Language Revitalization
Spring 2019
SLST S304 & S604
(32931 & 30730)
ANTH L400 & L600
(13385 & 29288)

INSTRUCTOR
Philip LeSourd
Student Building 336
812-855-4649
plesourd@indiana.edu
website: plesourd.com

CLASS MEETINGS
TR 1:00-2:15
Lindley Hall 316

OFFICE HOURS: M 12:30–3:30

DESCRIPTION
It is now generally agreed that half of the world’s 6,000 languages will go out of use by the end of the present century. This course investigates the social and cultural conditions that lead to language shift and explores what can be done to maintain and revitalize threatened minority and indigenous languages. We will work with case studies that show how practical problems are being handled in diverse linguistic communities. Students will select a particular endangered language to focus on in their own work and report to the class on language revitalization efforts in the community they have selected.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Other readings are available through Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1. Class participation. The focus of the course will be on discussion of material introduced in the readings. Thus, regular participation by all students in the class will be essential.
2. Regular reading assignments. These will include selections from the required textbooks, plus additional articles on a wide range of topics in language revitalization.
3. Op-ed piece (maximum 2 pages, due Thurs., Jan. 31). For this assignment students will write the equivalent of an opinion column that might appear in a newspaper or on a blog, briefly explaining in their own words why they believe that efforts to maintain and revitalize endangered languages are (or are not) important and worthy of support. (See unit 3 for details.)
4. Response paper (4-5 pages, due Thurs., March 7). Students will choose one of the “success stories” discussed in units 7–8 (Catalan and Welsh) and present an analysis of what has made for success in this case of a language revitalization effort.
5. Research paper (undergrads 8–10 pages, grads 15–20). In consultation with your instructor, each student will “adopt” an endangered language and a corresponding
revitalization program to investigate in detail. The language may be spoken anywhere in the world, but there must be sufficient literature available on revitalization efforts to make the project workable. A detailed statement of a topic for the paper (together with a preliminary list of references) is due on Tues., Feb 26. A first draft is due on Thurs., March 28. The final draft is due on the last day of class, Thurs., April 25.

6. **Class presentations of research.** Students will make presentations of the results of their research. These should include information on the language in question, on the social situation of its speakers, and on factors bearing on language shift, as well as information about language maintenance and revitalization efforts. Undergraduates should expect to make 15-minute presentations. Graduate students should expect to deliver a 20-minute talk comparable to a conference presentation.

**Grading**

Work for the course will count toward your final grade as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergrads</th>
<th>Grads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Op-ed piece</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response paper</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research draft</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy regarding late papers**

Homework should be submitted electronically on Canvas in .docx format. The grade for any paper turned in late will be lowered by 5 points per day late below the grade the paper would have earned if it had been turned in on time. This includes weekends and holidays. Any exceptions must be explicitly approved by your instructor.

**Course plan and readings — some dates may change**

1. **Language death: the nature and scope of the phenomenon (Jan. 8–10)**
   - Crystal 2014, ch. 1.
   - Grenoble and Whaley 2006, ch. 1.

2. **Why try to reverse language shift? (Jan. 15–22)**
   - Crystal 2014, ch. 2.

**Op-ed piece due: Thurs., Jan. 31.**

**The assignment:**
Suppose that you have been given an opportunity to write an opinion piece for a newspaper or a blog on the subject of programs for the maintenance and revitalization of endangered languages. Write such a column in no more than 2 pages, explaining what such programs are and why you think they are (or are not) important and worthy of support. You will need to give concrete reasons why it matters to preserve an endangered language, supposing that you think it does. Try to make your article convincing for readers who do not necessarily share your assumptions. *(Maximum length: 2 pages, double-spaced.)*

4. **Causes of language shift (Feb. 5–7)**
   Crystal 2014, ch. 3.
   Grenoble and Whaley 2006, ch. 2.

5. **Models for revitalization (Feb. 12–19)**

**Video:**
“We still live here: As nutayunean.” The Wampanoag language revival.
6. **A success story: Catalan (Feb. 21–26)**

   **Preliminary report on research topic due (with bibliography): Tues., Feb 26.**
   This report should include a concise but detailed *statement of the focus* of your project, together with a *description of the sources* that you plan to use in carrying out your work (i.e., an annotated bibliography).

7. **Another success story: Welsh (February 28–March 7)**

   **Response paper (4–5 pages): Evaluating language maintenance for Catalan or Welsh (your choice). Due: Thurs., March 7.**

   **SPRING BREAK — Mar 10–17 — NO CLASS**

8. **Case study: Māori (March 19)**

9. **Case study: Hawaiian (March 21)**
10. Case study: Chickasaw (March 26–28)

*Video:*
“Technology, Internet Access, and Language Revitalization in Chickasaw Nation.” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VkDLDOZWmA4

*First draft of research paper due: Thurs., March 28.*

11. Community and consultant (April 2–9)

12. Student presentations (April 11–25)
Undergraduate students will give 15-minute presentations of their research findings. Graduate students will speak for 20 minutes about their work.

*PowerPoints are encouraged!*

*Final draft of research paper due: Thurs., April 25.*