

Interpretation and Writing Exercises

Exercises #3 and #4

ANTH 410/510

Based upon the information you gathered earlier this semester when you interviewed a fellow student in our class (Interview Exercise #2): **first do Exercise #3**, an interpretation and analysis (parts 1 and 2 listed below), corresponding to syllabus topic “10. Interpretation - From Gathering To Writing Culture: Interpreting Another's Story” as assigned in our syllabus, **then do Exercise #4 (at the assigned time)**, presentation and writing (parts 3 and 4 listed below), corresponding to syllabus topic “11. Interpretation - From Writing To Representing Culture: Presenting Another's Story.”

Interpretation (Exercise # 3):

1. Develop and apply an appropriate theoretical perspective to the information obtained, rendering an interpretation and/or analysis of student’s story. The perspective used can range from constructionist to positivist, and be purely descriptive “thick description” to highly analytical in focus. Outline your coding method and your interpretation and/or analysis of the information.

Also consider the modes of legitimizing your information, from validity and reliability tests to authenticity and trustworthiness.

2. As you begin your interpretation of the information, reflect on your own reflexivity in the interview situations. Among your reflections, ask yourself what did you bring to the process that influenced how you asked questions, what questions you asked, as well as how you positioned yourself in the interview, and what issues you were dealing with as you conducted your interview. Outline your reflexive reflections.

An outline of your interpretation is to be kept in your own files for now; not to be turned in.

Presentation (Exercise #4):

3. Based upon the theoretical perspective you have adopted, your interpretations (Exercise #3), and, most importantly, driven by the informational content you gathered in this exercises (Exercise #2), determine the most appropriate manner, style and format for presenting the information. In the interview situation, whose “voice” are you attempting to present? Then write out the story of your interviewee’s route to anthropology (or another discipline). Include a section for your reflections on your reflexivity, as well as your interpretations of the information, with reference to the sorts of mode of legitimizing you are seeking. The narrative/report should be approximately two (2) pages in length, with an appropriate title and any other referencing.

4. Before you submit our narratives, present a copy of your interviewee’s story to him or her first and see what they think. Are they comfortable with the narrative, and allow it to be presented in our class?

5. Be ready to orally present and discuss how you determined your interpretation and presentation style, and turn in your narrative/report at the appropriate time.