

Spring 2025**Course:** Language Endangerment**Course Prefixes:** LIN 4930 (Section LE00)/LIN 6932 (Section EL01)**Period:** Mondays Wednesdays & Fridays (11:45 – 12:35)**Location:** MAT 118**Instructor:** Dr. James Essegbey**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00-4:00 and by appointment**Office:** 342 Pugh Hall**Phone:** 352-8462431**Email:** essegbey@ufl.edu**Description**

The United Nations declared 2019 to be the Year of Indigenous Languages (IY2019) in order to draw attention to the important role these languages play in the lives of people. According to UNESCO, of the world's 6000-7000 languages, 97% of the world's population speak 4% of the languages while only 3% of the people speak 96% of the languages. Although it is said that great number of these languages are disappearing at an alarming rate, and it has been estimated that up to 50% of the languages will become extinct by the end of the century, linguists have begun to sound optimistic about the situation lately. The course explores the phenomenon of language endangerment across the world. In addition to surveying the current situation of languages in the world, students will explore theoretical approaches to language endangerment and studies of language maintenance and revitalization.

Course objectives

At the conclusion of the course the participants should be able to:

- Discuss the different criteria for establishing language endangerment
- Describe the endangerment situation in all parts of the world.
- Discuss theoretical approaches to language endangerment.
- Review some empirical studies of measures to reverse language loss.

Requirements

Final grading is based on THREE quizzes and a final presentation on an endangered language that has not been discussed in class. Students in groups (for 4000-level) and individually (for (6000-level) will research into a less familiar language that is disappearing, prepare a 30-minute presentation on the current situation and whether there are efforts to document and revitalize it. If such efforts exist, how successful they are. Students will then ask questions and provide a one-paragraph feedback on each presentation. The breakdown is as follows:

Quizzes (20 pts for each quiz)	60
Comment of paper for the day	(4000-level=10 & 6000-level=5)
6000-level chapter discussion	5
Final Presentation	20
Student feedback on presentations	10

Course Materials

Textbook

- *Endangered languages in the 21st century*. Edited by Eda Derhemi and Christopher Moseley (2023): London & New York: Routledge. (Electronic copy available)

Book chapters and journal articles specified in syllabus.

Date	Topic	Source
Week 1 - Introduction		
Mon, Jan 13	Endangered languages and why it matters The Animere People	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7HZOsQYx_U Field videos
Wed, Jan 15	'Introduction: endangered languages' by Kenneth L. Rehg and Lyle Campbell	<i>The Oxford Handbook of Endangered Languages</i> . pp1-42 (Course Reserves)
Fri, Jan 17	A cost-and-benefit approach to language loss by Salikoko Mufwene	In <i>Endangered languages and languages in danger: Issues of documentation, policy and language rights</i> , edited by Luna Filipović and Martin Pütz, Pp115-146
Week 2- Language documentation		
Mon, Jan 20	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	
Wed, Jan 22	Why should we care about dying languages? Cherokee The linguists	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkENJ2hYUzY
Fri, Jan 24	"Beyond the ancestral code: towards a model for sociolinguistic language documentation" by Tucker Childs, Jeff Good & Alice Mitchell	<i>Language Documentation & Conservation</i> (Vol. 8) (2014), pp 168-191 (Canvas)

Week 3		
Section 1. The general state of endangered languages today		
Mon, Jan 27	The rise and rise of Australian Languages by <i>Michael Walsh</i>	Course Textbook Pp9-20
Wed, Jan 29	Endangered languages in Brazil in 2021 by <i>Sebastian Drude et al</i>	Course Textbook Pp 21-40
Fri, Jan 31	Endangered languages in Brazil in 2021 by <i>Sebastian Drude et al</i>	Course Textbook Pp 21-40
Week 4		
Mon, Feb 3	Endangered languages of Central Asia. Prospects for development in the new millennium by <i>Hakim Elnazarov</i>	Course Textbook Pp41-60
Wed, Feb 5	Endangered languages of Central Asia. Prospects for development in the new millennium by <i>Hakim Elnazarov</i>	Course Textbook Pp41-60
Fri, Feb 7	'They kill languages, don't they? A short chronicle of the planned death of Berber in North Africa by <i>Salem Mezoud</i>	Course Textbook Pp61-81
Week 5		
Mon, Feb 10	First- and second-language speakers in the home: perspectives on the state and revitalization of Indigenous languages in Canada by <i>Mary Jane Norris and Robert Adcock</i>	Course Textbook Pp82-102
Wed, Feb 12	Review	
Fri, Feb 14	Quiz 1	

Week 6		
Section 2. Theoretical approaches –assessing vitality		
Mon, Feb 17	Language endangerment: what it is, how to measure it and how to act by <i>David Bradley</i>	Course Textbook pp119-125
Wed, Feb 19	Assessing levels of endangerment in the Catalogue of Endangered Languages by <i>Nala Huiying Lee and John Van Way</i> .	<i>Language in Society</i> , Vol 45, No 2 (April 2016), pp 271-292 (Canvas)
Fri, Feb 21	Language endangerment and documentation in Africa by <i>Friederike Lüpke</i>	<i>The Cambridge handbook of African linguistics</i> , Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 468-490 (Canvas)
Week 7		
Theoretical approaches- supporting language maintenance		
Mon, Feb 24	Use of historical material for the safeguarding of endangered languages by Tjeerd de Graaf	Course Textbook pp126-138
Wed, Feb 26	The role of new media in minority- and endangered-language communities by Riitta-Liisa Valijärvi and Lily Kahn	Course Textbook pp139-157
Fri, Feb 28	Examining the role of change in endangered languages with some reference to Arbëresh and Arvanitika by <i>Eda Derhemi</i>	Course Textbook pp158-175
Week 8		
Mon, Mar 3	Transnational languages in the atlas of endangered languages by <i>Christopher Moseley</i>	Course Textbook pp176-196
Wed, Mar 5	Transnational languages in the atlas of endangered languages <i>Christopher Moseley</i>	Course Textbook pp176-196

Fri, Mar 7	Hypothetically speaking: ethics in linguistic fieldwork, a provocation	Course Textbook pp197-206
Week 9		
Mon, Mar 10	Hypothetically speaking: ethics in linguistic fieldwork, a provocation	Course Textbook pp197-206
Wed, Mar 12	Review	
Fri, Mar 14	Quiz on Section 2	
SPRING BREAK		
Week 11		
Section 3. Empirical studies: towards sustainable language maintenance and use		
Mon, Mar 24	Sustainable pathways for a fledgling language movement: the case of Kaurna of the Adelaide Plains, South Australia by <i>Rob Amery</i>	Course Textbook pp209-224
Wed, Mar 26	Sindhi Hindus, a diasporic community: reasons for shift and revitalisation strategies	Course Textbook pp272-281
Fri, Mar 28	Linguistic diversity endangered: the Waotodedo language and the effects of intense contact	Course Textbook pp284-301
Week 12		
Mon, Mar 31	Review	
Wed, Apr 2	Quiz on Section 3	
Fri, Apr 4	Students prepare their presentations	
Week 13		
Mon, Apr 7	Students prepare their presentations	
Wed, Apr 9	Students prepare their presentations	
Fri, Apr 11	Students prepare their presentations	
Week 14		
Mon, Apr 14	Group Presentation	

Wed, Apr 16	Group Presentation
Fri, Apr 18	Group Presentation
Week 15	
Mon, Apr 21	Group Presentation
Wed, Apr 23	Group Presentation

Quizzes (20 x 3 = 60 pts)

The quizzes will be taken in class and cover each of the three sections of the course book. These are:

SECTION I: Language endangerment and documentation since the start of the 21st century.

SECTION II: Theoretical approaches – supporting language maintenance.

SECTION III: Empirical studies: towards sustainable language maintenance and use.

Comment on paper for the day (10 pts for 4000-level students and 5 pts for 6000-level students)

Before the start of class, every student will provide an original comment on the chapter (that'd be different from what others have said) in order to show that they have read the paper. Note that points will not be awarded for students who agree with what others have already said or re-state it.

6000-level chapter discussion (5)

6000-level students will do a class-length presentation on one of the class readings. Students choose mode of presentation and incorporate questions and or exercises for class.

Class presentation on chapter (20 pts)

4000-level students will be paired while 6000-level students will work independently to identify a non-familiar endangered language that has been discussed in the literature. They will give a presentation on the situation of the language, and include such information as (i) demographics, (ii) language family, (iii) causes of endangerment, (iv) whether there are revitalization projects on the language and, if so, how successful it is, (v) what the knowledge of the language would contribute to linguistic theorizing (something on the structure of the language). The presentation should be at least 30 minutes long and include at least 5 published references (this includes electronic publications).

Student feedback on presentation (10)

Students will provide a 100-word feedback on each of the presentations with the exception of that of their group. This will cover (i) content (ii) mode of presentation (iii) quality of presentation

Grading Scale

93-100 (A); 90-92 (A-); 87-89 (B+); 83-86 (B); 80-82 (B-); 77-79 (C+); 73-76 (C); 70-72 (C-); 67-69 (D+); 63-66 (D); 60-62 (D-); 59 or below (E)

A grade of Incomplete (I) will not be issued under any circumstance.

Grading Policy

Information on current UF grading policy can be found

at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> [Links to an external site.](#)

Students with disabilities

The University of Florida provides high-quality services to students with disabilities, and you are encouraged to take advantage of them. Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should 1) Register with and provide documentation to Disability Resources (352-392-8565), and 2) Bring a letter to the instructor from Disability Resources indicating that you need academic accommodations. Please do this as soon as possible, preferably within the first week of class.

Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Class attendance is expected. I will not deduct points for absences. However, I will also not give out my classroom presentations. This means that students who fail to attend classes will miss out on my slides. Students need to be in class to take the three quizzes that constitute a substantial part of the final grade. Only excused absences that are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog and appropriately documented will be accepted for those who miss a quiz.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Honor/Conduct Code

An academic honesty offense is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. As a University of Florida student, one is expected to neither commit nor assist another in committing an academic honesty violation. Additionally, it is the student's duty to report observed academic honesty violations. Violations of the Honor Code and academic dishonesty will be sanctioned.

Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be

notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Materials and Supplies Fees

There are no materials and supplies fees

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

U Matter, We Care:

If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Regulation around In-Class Recording:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.