in the modern West in the past five hundred years, and part of our work will be to historicize

“evidence” as a phenomenon. In the contemporary world, these different meanings of evidence find themselves in conflict as vernacular evaluations of specialist domains—from the value of public health restrictions and the veracity of climate science to the reliability of election outcomes—threaten taken-for-granted specialist presumptions about and authority over the character of evidence and who has the right to assert claims to truth in the public sphere.

This class thus has a dual character, switching off between anthropological and linguistic studies of grammatical and lexical *evidentiality* on the one hand and anthropological and allied disciplinary discussions of the problem of *evidence* in relation to contemporary political debates, anthropological representation, and histories of science, medicine, and law. The course has three primary sections: (1) A review of debates about *evidentiality* in linguistics, sociolinguistics, and linguistic anthropology; (2) Anthropological and historical accounts of *evidence* in scientific, medical, and legal contexts; and (3) “domains of doubt” where the problem of *evidence* and *evidentiality* come up against entities—ancestors, spirits, gods, UFOs—that exceed conventional expectations of evidential standards and evaluations and that require revised epistemological frameworks. The primary goal is to think about how applying linguistic anthropological understandings of *evidentiality* in ordinary talk may give us insight into highly varied cultural practices of evaluating evidence.

Finally, a focus on evidence and evidentiality also offers a way into evaluating disputes or debates among scholars about what counts as relevant to the questions under discussion. This class therefore has a meta character, because we will be actively tracking how the scholars we read *employ evidence in their scholarship* to make arguments *about* evidence and evidentiality, allowing us to reflect on our own practices of evidence-making and evaluation.

Course requirements:

Guidelines for each of these projects are included at the end of this syllabus.

1. Evidence diary (4 x 5 points)	20 (At least 2 must be submitted prior to Spring Break)
2. Reading notes (5 x 2 points)	10 (At least 2 must be submitted prior to Spring Break)
3. The Judge Judy Project (joint project)	
Transcription	5
Report	20
Class presentation	10
4. Final Analytic Paper	25
5. Class contributions	<u>10</u>
Total:	100

Required Texts:

With the exception of the book below (available online through the library), all other texts will be available on the class Canvas page.

Lepselter, Susan. 2016. *The Resonance of Unseen Things: Poetics, Power, Captivity, and UFOs in the American Uncanny*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
[available online at UMN libraries]

Civil Life and Ethics

How this course fulfills its mission as a liberal education course

Liberal education cultivates critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills across a broad range of fields. Liberal education (LE) courses cumulatively add to students' capacities and hone skills toward life-long learning and contributions to society. A core component of liberal education training is preparation for ethical action and participation in civil life and civic institutions. This course offers a "Civil Life and Ethics" LE, bringing student to a key recognition in the social sciences that the daily work involved in talking is productive of social realities and thus deeply enmeshed in relationships of social power and not simply about exchanging information. The class highlights the centrality of evidence and evidential structures in daily talk to examine how humans go about making meaning about themselves, others, and the world around them, and thus highlights the role of ordinary daily talk in the maintenance and transformation of much larger social structures. The course aims at a practical level to train students in discourse analysis of transcripts through a long term, collaborative project, but simultaneously to look at how that analysis allows for a recognition of how individual social acts, such as speaking, are embedded in larger socio-political and cultural structures of meaning.

How this course fulfills the Civic Life and Ethics theme

"Evidence" has become one of the most fraught words in contemporary public debate in first part of the twenty first century as taken-for-granted deference to expertise in science, medicine, and law (around climate change, public health, legal liability and more) has been undermined by elected officials and shifts in popular discourse alike. However, anxieties about, hostility toward, or debates about "evidence" are not new phenomena in U.S. American and European public debate and, indeed, are constitutive features of histories of science, medicine, and law precisely because "evidence" stands in complex relation to systems of authority. As such, "evidence"—and ideas about evidence—bear a powerful relationship to ethical claims and building arguments around what appropriate ethical stances should be.

At the same time, the concept of "evidentiality" in linguistics has only recently coalesced as an area of study. Because European languages do not have grammatically marked evidential systems (unlike grammatically marked systems for such categories as tense, aspect, case, or number), evidentiality did not draw significant attention in Western linguistics until the latter part of the twentieth century. More recently, different subfields of linguistics, sociolinguistics, and linguistic anthropology have developed a rich literature around evidentiality, demonstrating how essential these linguistic resources are to evaluations, epistemic stances, claims to authority, consensus-building, and disputes, whether in face-to-face conversation or in national debates.

Bringing together cross-disciplinary debates about and histories of "evidence" and "evidentiality" as an analytic frame provides students with a significant resource and skill set for examining *how* claims about "evidence" are made in public debates about key domains of social and political life—and for intervening in those debates. This class combines training in linguistic analysis with historical and ethnographic contextualizations to support students' ongoing engagement with such debates, to bring this skill set to their conversations with others in the public domain.

Student Learning Outcomes: Identify, define, and solve problems.

By the end of this course, students will be able to **identify, define, and analyze** problems related to evidence and evidentiality in different linguistic and cultural contexts. They will demonstrate the ability to apply theoretical frameworks and empirical research methods to solve complex issues involving how languages encode knowledge, sources of information, and speaker authority. Students will critically engage with the role of evidentiality in shaping communication, cultural practices, and social interactions.

This course is relevant and meta-relevant to this SLO. The goal of this class is to train students to identify linguistic structures that are central to speakers' responsibility for expressing their relationship to the knowledge imparted in their talk. Simultaneously, it seeks to explore how "evidence" is actively engaged as a domain in expert and vernacular discourse as speakers seek to solve problems about the nature of evidence itself. As such, students will be taught not only how to identify and define the linguistic and rhetorical forms speakers use to do so, but will also have their attention drawn to the linguistic means by which ordinary people identify, define, and solve problems in their day-to-day lives.

Key Competencies Assessed

1. Identification of Problems

- Ability to recognize instances where evidentiality is central to understanding communication issues in different linguistic and cultural contexts.
- Ability to identify how evidential markers affect meaning, power dynamics, and social interaction.

2. Definition of Problems

- Clear articulation of the problem being addressed, with a specific focus on evidentiality (e.g., ambiguity in speaker authority, challenges in cross-cultural communication).
- Integration of theoretical concepts such as types of evidential markers (direct, indirect, inferred, etc.) and their cultural relevance.

3. Problem-Solving Approach

- Use of appropriate linguistic and anthropological methods to solve the identified problems.
- Application of case studies, cross-cultural comparisons, or ethnographic data to support proposed solutions.
- Ability to critically assess the limitations of proposed solutions, considering language variation, context, and cultural differences.

Assessment Components

See "assessment components" in each of the **Course Requirement Guidelines** below

.

Course requirement guidelines, policies, and class/university resources are at the end of this syllabus

Linguistics Resource:

Many of the readings of this class come from the field of linguistics which has a highly specialized technical vocabulary. I recommend this Glossary of Linguistic Terms to help you navigate these readings:

<https://glossary.sil.org/term>

Course Outline

Week of

1/22 **Introduction to the class: What's at stake in thinking about evidence and evidentiality**

No reading

Part I: Concepts and Histories

Week 2

1/27 **What is "Evidence" and "Evidentiality" for Linguists? I**

Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2018. "Evidentiality: The Framework." In *The Oxford Handbook of Evidentiality*, edited by Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald, 1-43. Oxford University Press.

1/29 **What is "Evidence" and "Evidentiality" for Linguists? II**

Bergqvist, Henrik, and Karolina Grzech. 2023. "The Role of Pragmatics in the Definition of Evidentiality." *STUF - Language Typology and Universals* 76 (1): 1-30.

Week 3

2/3 **What is "Evidence" and "Evidentiality" for Anthropologists?**

Chua, Liana, Casey High, and Timm Lau. 2009. "Introduction: Questions of Evidence." In *How Do We Know? Evidence, Ethnography, and the Making of Anthropological Knowledge*, edited by Liana Chua and Casey High, 1-19. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

2/5 **Stance**

Jaffe, Alexandra. 2009. "Introduction: The Sociolinguistics of Stance." In *Stance: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*, edited by Alexandra Jaffe. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Babel, Anna M. 2009. "Dizque, Evidentiality, and Stance in Valley Spanish." *Language in Society* 38 (4): 487-511.

Optional:

Du Bois, John W. 2007. "The Stance Triangle." In *Pragmatics & Beyond New Series*, edited by Robert Englebretson, 164:139-82. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing

Company.

Week 4

2/10 Responsibility and Authority I

Kuipers, Joel. 2013. "Evidence and Authority in Ethnographic and Linguistic Perspective." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42 (1): 399-413.

Sidnell, Jack. 2014. "Who Knows Best? Evidentiality and Epistemic Asymmetry in Conversation." In *Evidentiality in Interaction*, edited by Janis B. Nuckolls and Lev Michael, 127-53. *Benjamins Current Topics*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

2/12 Responsibility and Authority (Case Studies) II

Fox, Barbara A. 2008. "Evidentiality: Authority, Responsibility, and Entitlement in English Conversation." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11 (2): 167-92.

Duranti, Alessandro. 1993. "Intentions, Self and Responsibility: An Essay in Samana Ethnopragmatics." In *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*, edited by Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine, 24-47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Part II: Domains of Expertise

Week 5

2/17 Visuality, Objectivity, and Truth

Daston, Lorraine, and Peter Galison. 1992. "The Image of Objectivity." *Representations* 40 (Autumn): 81-128.

Pinney, Christopher. 2008. "The Prosthetic Eye: Photography as Cure and Poison." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14 (s1).

2/19 Learning to be an Expert

Goodwin, Charles. 1994. "Professional Vision." *American Anthropologist*, New Series 96 (3): 606-33.

Carr, E. Summerson. 2021. "Learning How Not to Know: Pragmatism, (In)Expertise, and the Training of American Helping Professionals." *American Anthropologist* 123 (3): 526-38.

Week 6

2/24 (Anthropological Expertise on) Expertise and Evidence in the Courts

Wilson, Richard Ashby. 2016. "Expert Evidence on Trial: Social Researchers in the International Criminal Courtroom." *American Ethnologist* 43 (4): 730-44.

Clifford, James. 1988. Identity in Mashpee. *In* *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. Pp. 277-348.

2/26 Evidence and Conflict in the (Televised) Courtroom

Thornborrow, Joanna. 2000. "The Construction of Conflicting Accounts in Public Participation TV." *Language in Society* 29 (3): 357-77.

O'Barr, W.M., and J.M. Conley. 1996. "Ideological Dissonance in the American Legal System." *In* *Disorderly Discourse: Narrative, Conflict, & Inequality*, edited by Charles L. Briggs, 114-34. *Oxford Studies in Anthropological Linguistics* 7. New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 7

3/3 Evidence-based Medicine and Evidence in Medical Science

Wendland, Claire L. 2007. "The Vanishing Mother: Cesarean Section and 'Evidence Based Obstetrics.'" *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 21 (2): 218-33.

Halverson, Colin Michael Egenberger. 2019. "Evidence and Expertise in Genetic Nomenclatures." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 29 (3): 314-31.

3/5 Evidence-based (Medical) Anthropology?

Ecks, Stefan. 2008. "Three Propositions for an Evidence based Medical Anthropology." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14 (s1):S77-S92.

Lambert, Helen. 2009. "Evidentiary Truths? The Evidence of Anthropology through the Anthropology of Medical Evidence." *Anthropology Today* 25 (1): 16-20.

Spring Break March 10-14

Week8

3/17 Evidence in/of the Body

Lee, Hyemin. 2022. "Sounds of Healing: Qualia and Medical Efficacy in a Traditional Korean Medicine Clinic." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 32 (2): 364-85.

Crossland, Zoe. 2009. Of Clues and Signs: The Dead Body and Its Evidential Traces. *American Anthropologist* (111)1:69-80.

3/19 Judge Judy Project Presentations

Part III: Domains of/in Doubt

Week 9

3/24 Evidence, Plausibility, and Suspicion

Murphy, Keith M. 2023. "Fake News and the Web of Plausibility." *Social Media + Society* 9 (2): 1-18.

Jones, Graham M. 2020. "Purity's Perils. Race, Republicanism, and Relevance of Magic in Contemporary France." In *Mediality on Trial*, edited by Ehler Voss, 605-24. De Gruyter.

3/26 Feminist Evidence and Strong Objectivity

Harding, Sandra. 1995. "'Strong Objectivity': A Response to the New Objectivity Question." *Synthese* 104 (3): 331-49.

Gumbs, Alexis Pauline. 2015. "Evidence." In *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements*, edited by Walidah Imarisha and adrienne maree brown, 1st edition, 33-42. Oakland, CA: AK Press.

Week 10

3/31 Indigenous Evidence and Decolonial Knowledges

Samuels, David W. 2016. "Truth and Stories." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 26 (1): 62-80.

Pedri-Spade, Celeste. 2014. "Nametoo: Evidence That He/She Is/Was Present." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3 (1): 73-100.

4/2 **“Belief” v. “Evidence”**

Keane, Webb. 2008. “The Evidence of the Senses and the Materiality of Religion.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14 (s1).

Holbraad, Martin. 2008. “Definitive Evidence, From Cuban Gods.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14 (S1): S93-109.

Optional

Du Bois, John W. 1986. “Self-Evidence and Ritual Speech.” In *Evidentiality: The Linguistic Coding of Epistemology*, edited by Wallace L. Chafe and Johanna Nichols, 313–36. *Advances in Discourse Processes*; v. 20. Norwood, N.J: Ablex Pub. Corp.

Week 11

4/7 **Shamanic Knowledge and Evidence**

Yvinec, Cédric. 2012. “Arousing and Mastering Feelings of Alien Inspiration in One’s Own Speech: Pragmatics of the Shamanic Songs of the Suruí of Rondônia (Southern Amazonia).” *Anthropological Linguistics* 54 (4): 371–400.

Virtanen, Pirjo Kristiina, and Marja-Liisa Honkasalo. 2020. “New Practices of Cultural Truth Making: Evidence Work in Negotiations with State Authorities.” *Anthropology of Consciousness* 31 (1): 63–90.

4/9 **Dreams and Mediums**

Tomlinson, Matt. 2019. “How to Speak like a Spirit Medium: Voice and Evidence in Australian Spiritualism.” *American Ethnologist* 46 (4): 482–94.

Groark, Kevin P. 2009. “Discourses of the Soul: The Negotiation of Personal Agency in Tzotzil Maya Dream Narrative.” *American Ethnologist* 36 (4): 705–21.

Week 12

4/14 **Anthropologies against “Evidence”**

McLean, Stuart J. 2017. *Fictionalizing Anthropology: Encounters and Fabulations at the Edges of the Human*. Minneapolis: Univ Of Minnesota Press. **(Prologue, Chapter 1)**.

Ingold, Tim. 2014. “That’s Enough about Ethnography!” *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4 (1): 383–95.

Part IV: Case Studies

4/16 **UFOs, Allegedly (I)**

Hong, Jisoo. 2022. "A Thesis, Allegedly." Master of Science in Technology and Policy, Cambridge Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology. [You can skim the section on methods (pp. 59-73)]

Week 13

4/21 **UFOs, Allegedly (II)**

Lepselter, Susan. 2016. *The Resonance of Unseen Things: Poetics, Power, Captivity, and UFOs in the American Uncanny*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

4/23 **UFOs, Allegedly (III)**

Lepselter, Susan. 2016. *The Resonance of Unseen Things: Poetics, Power, Captivity, and UFOs in the American Uncanny*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Week 14

4/28 **Hobbit, *Homo*, or Hoax? Homo Floresiensis & Ebu Gogo**

Forth, Gregory. 2023. "Evidence and Extinction: The Possibility of Another Hominin Sharing Our Planet." *Anthropology Today* 39 (6): 21-23.

Tucci, Serena, Samuel H. Vohr, Rajiv C. McCoy, Benjamin Vernot, Matthew R. Robinson, Chiara Barbieri, Brad J. Nelson, et al. 2018. "Evolutionary History and Adaptation of a Human Pygmy Population of Flores Island, Indonesia." *Science* 361 (6401): 511-16.

[Press release: <https://www.princeton.edu/news/2018/08/02/modern-flores-island-pygmyes-show-no-genetic-link-extinct-hobbits>]

Madison, Paige. 2020. "Investigating Homo Floresiensis and the Myth of the Ebu Gogo | Aeon Ideas." Aeon (blog). February 3, 2020. <https://aeon.co/ideas/investigating-homo-floresiensis-and-the-myth-of-the-ebu-gogo>

4/30 **Final Paper Workshop**

Week 15

5/5 **Course Review: Evidence for its Success or Failure?**

Course Requirement Guidelines

1. Evidence Diaries

The Evidence Diary exercise is an opportunity to bring class readings into conversation with events in your world. The diary entry should include a personal reflection where you explore moments where you have been conscious of the sources of evidence in your own life, and how you communicated or interpreted information. This might include experiences related to trust, authority, or understanding other people's beliefs. You must submit four Evidence Diary entries over the course of the semester. You may submit them in any week, but at least two must be prior to Spring Break.

The goal of the Evidence Diary is to draw your attention to the centrality of evidential and evaluative elements of ordinary talk, news reportage, gossip etc. that you encounter and/or participate in on a daily basis. Please note:

- Diaries should be 400-500 words (max) in which you discuss how one or more recent class reading(s) allows you to reflect on events in your personal life (e.g. a dispute, a conversation, an observation of an event) or in the news (e.g. a presidential news conference, a news story, a matter of concern in your city, global events).
- Stylistically, aim for a diary- or journal-like style (i.e. this is not a formal analytic paper).
- As such, you don't need a thesis statement, but you should seek to make some kind of point by drawing your observations in relation to a class reading.
- I recommend starting as in a free-writing exercise and then going back to lightly edit to make sure that you have met the requirements of the exercise.
- Each diary entry should take you no more than a half hour – don't overthink it!

Assessment Components

A successful diary entry:

- Provides thoughtful, introspective reflections on personal experiences with evidence and knowledge.
- Explores the role of evidentiality (direct, indirect, inferred) in these experiences, providing specific examples from life and/or demonstrates critical thinking about the impact of evidentiality on perceptions of truth, trust, and communication.
- Accurately incorporates and explains concepts of evidentiality and its different markers (direct, indirect, inferred, etc.).
- Demonstrates how linguistic practices (e.g., the use of specific language forms to express sources of knowledge) play a role in the student's personal communication.
- Provides a clear connection between linguistic theory and personal experience.
- Should reference course materials or class discussions to support the reflection.
- Has clear and coherent writing with well-organized ideas and have proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation, ensuring the diary entry is easy to read and understand.

2. Reading Notes

The goal of this exercise is to help you develop or hone your note-taking practice, a crucial skill for academic success. You must submit five sets of reading notes over the semester. You may submit them in any week, but at least two must be prior to Spring Break.

The goal of taking reading notes is to help you recall the key argument and reasoning of an author's work at a later point. In addition, research shows that taking notes while reading is an important way to cement your understanding of what you have read. Please note:

- Reading notes are due within the week of the class for which you took the notes (i.e. by that Friday).
- Each submission should be for the readings for one class (in almost all cases, two chapters or essays)
- Notes should be stand-alone notes (i.e. not annotated or highlighted essays), and ideally digital i.e. typed. This is not a requirement, however, and you can scan hand-written notes if that is your usual practice. However, notes in digital form will make them more useable in the future and I recommend that you develop this habit.

I don't have formal requirements about the form your notes take per se, as I want them to be useful to you. If you already have a reading note practice that you do, use that! But, from long experience, here are some suggestions;

- In addition to points you take from the essay, you should start each of your reading notes with a synthetic or summary point about the main argument or intervention of the essay/chapter.
- I would recommend as a strategy copying (with page citation) key quotes that you feel are useful or that clinch the author's point.
- *Always put the full citation of the essay or chapter or book at the head of your notes.* Nothing is less useful than notes about something you don't know the origin of!
- There is no ideal length for reading notes. You want it to capture the scope and scale of the argument, but not be so detailed that it extends your reading excessively.
- Take notes as you read. You don't have to summarize each paragraph. Set yourself the task of summarizing at the end of each section - authors have good reason for using subtitles in their work, so use those sections to guide your note-taking.
- Some readings may demand more detailed notes than others, depending on how much context you need to make sense of your notes later.

Assessment Components

Successful reading notes should demonstrate:

- your ability to create notes that are clearly structured, easy to follow, and effectively

highlight key points.

- Your ability to accurately capture the main ideas, supporting details, and key concepts discussed in class or from the reading material.
 - Your ability to synthesize information and engage critically with the material, noting important connections, questions, or implications.
 - Good organization with clear headings and subheadings that follow the flow of the material and a clear visual hierarchy (e.g., main ideas in bold, secondary details in regular font).
-

3. The Judge Judy Project

The Judge Judy Project is the major midterm project, done in collaboration with a classmate. It is a transcription-analysis project directed at analyzing uses of evidence and evidential marking in talk in a quasi-legal setting. The goal is to help you develop fine-grained linguistic and ethnographic skills in analysis of talk where the question of evidence is highly marked.

Grade breakdown:

Transcription: 5 points

Presentation: 10 points

Report: 20 points

Total: 35 points

Deadlines

- Send URL of your case to me by Friday, February 14th (with timestamp if embedded in a larger episode). Best case: send the actual video if you can download it. You are also responsible for watching all of the cases that other teams select to analyze prior to the class presentation.
- You should complete your transcription of your case by Friday, February 28th and submit it on Canvas. Both team-members should submit the same transcription so I can assign points to both of you.
- You and your teammate will present your project in class on Wednesday, March 19th.
- Your jointly written report will be due on Friday, March 28th on Canvas. The written report should be no more than five double space pages and follow the model described below.

Project Elements, Guidelines, and Instructions

(A) Transcription

- With your teammate, identify one case from any episode of the television show, Judge Judy, that you find interesting or compelling. (Many episodes are available on YouTube).
- I recommend you choose a case that is compelling to you but also on the short side (5-ish

minutes). If you have selected a long case, you may want to focus on a shorter (4-5 minutes) section that is particularly relevant to the problem of evidence and evidentiality.

- Use transcription notation from Atkinson and Heritage (1999) (uploaded to the assignments module) to transcribe the audio.

Atkinson, J. M., and J. Heritage. 1999. "Transcript Notation - Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis." *Aphasiology* 13 (4-5): 243-49.

On Canvas, I have uploaded a short sample transcription using a video that will be familiar to those of you who have taken ANTH 3005. I have posted it and the video on Canvas in the "Assignments" module, along with the Atkinson and Heritage guide to transcription of conversation.

Please note that Atkinson and Heritage mostly don't provide ways of noting non-verbal communication except for "gaze direction" and honestly, I think their suggestions are a bit confusing on that front. In my sample transcription, for non-verbal cues, gaze direction, and hand-motions that were significant to the interaction I simply added notes on the right-hand side of the page at the appropriate point. They do not need to be as comprehensive as your transcription of the talk itself.

You may use AI to help in transcription, but you must listen to the audio and watch the video several times alongside the transcription to ensure that the AI has accurately recorded the talk including pauses, mis-speaking, repetitions, extended vowels, stutterings, etc. It is vital that you produce an accurate transcription of the interactional features of the talk (interruptions, overlaps, token utterances, volume, pitch, speed etc.)

Note that while the video in the example transcription is a single shot of five people, you will be transcribing from a television show edited for maximum drama and emotional impact, so you may have to infer certain kinds of things about eye contact, gaze direction etc. There is no perfect way to do this, but the goal is to have the richest data set you can derive from the recording.

Please share the work of transcription as this is a joint project. Come to an agreement about who does what (e.g. first half/second half or transcribing conversation/visual cues, or doing the work at the same time, together) so that everyone is comfortable with the distribution of the work.

Assessment Components

- Your transcription should demonstrate your ability to transcribe ordinary talk and non-verbal communication according to the conventions described above.

(B) In-Class Presentation

The in-class presentation will allow your classmates to offer additional thoughts and analysis for your project. Here are some key things to consider when preparing your presentation:

Each group will have about 12 minutes to present their findings. You will not have time to show your full case, but everyone will have had the opportunity to watch it in advance, so you don't have

to tell us the story or explain the case. (You may choose to show brief segments of the case to make key points, but more on this later). You should leave at least 3-4 minutes for Q&A so your classmates can offer additional analysis, point to other features of the talk that you might not have observed etc. In other words, time your presentation to make sure that you can talk about the key parts of your analysis in an 8-9 minute period.

You do not –in fact, should not – have to have written your final report prior to the presentation. The goal of the presentation is to enrich your analysis by sharing it with others who are thinking about the same kinds of questions, which is a common model of scholarly production. You should aim to show your initial evidence and your analysis of your evidence, that is, what has drawn your joint attention.

Here are some guiding questions:

- What kinds of evidence are brought by the claimants/defendants?
- What do participants (the judge and the claimants/defendants) identify as an information source (i.e. how do they demonstrate how they know what they know?)
- How do the participants evaluate the validity of the evidence, and how do they differ in their evaluations at what points of the case?
- What does Judge Judy admit as evidence and what does she rule as being irrelevant? Does that change when new evidence is introduced?
- What disputes arise about what is evidence and what is not?
- What claims do participants make about—and what evidence do they give for—their own and others' responsibility, intentions?
- What kinds of evidential markings are used by different participants?
- What other features of talk (tense, use of pronouns, discourse markers) or non-verbal communication (eye-rolling, head-shaking, nodding) do participants use to assert or contest a stance, to evaluate others' contributions, or to demonstrate alignment/disalignment with others' stances?
- How is intention and responsibility assessed by different participants?
- How does the emergence of new information shape or reshape stances?
- How does the sequential unfolding of the talk shape how evidence is evaluated at different points of the proceedings?

Both team members should participate in the presentation, so plan in advance who will present what element of the presentation.

I recommend you use some kind of presentation software (PowerPoint, Prezi etc.) to put together a slideshow (e.g. for screenshots, short video clips of crucial moments, key sections of your transcriptions, quotes from readings that you think are relevant to your analysis). This will all be valuable work toward your final reports. Please email these to me in advance so I can put them all on one computer, allowing us to cut down on transition time between groups.

(C) Report

This is not an analytic paper, so you do not need a thesis statement. Your jointly authored report should be no more than 5 pages.

- As with the presentation and the transcription, both team members should aim to contribute equally to its production. Joint authorship can take longer than writing something yourself, so:
- Plan the writing process and agree on a method in advance. For example, decide if you are going to work remotely or in person, synchronously or asynchronously, etc. I recommend using a collaborative platform like google docs or similar.

In your report, please include:

- A brief outline of the case and the issue(s) Judge Judy must rule on (one paragraph)
- Description of what forms of physical/documentary evidence claimants/defendants bring to the court room.
- The main body of the report should focus on one or more elements of evidential talk that strike you as significant, by referring to the work done by the participants (both Judge Judy and the claimants/defendants) to identify responsibility and culpability.
- Use the questions above and what you learned from your classmates in your in-class presentation to refine your analysis.

Assessment Components for in-Class presentation and written report:

Your presentation and report will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Clear identification of evidential markers in the language used by both the plaintiffs and defendants.
- Detailed analysis of how these markers influence the audience's perception of the evidence's credibility and the parties' trustworthiness.
- Application of relevant linguistic theories (e.g., evidentiality markers such as hearsay, inference, sensory knowledge, etc.) to interpret the linguistic strategies used.
- Reference to other features of talk that bear on evidential claims (tense, discourse markers etc.)
- Application of legal concepts such as types of evidence (witness testimony, physical evidence, hearsay, etc.) in relation to the linguistic analysis of the episode.
- Examination of how legal evidence is framed by linguistic practices and the impact this has on the outcomes of the case.
- Critical evaluation of how language (including evidential markers) influences the perception of legal evidence, the courtroom dynamic, and the outcome of the case.

In addition, there should be:

- Clear evidence of equal participation from all group members in analyzing the episode and preparing the final deliverables.
- Well-managed team collaboration, including regular communication and sharing of insights.

- A cohesive analysis, with all sections of the project fitting together logically and coherently.
 - Respectful and productive discussion of differing perspectives or insights within the group.
 - Clear presentation, with logical flow from introduction to conclusion.
-

4. Final Analytic Paper

The final paper is an analytic paper written in response to one of four prompts I will give you well in advance of the final paper deadline. As this is an analytic paper, you are expected to develop a defensible thesis statement which you will support with evidence from the class readings. Since we have been centering “evidence” in the course of the semester, this paper is also an opportunity to reflect on the nature of anthropological, linguistic, and historical evidence in building an argument!

To support your writing, we will dedicate a full class at the end of the semester to workshoping thesis statements, approaches, and lines of argumentation. I will also provide you with an analytic paper writing worksheet that lays out a conventional method for developing an evidence-based analytic paper.

Assessment Components

Assessment will be in relation to the specific prompt the student responds to. Criteria for assessment will be:

- Clear thesis that is supported across the span of the paper, and that goes beyond a mere summary of existing literature.
 - The paper is well-organized, with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
 - Clear application of relevant concepts to the analysis of specific ethnographic and linguistic data (e.g., cultural practices, legal settings, everyday conversation).
 - Arguments are presented clearly and supported by evidence throughout. Effective use of examples from both scholarly literature and ethnographic data to support the paper's claims with citations that are well-chosen, relevant, and provide a balance of perspectives on the topic.
 - The ability to evaluate contrasting perspectives on evidentiality or evidence, addressing potential counterarguments or alternative interpretations.
-

5. Class contributions

While this course has a lecture component, most of the learning in the class will develop through discussion among all participants, instructor and students alike, so you should be prepared to contribute your ideas (and your questions) in every class. Your participation in these class discussions will be evaluated as “class contributions.” As students of linguistic anthropology interested in how ordinary people evaluate and build evidential cases for what they know, “discussion” in this class also includes attention to—and discussion about—*our own* evidential practices (I told you it was meta!)

I fully understand that the class readings are complex and that students are often nervous or shy about speaking in front of peers. As such, below I have outlined strategies to help you overcome your anxieties and to participate fully and effectively in class. My broader goal as a teacher is to help you build confidence in your ability to express your understanding and learning in a classroom environment.

Class contributions take two forms:

- a. At the start of every class, I will pair you with a classmate so you can have a short (6 minute) one-on-one conversation with your classmate about the readings for the day and the things that came up for you, whether they were realizations, confusions, connections, disorientations, or epiphanies! (If there is an odd number of students, you may end up talking with two classmates). The goal of these short conversations is to warm up your voice and your thinking, to hear your voice in conversation with another, and to test out your ideas in a low-stakes environment.
- b. After this short period, we will return to a full-class format and I will ask each student to offer a short insight, point, or question to build an agenda for the day's conversation and help structure our emergent discussion, which can include insights that emerged from your one-on-one conversation. Our full-class discussions will develop organically, but I will also use your initial contributions to elicit further contributions from you should they not come up in our conversation.

In the full-class discussion, I will be attentive to students' overall contributions to the conversation, so expect me to call on you to respond to a point or question if it touches on your initial contribution. You may always "pass" on a query or an offer to talk that I make to you, and I promise I will never use these moments to try and trick or test you. If you feel uncomfortable with this method, please let me know and we will find alternative ways to help you become part of the larger conversations.

Strategies for effective class contributions:

- First, it is critical to complete class readings prior to the beginning of class. Knowing what we are talking about is essential for contributing!
- Since one of the requirements for this course is to submit reading notes, use this practice to jot down points of clarity, questions, confusions, insights, connections to other readings etc. that emerge as you read.
- You can use these notes to help you respond to my initial query at the start of every class. It is absolutely acceptable—and even warmly welcomed—to read out something you have written in advance! I cannot guarantee it, but students often find that once they start hearing their own voices in the classroom, it becomes progressively easier to participate in future class discussions.
- If you struggle with a particular reading, identify *why* you are struggling and make a note of that to bring to class as your initial contribution. You are not required to understand everything in advance of class! (If you were, there would be no point in being in the class).

- But it's also not enough to say "I'm confused." You should take notes about *what* you find difficult, too technical, or obtuse in a class reading so we can work together as a class to advance everyone's understanding. "I'm confused" stalls a conversation. However, telling us that "I'm confused about what x says on page y of this article because...." opens to others' responses and to the possibility for clarification and learning.
- Please be absolutely assured that if you are struggling to understand something, it is extremely likely that other students are too! As such, asking a question, expressing confusion, or detailing your frustration with a class reading is both productive and **brave!**
- If it helps, you are also very welcome—and again, warmly invited—to test out an idea for an initial class contribution with me during my office hours or even by email.

Assessment Components

- Regular participation in one-on-one and full-class discussions, including taking responsibility for contributing an initial understanding, insight, question, confusion, or connection to an earlier reading.
- As such, while attendance is not graded per se, attendance at all classes is essential for successful completion of this component of the course.
- Exceptional classroom contributions are those that advance the larger understanding by engaging and advancing other students' contributions.

Policies and Resources

Workload Policy and Statement of Instructional Time

For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. So, for this three credit class which meets for three hours a week over two periods, you should expect to spend an additional six hours a week on coursework outside the classroom.

Instructional time --that is, the time you spend in class -- will comprise 3 instructional hours (which corresponds with this three-credit hour, 15-week course). You should expect to spend an average of six hours outside of class time preparing for class by completing all assigned readings and writing and submitting reading notes and Evidence Diaries. Included in this estimate are the weeks you are collaborating with a classmate to complete the work for the midterm Judge Judy Project and planning and writing your final analytic paper. Since you do not have to submit reading notes or Evidence Diaries weekly, I recommend that you plan carefully to avoid having to submit those assignments around midterm and during the final two weeks of the semester.

Policy on Lateness and Attendance and Makeup Work

You are, naturally, expected to attend all classes. It is expected that if you have to miss a class for a valid reason (such as illness, jury duty, or family emergency), you will inform me prior to the class,

or as soon thereafter as is possible. Please try to be on time as lateness disrupts the class and other students' learning. I am happy to grant extensions for reasonable cause; in this case, please request an extension at least a day before the paper is due if at all possible. For complete information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/education/makeupwork>.

Policy on Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom

You are welcome to use an electronic device in class. However, I would strongly urge you to take notes with a pen/pencil and paper since research has long shown that you develop a better understanding of class materials with this method. If you do use an electronic device, **I request that you close all windows, applications, programs, and mute all alerts that are not necessary for our course work.** This is distracting to you and potentially to other students. The University policy on this matter [can be found here](#).

Policy on Disability Accommodations

The University of Minnesota—and I—view disability as an important aspect of diversity, and we are committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations, <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/> or drc@umn.edu.

Policy on Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf.

Policies on Plagiarism, Student Conduct, Grading, and Academic Freedom,

Plagiarism will not be tolerated, will result in a failing grade, and will be reported to the Student Conduct Committee. The university policy on plagiarism, and the Student Conduct Code, is available at:

https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf. The

administrative policy statement on student responsibilities can be found here:

<https://policy.umn.edu/education/studentresp>.

The university grading policies can be found at:

<https://policy.umn.edu/education/gradingtranscripts>.

You should also be familiar with the University's policy on Academic Freedom and Responsibility, at https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Academic_Freedom.pdf.

Policy on ChatGPT or other AI generated work

Generative AI is a social fact, so it is impossible to exclude its presence in one way or another in the classroom. I do not object to using AI altogether, but I expect your work to be of your own creation and I reserve the right to use tools such as ZeroGPT to detect nonoriginal work. Here's the problem: Generative AI has a particular "voice" that is easily identifiable (at least currently); moreover, it is not (yet) capable of the kinds of synthetic writing I will train you in. If I suspect and document AI authorship, any of your own contribution or thinking will not be visible, and I will

not be willing to award points for that work. As such, I strongly urge you to avoid using it for writing your papers. If you have questions about the appropriate use of generative AI, I will be happy to talk with you about it.

Sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking and relationship violence

In my role as a University employee, I am required to share information that I learn about possible sexual misconduct with the campus Title IX office that addresses these concerns. This allows Title IX staff member to reach out to those who have experienced sexual misconduct to provide information about the personal support resources and options for investigation that they can choose to access. You are welcome to talk with me about concerns related to sexual misconduct. Within the requirements of my job, I will be as responsive to your requests for confidentiality and support as possible. *You can also or alternately choose to talk with a confidential resource that will not share information that they learn about sexual misconduct.* Confidential resources include The [Aurora Center](#), [Boynton Mental Health & Counseling](#), and [Student Counseling Services](#).

Mental Health and Stress Management

I recognize that college is a stressful endeavor and that many of my students have work and family obligations in addition to their studies. I am always willing to talk with you to strategize about how to do well in class in the face of your unique circumstances, but I cannot help unless you seek out help, so if you are struggling this semester, please reach out to me for help as soon as you realize you are facing difficulties and don't wait until the end of semester when our options will be much more limited. You are also encouraged to seek help from the counseling services listed above.

Letters of Recommendation

My criteria for saying "yes" to a request for a letter of recommendation are that (a) you successfully completed the work in a class I taught; (b) that you got at least an A- grade in that class; and (b) that we had some kind of personal interaction in which I could get to know you and your capacities (e.g. your active participation in a discussion seminar, doing an independent study or thesis with me, taking the time to come to my office hours). Without these three elements, I will not have the material to write the letter you need, and you should seek out a professor with whom you've had a closer pedagogical relationship to write on your behalf.
