

LIN 350 How to Describe a Language
Unique 41465
TTH 12:30-2:00 CBA 4.328

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Hours: 2-3:00 TTH, 11-12 TH

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Course Description:

This course is a practical introduction to language documentation and preservation. Language diversity will be discussed, including its benefits, the status of the world's language, their endangerment, and the possibilities for their maintenance and/or preservation. Practical methods for describing, documenting, and preserving languages will be introduced, with appropriate exercises for learning how to use them. The focus of the exercises will be on the phonological and morphological analysis of restricted data sets. The role of linguists in conjunction with communities of speakers who wish to document or revitalize their languages will also be discussed.

Course Requirements:

Two partial exams, two short papers and frequent problem sets.

Grading Policy:

Exams: 30% (15 points each)

Short papers: 20% (10 points each)

Problem sets: 40% (each problem 5 points)

Class participation: 10% (sounds quiz 4 points, attendance 6 points)

(Attendance is required, unless you have a valid medical or other reason for not being able to attend. You must inform me about absences *before* class for an absence to be excused. After two unexcused absences, 2 points will be subtracted for each additional absence, up to a total of 6 points.)

Reading (on Blackboard):

Bird, Charles and Timothy Shopen. 1979. Maninka. Chapter 2 in *Languages and Their Speakers*, edited by Timothy Shopen. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop, pp. 59-111.

Crystal, David. 2000. Chapter 2: Why Should We Care? in *Language Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 27-67.

England, Nora. 2003. Mayan Language Revival and Revitalization Politics: Linguists and Linguistic Ideologies. *American Anthropologist* 105(4): 733-743.

Hale, Ken. 1992. Language Endangerment and the human value of linguistic diversity. *Language*, Vol. 68, No. 1. pp. 35-42.

Haviland, John B. 1979. How to Talk to your Brother-in-law in Guugu Yimidhirr. Chapter 4 in *Languages and Their Speakers*, edited by Timothy Shopen. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop, pp. 161-239.

Hill, Kenneth C. 2002. On Publishing the *Hopi Dictionary*. In *Making Dictionaries*, edited by William Frawley, Kenneth C. Hill, and Pamela Munro. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 299-311.

Hinton, Leanne. 2001. Language Revitalization: An Overview. Chapter 1 in *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*, edited by Leanne Hinton and Ken Hale. New York: Academic Press, pp. 3-18.

Nettle, Daniel and Suzanne Romaine. 2000. Chapter 2: A World of Diversity, in *Vanishing Voices: the Extinction of the World's Languages*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 26-49.

Reyhner, Jon. 1999. Some Basics of Indigenous Language Revitalization. Introduction to *Revitalizing Indigenous Languages*, edited by Jon Reyhner, Gina Cantoni, Robert N. St. Clair, and Evangeline Parsons Yazzie. Flagstaff, AZ: Northern Arizona University, pp. v-xx.

Course Outline:

Assignments are indicated in bold; readings are indicated in bold preceded by “R:”.

T		TH	
		8/27	Introduction
9/1	Language Diversity R: Nettle and Romaine; Hale	9/3	Language Disappearance R: Crystal
9/8	Language Description	9/10	Short Paper 1 due
9/15	Sounds Quiz	9/17	
9/22		9/24	Problem 1
9/29		10/1	Problem 2
10/6		10/8	Problem 3
10/13	First Exam	10/15	Maya
10/20	R: Bird and Shopen: Maninka	10/22	Problem 4 (Maya 1)
10/27	Maya	10/29	Problem 5 (Maninka)
11/3	R: Haviland: Guugu Yimidhirr	11/5	Problem 6 (Maya 2)
11/10	Maya	11/12	Problem 7 (Guugu Yimidhirr)
11/17	Language Revitalization R: Hinton, Reyhner	11/19	Problem 8 (Maya 3)
11/24	Language and Community R: England, Hill	11/26	<i>Thanksgiving</i>
12/1	Short Paper 2 due	12/3	Second Exam

Problems and papers normally will not be accepted late. It is expected that you will work on your own. Students who violate rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, which may include failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University.

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY.