

ETHNOGRAPHY of SPEAKING-and-FEEDING #1

SPEAKING

Setting	<u>Macro:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Brunswick, NJ, United States of America November 12, 2017 	<u>Micro:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 PM on a Sunday Mexican Oasis, a Mexican Restaurant Sat at a small table with a cushioned seating bench on one side. There was not enough room on that side, so Petri and Jeffrey sat on that side while I sat on the opposite side. There were no chairs on the opposite side of the table, so I took a stool from an adjacent table and sat on that instead.
Participants	<u>General sociocultural characteristics:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All aged 20-22 All male All from upper-middle-class families All college students 	<u>Individual identities and roles</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petri – Male Indian college student in his early 20s Jeffrey – Male white college student in his early 20s Ricardo (researcher) – Male Indian college student in early 20s
Ends	<u>Goals of the discourse event in general</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have a good time and enjoy the company of friends 	<u>Goals of a few specific discursive acts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss music genres and mention what each of us likes and why To discuss how the political system handles societal drug issues To discuss career plans after graduation from college To discuss the macronutrients that contribute to good and bad health To discuss whether sugar itself is something to avoid consuming too much, or whether it is simply necessary to pay attention to calorie counts without worrying specifically about sugar. To discuss various exercise routines that can be done to lose weight, gain weight, or gain muscle. To discuss a project in another class and work to do for that project.
Acts	<u>Usual types of discursive acts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greetings Asking questions Answering questions Suggesting Inviting Denying 	<u>Examples of these discursive acts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting example – When we first met for lunch, we said “how’s it going,” and “how are you” Asking questions example – I asked Jeffrey what exercises he does at the gym for building muscle Answering questions example – Jeffrey answered my aforementioned question by telling me he does squats, dead-lifts, and benching exercises

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insisting • Disagreeing • Agreeing • Apologizing • Congratulating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggesting example – I suggested Jeffrey shouldn't drink Monster energy drinks after Jeffrey said he drinks them often. • Inviting example – Jeffrey invited me to go to the gym with him at 4 PM • Denying example – I told Jeffrey I could not go to the gym at 4 PM because of homework. • Insisting example – Jeffrey insisted that sugar inherently is not bad for you, and as long as he followed a strict caloric intake limit, it didn't matter how much sugar he consumed. • Disagreeing example – I told Jeffrey that I disagreed about sugar, and said that consuming too much sugar would be bad for you even if you make sure you don't consume too many calories. • Agreeing example – I agreed with Jeffrey that helping people with drug problems through rehabilitation centers is better than throwing them in jail. • Admonishing example – Petri got annoyed with me when I came late to the restaurant and said I should have been there on time. • Apologizing example – I apologized for Jeffrey and Petri for going 10 minutes late to the Mexican Oasis food restaurant. • Congratulating example – I congratulated Petri for obtaining a job for the upcoming year in New York City.
Keys	<u>Overall mood</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casual • Easy-going • Relaxed 	<u>Some specific emotional moments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing how the government does not handle some issues properly caused a slightly passionate (though not abrasive) discussion in which everyone was alert and discussing their views. • When I arrived late to the restaurant, Petri and Jeffrey were annoyed at my lateness. • When he discussed his job offer, Petri was happy • Discussing whether sugar is bad for you or not caused a slightly passionate (though not abrasive) discussion in which everyone was alert and discussing their views.
Instru-mentalities	<u>Channels</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking (discourse) • Body language (occasionally using hands during slightly passionate discussions, eyes fluttering or rolling when annoyed) 	<u>Codes</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language – English • Dialect – Philadelphia dialect/accents • Register – Casual, non-formal

<p>Norms</p>	<p><u>Normal topics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal topics – schoolwork (when are projects due, etc.), world events or situations, national events or situations, hobbies, careers. • Taboo topics – Sex/romance (although we can certainly talk about it if one of us wants to, we don't normally organically weave the conversation into that topic area; there is an extra push required by someone in the group to start a discussion about it); in-depth academic material (things such as specific material learned in class; once again, although we can certainly talk about it if one of us wants to, it, there is an extra push required by someone in the group to start a discussion about it because we want to take a break and not think too much about academic material). 	<p><u>Normal discourse features</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casual – we addressed people by first name, were comfortable talking about a wide variety of topics instead of just academic or career topics, and were comfortable discussing our views on certain topics. • There is no particular measure of how much silence is appropriate. Usually, if no one spoke for longer than a minute, someone decided to speak and restart the conversation, or (once enough time had passed and everyone had finished eating) we left the restaurant. However, we each wanted to discuss many things, so long periods of silence are rare. • Overlap was generally not appropriate, although we did not take offense and/or get irritated when it occurred. When overlap occurred, one of us stopped talking so that the other one could continue talking, or both of us would stop talking and decide briefly who will speak first. • Generally, code-switching was rare if not non-existent. We kept the atmosphere casual and light-hearted throughout the meal.
<p>Genres</p>	<p><u>Routine discourse genres by name</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Questioning 	<p><u>Examples of one of these discourse genres</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of discussion genre: • Discussing how government treats those with drug problems • Discussing whether sugar itself is inherently good or bad for you • Discussing career plans • Discussing upcoming assignments for a class • Discussing favorite music genres • Discussing good forms of exercise

FEEDING

Food	<u>Food items present include:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Burrito Boxes (filled with beans, sour cream, lettuce, tomato, etc.) • One Burrito (filled with beans, sour cream, lettuce, tomato, etc.)
Employment	<u>Practices involved with procuring food:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After entering the Mexican Oasis restaurant, we immediately went to a line and waited to order food at the cash register. The person operating the cash register, besides collecting money, also recorded our names so that we knew when our dishes had been successfully prepared. • After ordering food, we waited near the preparation counter until the dishes had been prepared • When the dishes had been prepared, we confirmed with an individual at the counter that it was our dishes by mentioning our names. At that point, we receive the dishes. <u>Practices involved with preparing food:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While we did not prepare the food, we patiently waited (without rushing the cook) until the dish had been made and was ready to be received. <u>Practices involved with serving food:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We chose the table at which we would sit, and placed our dishes on that table. • We made sure everyone had proper seating. Since there were not enough chairs for all of us, I took a stool from another table and used it for sitting. • We each then obtained the utensils, napkins, and water necessary for consuming the food. Forks and napkins were obtained from boxes near the table. Water was obtained by first asking the person at the cash register for a plastic cup, and then filling the cup with water from the water machine near the table. <u>Practices involved with eating food:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petri and I ate with forks (because we ate burrito boxes). Jeffrey used his bare hands (because he ate a burrito). • We used one hand constantly to consume the dishes with the fork, as opposed to switching between the left and right hands or vice-versa. • We spoke while eating. No one consumed the meal first before speaking.
Etiquette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As this was a casual meal with friends, there was mostly casual etiquette – there were no formal interactions, and we were free to discuss whichever topics we wanted to discuss. In other words, the cultural rules for this meal (a casual meal among friends) were that there should not be formal etiquette during the meal. That being said, there was some rules that were not mandatory but that we performed anyway, such as greeting each other before we started the meal, talking with each other during the meal, and looking at each other’s eyes when talking to each other.

Display	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We arranged our foods/dishes along the table, so that the dishes were roughly in a line. This arrangement allowed us enough space to consume our dishes comfortably. Petri and I presented our dishes by removing the plastic top of the burrito box. Jeffrey presented his dish by opening up the foil of his burrito and leaving the foil underneath the burrito.
Implements	<p><u>Equipment used to produce/prepare this food:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A spatula and a stove were used to prepare the foods (unfortunately I was unable to closely observe preparation of the dishes, but I at least observed these aspects). <p><u>Equipment used to package this food:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the burrito boxes Petri and I ordered: a plastic, clear top cover (that is removable), and a black, plastic container (to hold the food). For the burrito Jeffrey ordered: Aluminum foil (to wrap the burrito) <p><u>Equipment used to serve this food:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A (we just used our hands and placed the dishes we obtained onto a table) <p><u>Equipment used to consume this food:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Petri and me, we used forks to consume this food. Jeffrey did not use any equipment because he ate the burrito with his bare hands.
Notions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The belief that taste is important and valuable in food. While this particular belief was never explicitly stated by any of us, the fact that we went to Mexican Oasis – a Mexican restaurant that is known for serving tasty food – shows this belief. The belief that too much sugar inherently is not bad for you (which Jeffrey and eventually Petri shared) and the belief that too much sugar inherently is bad for you (my belief). Jeffrey and Petri argued that the only issue with eating too much sugar is that one accumulates too many calories; in other words, they argued that calories are the main issue with eating too much sugar. By extension, they argued that if you ate a lot of sugar while getting necessary nutrients through other food sources, and made sure to stay under a certain caloric level, your body will not be harmed in any way by the excess sugar you consumed. I argued that eating too much sugar inherently is bad for you, as I thought it could affect the body’s ability to respond to insulin produced from consumed sugar, potentially leading to diabetes.
Gender (and other socially constructed identities and roles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During this meal, socially constructed identities and sociocultural roles did not affect who had the right or obligation to do something with the food. This is because we each purchased our meals individually; as a result, we each had a right to eat each of our meals because we were solely the ones who purchased our meals. That being said, this situation is reinforced by how we shared the same sociocultural roles (students), class (upper-middle-class roughly), age, sexuality, and gender. We only mainly differed in ethnicity, but that factor did not affect who had a right to do something with the food during this meal. Our similarities in the aforementioned ways reinforced the perception that we each had the equal right to do something with the food we purchased.