

Language in African Society

LIN 4930 . SSA 3730 . Spring 2019 . T4 R4-5 . AND 019

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Hours: T 1-3pm
& by appointment
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Lu nekk, meneesna ko toxal, mu mel ni mu meloon, ba mu des wax
Anything can be moved and remain the same, except speech
Wolof proverb

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Africa is a vast and diverse continent where multilingualism is the norm and language plays a central role in social belonging and the maintenance of social relations. This course is concerned with the relationship between language and society in Africa from both a linguistic and an ethnographic perspective. You will be introduced to a number of important topics in the study of language in African societies and become familiar with recent theoretical perspectives that allow you to talk about complex linguistic practices in new ways. No knowledge of an African language is required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this course are:

- To gain a general familiarity with the overall structure of African societies
- To survey the different roles of language in African societies
- To acquire critical skills for analyzing language in African societies
- To gain experience in presenting oral and written arguments about language in African societies
- To develop a deeper understanding of the role of language in African society

BOOKS and OTHER READINGS

The following textbooks are required for this class:

Grosz-Ngaté, Maria, John Hanson, and Patrick O'Meara, eds. 2014. *Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Simpson, Andrew, ed. 2008. *Language and national identity in Africa*. Oxford UP.

Vigouroux, Cécile B. & Salikoko S. Mufwene, eds. 2008. *Globalization and language vitality: perspectives from Africa*. London: Continuum.

Hale, Thomas. 1999. *Griots and griottes: Masters of word and music*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Additional required readings are available on CANVAS (<https://elearning.ufl.edu>) or through the UF library system.

GRADES

Grades will be based on the following:

Class participation and presentations	20%
Short papers	30%
Test 1	15%
Test 2	15%
Project	20%
Total	100

The assignment of a final letter grade will be based on the following scale:

A 92-100	B 81-84.9	C 71-74.9	D 61-64.9
A- 88-91.9	B- 78-80.9	C- 68-70.9	D- 58-60.9
B+ 85-87.9	C+ 75-77.9	D+ 65-67.9	E Below 58

You may consult the following website to see how the final letter grade is weighted with regard to overall GPA: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

PARTICIPATION, CLASS INVOLVEMENT & CLASSROOM CULTURE

The classroom is where we will accomplish much of our work this semester and you are expected to be a contributing member of our classroom community. This means that attendance and preparation are of paramount importance. Unexcused absences or repeated tardiness will result in a lowered grade. You must complete all assignments and readings in a timely fashion, and come to class informed and prepared to discuss the topic of the day. Please make sure that your cellphones are turned off or silenced before class starts. Assignments must be handed in both electronically and in hard copy. Makeup exams will be given only in the case of an emergency and with proper documentation. Mutual respect for class members is expected at all times in order to ensure a positive learning environment for a productive and enjoyable semester.

Academic honesty

Most students are honest, and I expect you to uphold UF's honor code at all times. Academic dishonesty, including cheating on tests and plagiarism, is unacceptable. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy and receive a failing grade for the course (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/quick-links/academic-integrity/>). It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism. If you have any questions about it, please consult the professor.

Students with disabilities

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this class, you should contact the Dean of Students' Office (<https://disability.ufl.edu>) and I will be happy to make special arrangements to accommodate you.

Communication

Many problems can be solved by simple communication between student and professor. Please don't hesitate to send me an e-mail or come by during my office hours as soon as you see a problem developing, rather than procrastinating until it becomes a big problem. I want you to succeed in this class!

SCHEDULE

Schedule of topics, readings and assignments (may be modified by the instructor to suit the needs of the class) *Indicates that a reading is available on electronic reserves.

	Topic	Readings
Week 1 1/8-10	Introduction to African societies Space and time	Africa, Ch. 1-2
Week 2 1/15-17	Introduction to African societies Social relations Film: <i>The little girl who sold the Sun</i> by Djibril Diop Mambéty https://ufl.kanopy.com/video/little-girl-who-sold-sun-la-petite-vendeuse- Coleman Donaldson: What's the use of greeting? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq0-rB3cKYs	Africa, Ch. 3 *Bird 1979
Week 3 1/22-24	Linguistic repertoires in African societies Multilingualism Film: <i>Kanraxël</i>	*Lüpke & Storch (2013:13-47)
Week 4 1/29-31	Multilingualism and the nation North & West Africa & the Horn	Simpson (TBA)
Week 5 2/5-7	Multilingualism and the nation Southern, East & Central Africa	Simpson (TBA)
Week 6 2/12-14	Writing and literacy in Africa Regimes of language: schools, mosques and churches	Africa, Ch. 4-5 *Ngũgĩ (1992) *Saro-Wiwa (1992)
Week 7 2/19-21	Writing and literacy in Africa Old literacies: <i>ajami</i> and <i>tifinagh</i>	*Lüpke & Bao-Diop (2014) *Savage (2008); Soulaïmani (2014)
Week 8 2/26-2/28	Writing and literacy in Africa New literacies	*Deumert & Lexander (2013) *Donaldson (2015)

SPRING BREAK

Week 9 3/19-21	Language and mediation Language and caste in West Africa	Hale (1998)
Week 10 3/26-28	Language and mediation Film: <i>Keita, heritage of the griot</i> by Dani Kouyaté	*Hoffman (1995)
Week 11 4/2-4	Language vitality and endangerment in Africa	Vigouroux & Mufwene (TBA)
Week 12 4/9-11	Language vitality and endangerment in Africa	*Lüpke & Storch (2013:267-332)
Week 12 4/16-18	Urban languages in Africa	*McLaughlin (2001, 2009)
Week 13 4/23	Conclusions	
1/15	Map quiz	
1/22	Short paper	
2/12	Short paper	
2/26	Test 1	
3/19	Short paper	
4/2	Short paper	
4/16	Test 2	
4/23	Final project due	