

**LIN 4930 (5933), SSA 4930, ANT 4930 (6926), LIN 6932 (7753)**

Syllabus for Language Documentation

University of Florida, Gainesville

Anderson Hall, Room 0032, Tuesday 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Professor:	Frank Seidel
Department	Center for African Studies
Office location:	Grinter Hall
Telephone:	TBA
Email:	frank.zidle@gmail.com
Office Hours	TBA

**Course Description**

This is an interdisciplinary course designed to expose students to new techniques used in language documentation and conservation. It is open to students who have either taken LIN 3010 (Introduction to Linguistics) or ANT 3620 (Language and Culture) or based on interview with instructor.

**Introduction**

The languages of the world are disappearing at an alarming rate. It has been suggested that about half of the world's languages have disappeared in the past 500 years (Nettle and Romaine 2000), and some linguists estimate that between 60 to 90% of the world's languages may be at risk of extinction within the next hundred years (see Romaine 2007). This situation leads to loss of diversity and important cultural knowledge. Since the 1990s efforts have been made by several bodies including UNESCO to address this problem. Linguists and anthropologists have been at the forefront in the effort to at least document the languages before they disappear. In some cases, efforts are made to revitalize the languages as well.

Language documentation and conservation are facilitated by modern technological advances that enable the digitization and integration of video, audio and textual material, and the production of material for revitalization.

**Class objectives**

The aim of this course is to teach students to use new technologies to document languages as a way to deal with language endangerment. It will appraise students with the present linguistic state of affairs and its consequences for global linguistic ecology. Students will learn about language documentation as an interdisciplinary field of linguistic inquiry and practice, which deals primarily with endangered languages. This includes various aspects of fieldwork, such as the expectations of the documentalist and those of potential communities whose languages are documented, and the ethics and practicalities involved. An important aspect of this course is the integration of the study of language structure, language use and the culture of language. This means that in addition to issues involving the documentation of lexical knowledge and grammatical structure, students will learn about cultural and ethnographic understanding of language. State of the art tools for recording, processing and archiving digital data will also be learned. These include using Toolbox to create lexical and textual databases, Isle Metadata Initiative (IMDI) for creating metadata for digital data that is prepared for archiving, and ELAN for integrating textual, audio and visual data in a time-aligned format. Finally, students will learn how to write grant proposals to document endangered languages.

**Requirements:**

The evaluation requirements for this course is one test which will be taken after 1/3 of the course, and two class assignments, a documentation project, and a project proposal, all of which will be

the focus of the second part of the course. Since this course deals with a fairly young sub-discipline in linguistics the available literature is somewhat scarce, class attendance is therefore more important than in other courses and will be counted towards the grade. The breakdown is as follows:

1. Test (1)	20
2. Assignments	20 (10 points each)
3. Documentation project	30
4. Project proposal	20
5. Attendance	10

**Important Dates:**

Test:	October 11, 2011
1 <sup>st</sup> Assignment due	November 01, 2011
2 <sup>nd</sup> Assignment due	November 15, 2011
Documentation project due	December 12, 2011, 2:30 pm
Project Proposal due	December 12, 2011, 2:30 pm

**Topic 1 (8/23). Language endangerment**

Discusses the different levels of language endangerment and the consequences on linguistic and cultural diversity.

- What is Language death? By David Crystal, pp1-27 (**electronic reserve**)
- Warramurrungunji's Children- The library of Babel. By Nicholas Evans (**electronic reserve**)
- <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00206>  
(online atlas for endangered languages)
- **Manitoba on Aboriginal languages**  
([http://www.thegovmonitor.com/civil\\_society\\_and\\_democratic\\_renewal/manitoba-proposes-legislation-to-recognize-aboriginal-languages-28441.html](http://www.thegovmonitor.com/civil_society_and_democratic_renewal/manitoba-proposes-legislation-to-recognize-aboriginal-languages-28441.html))
- Extinct Alaskan native interests French student  
(<http://www.adn.com/2010/06/27/1343777/unlikely-passion-may-save-eyak.html#ixzz0sDX41WNq>)
- New York is now home for some endangered languages  
(<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/70927/endangered-tongues.html>)

**Topic 2 (8/30). The lost voices**

Watch, listen to and read people talk about their languages

- The Linguists (film)

**Required Preparation for this class:**

- Linguist's Preservation Kit has New Digital Tools, *The New York Times*, July 27, 2009  
(<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/28/science/28prof.html>)
- Maria Hinton and Oneida (<http://www.americanindiannews.org/2010/06/treasured-teacher-embodies-100-reasons-to-learn-oneida/>)
- Katrina-Ann R. Kapā'anaokalāokeola Nākoa Oliveira on Hawaiian place names  
(<http://www.alternative.ac.nz/journal/volume5-issue2/article/wahi-kahiko-place-names-vehicles-ancestral-memory>)
- Lushootseed for nrxt generation:  
(<http://crosscut.com/2010/05/06/tribes/19787/Preserving-the-Lushootseed-language-for-the-next-generation/>)

- Training Young Mapuche Filmmakers in Chile  
(<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51345>)

**Topic 3 (9/6).** Language documentation as a field of anthropological linguistic inquiry and practice –Discusses documentary linguistics.

**Required Reading:**

- Anthony Woodbury 2003. Defining Documentary Linguistics. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 1. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 35-51 (**electronic reserve**)
- Peter, K. Austin and Leonore A. Grenoble 2007. Current trends in language documentation. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 4. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 12-25 (**electronic reserve**)
- Reproduction and preservation of linguistic knowledge: linguistics' response to language endangerment, by Nikolaus Himmelmann *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol 37, 337-350 (**electronic reserve**)

**Optional Reading:**

- Boas, Franz 1911. Introduction. In: Franz Boas (ed.), *Handbook of American Indian Languages, part 1*. Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology.

**Topic 4 (9/13).** Ethics

Discusses the ethical issues involved in working with human subjects most often with economically disadvantaged groups. (If possible Tools for recording, the next topic will start on this day, no reading required for this day, however.)

**Required Reading:**

- Ethics and practicalities of cooperative fieldwork and analysis. By Arienne M. Dwyer (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 2)
- IRB ([http://www.research.ufl.edu/research/pdf/irb\\_1.pdf](http://www.research.ufl.edu/research/pdf/irb_1.pdf))

**Topic 5 (9/20).** Tools for Recording I

Discusses the hardware needed for a documentation project, particularly: 1) Microphones and recording audio. 2) Audio recorders. 3) Video cameras and recording video. 4) Still cameras. 5) IT-skills (i.e. Software skills in the various stages of documentation (recording, processing, transfer of data, archiving etc.) 6) Energy supply. 7) The recording situation.

**Required Reading:**

- Munro, Robert 2005. The digital skills of language documentation. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 3. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 141-156.
- Ashmore, Louise 2008. The role of digital video in language documentation. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 5. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 77-102.
- Nathan, David 2009. Audio responsibilities in endangered languages documentation. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 6. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 101-116.
- David Nathan: Sound recording: microphones (<http://www.hrelp.org/archive/advice/microphones.html>)

### **Additional Material for LIN 6932**

- Rose, Jay 1999. Producing Great Sound for Digital Video. San Francisco: Miller Freeman (available as ebook in Library)
- Use Praat help (<http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/manualsByOthers.html>)

### **Optional material**

- Peter Ladefoged (2003) Phonetic data analysis: an introduction to fieldwork and instrumental techniques. Malden, MA : Blackwell Pub
- Ubiray Rezende (2006): Workflow for analog capture and digital transfer of MD/Hi-MD recordings ([http://www.hrelp.org/archive/advice/HiMD\\_data\\_transfer.pdf](http://www.hrelp.org/archive/advice/HiMD_data_transfer.pdf))
- Digital editing of field audio (reviews of recorders) ([http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res\\_digitalediting.htm](http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res_digitalediting.htm))
- ELAR Resources (<http://www.hrelp.org/archive/resources/index.html>)

### **Required Downloads and installation:**

Audacity (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>)

Elan (<http://www.lat-mpi.eu/tools/elan/>)

### **Topic 5 (9/27). Tools for Recording II**

Practical classroom exercises in video and audio recording.

### **Topic 6 (10/4). Ethnography**

Discusses the position of ethnographical information in language documentation and how to incorporate a cultural and ethnographic understanding of language into research.

### **Required Reading:**

- Ethnography in language documentation, by Bruna Franchetto (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 8)
- The ethnography of language and language documentation, by Jane H. Hill (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 5)
- Salzmann, Zdenek 2004. Chapter 10: Ethnography of Communication. In: Zdenek Salzmann, *Language, Culture, and Society: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*, (3rd edition). Boulder, Westview: 216-232.

### **Additional Material for LIN 693**

- Harrison, K. David 2005. Ethnographically informed language documentation. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 3. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 22-41

### **Optional material**

- Hurston, Zora Neale 1935. Mules and Men. (<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Grand-Jean/Hurston/Chapters/index.html>)

### **Topic 7 (10/11). 1) Test and 2) Documenting lexical knowledge**

### **Test    October 11<sup>th</sup>**

The test will take up the first 50 min. of the session on October 11.

**Required Reading:**

- Ulrike Mosel 2004. Dictionary making in language communities. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 2. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 39-54
- Documenting lexical knowledge, by John B. Haviland (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 6)

**Required Familiarization:**

- Comrie, B. and N. Smith, Questionnaire, Lingua Descriptive Series, Lingua 42: 1-72. P9 L55.
- Bouquiaux, Luc and Jacqueline M.C. Thomas 1992. Studying and Describing Unwritten Languages. [Originally published in 1976 as *Enquête et description de langues à tradition orale. L'enquête de terrain et l'analyse grammaticale*, 1. Approche linguistique, 2. Approche thématique. Translated by James Roberts]. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics.

**Required Homework:**

Download either Toolbox (or FLEEx) (see next topic) install and do Toolbox Self-Training 1.5.9 (available at <http://www.sil.org/computing/toolbox/downloads.htm>)

**Topic 8 (10/18). Establishing a lexical and textual database**

Introducing Toolbox (and Flex) and doing class exercises.

**Required Downloads (one of):**

- Toolbox (<http://www.sil.org/computing/toolbox>)
- (FLEEx Language explorer (<http://fieldworks.sil.org/flex/>))

**Required Readings:**

- Coward, David F. and Charles E. Grimes 2000. *Making Dictionaries. A guide to lexicography and the Multi-Dictionary Formatter*. Waxhaw: SIL International (pdf available at [http://www.sil.org/computing/shoebox/MDF\\_2000.pdf](http://www.sil.org/computing/shoebox/MDF_2000.pdf))
  - Familiarization with pages (7-52)
  - Reading pages (67-96)

**1st Assignment:** Group Audio recording of 20 lexical items from a language of your choice (not English) and individual compilation of 5 recorded lexical items into the Toolbox (or FLEEx) database (Time to complete 2 weeks). The database has to contain sound files illustrating the phonological transcription and at least 1 picture. Graduate and Ph.D. students will be working as group leaders and direct the group activity.

**Topic 9 (10/25). Writing grant proposals to document an endangered language**

Looks at the bodies that fund language documentation programs, noting their criteria and tailors proposal to suit the requirements

- NSF-Documenting Endangered Languages ([http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm\\_summ.jsp?pims\\_id=12816](http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12816))
- Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Program (<http://www.hrelp.org/>)
- <http://www.mpi.nl/DOBES>
- Foundation for Endangered Languages (<http://www.ogmios.org/>)
- We discuss some successful proposals on the NSF-DEL website
- Digital archiving tool to give voice to indigenous peoples

(<http://wsutoday.wsu.edu/pages/publications.asp?Action=Detail&PublicationID=19698&TypeID=1>)

- [http://media-newswire.com/release\\_1117246.html](http://media-newswire.com/release_1117246.html)

### **Topic 9 (11/01). Integrating video and audio**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Assignment due**

Introducing ELAN (<http://www.mpi.nl/publications/escidoc-60436/?searchterm=ELAN>) and class exercises

**2<sup>nd</sup> Assignment:** Individual Audio-visual recording of language event and 5 minutes transcription and free translation in ELAN. The integration into ELAN has to include 1 Reference tier, 1 transcription tier, and one free translation tier.

### **Topic 11 (11/8). Using elicitation techniques and tools**

Discussion of different techniques and tools for elicitation: Director matcher tasks, Triads; the design and use of diagrams, drawings and wordless pictures, as well as video stimuli

#### **Required Reading:**

- L üpke, Friederike 2010. Research methods in language documentation. In: Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language Documentation and Description*, vol 7. London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 55-104

#### **Stimuli that will be discussed in class more thoroughly:**

- Picture-book stimuli: Frog story
- Audio-visual stimuli: information structure video stimuli

#### **Optional material**

- Russ Tomlin's Fish Film: Stimulus designed to uncover the motivation for voice contrasts, topicality, etc. [http://logos.uoregon.edu/tomlin/research\\_fishfilm.html](http://logos.uoregon.edu/tomlin/research_fishfilm.html)
- Field Manual for the Language and Cognition Group at the Max-Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen
- The MPI EVA Leipzig links to field tools: <http://lingweb.eva.mpg.de/fieldtools/tools.htm>

### **Topic 12/13 (11/15). 1) Transcription and 2) Creating Metadata and archiving**

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Assignment Due**

Discusses different forms of transcription, metadata creation, the IMDI standard for metadata, and how to use Microsoft Excel for metadata compilation. (If possible start of Integrating video and audio, no reading required yet)

#### **Required Reading:**

- Linguistic annotation by Eva Schultze-Berndt (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 9)
- Orthography development by Frank Seifert (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 11)

- Archiving challenges by Paul Trilsberg and Peter Wittenburg (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 13)
- ISLE Metadata Initiative (IMDI) (<http://www.mpi.nl/publications/escidoc-60630/?searchterm=imdi>)

#### Additional material

- Nathan, David 2008. Digital archives: essential elements in the workflow of endangered languages documentation and revitalization.

#### **Topic 14 (11/22).** 1) Sketch grammar and 2) Preparation for documentation project

Takes a look at the typology and role of sketch grammar in language documentation. There will be ample time to discuss questions about the final projects.

- Sketch grammar by Ulrike Mosel (*Essentials of Language Documentation*, Chapter 12)

#### **No Class (11/29)**

Time off to work on projects. Class time can be used to discuss projects with professor.

#### **Progress Reports (12/6)**

Discussion of progress of individual projects. Graduate and Ph.D. students will have to prepare a 5 minute presentation on their project and present it in class. Undergraduate students should have their projects available in class. The projects do not have to be finished by this date, they can be in any stage.

#### **Required preparation:**

Bring the project files to class on your laptop or a thumb-drive.

#### **No Class (12/13)**

#### **Required textbook**

Gipbert Jost, Himmelmann Nikolaus P., and Mosel Ulrike (2006): *Essentials of language documentation*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter

#### **Required and optional readings provided under topics**

#### Class Guidelines

##### Documentation Project (30 points)

Students will record a session on a language of their choice using one of the elicitation tools. The recording should be audio and video. Students will then transcribe, translate and integrate 5 minutes of the work for 10 points. Students will also set up a lexical database comprising 20 words. The lexical database should contain words from a semantic domain and words from the transcribed portion of their text (10 points). Students can opt to replace the lexical database part of the project and provide extensive meta-commentary on integrated audio-video section of project instead (10 points). Students will provide an Excel table containing selected IMDI metadata concerning their project (10 points).

Students need to choose their project language (which can be any language but English) and inform the professor by the end of week 6. The project should be submitted the date that is scheduled at ISIS for final exams (NB there are no final exams).

##### Proposal (20 points)

As part of the grades students are required to write a project proposal for the documentation of an endangered language. The said proposal will be written using a standard form provided by professor that needs to be filled out. In addition to 2.5 pages requesting general project data information, the form will include a section for the proposal narrative which in itself will be 6-10 pages in length, including bibliography, and a section that will detail the cost calculation for the project of 2-3 pages. The proposal will be double-spaced and it must have Times New Roman with font size 12. The proposal should also be submitted on the date that is scheduled at ISIS for final exams (NB there are no final exams).

#### Class Attendance (10 points)

From the start everybody will have 100 points of class attendance. Each unexcused non-attendance of a week's session will be penalized by subtracting 5 points from this score. The final score will count 10 per cent of the final grade.

#### Academic Honesty Guidelines

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. An academic honesty offense is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines include but are not limited to:

*Cheating.* The improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit. Taking of information includes copying graded homework assignments from another student; working with another individual(s) on graded assignments or homework; looking or attempting to look at notes, a text, or another student's paper during an exam.

*Plagiarism.* The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the other's work is oral or written (including electronic), published or unpublished. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on written materials or in oral presentations; submitting work produced by an on-line translation service or the translation feature of an on-line dictionary as your own.

*Misrepresentation.* Any act or omission with intent to deceive a teacher for academic advantage. Misrepresentation includes lying to a teacher to increase your grade; lying or misrepresenting facts when confronted with an allegation of academic honesty.

#### Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities must register with the Dean of Students office. Contact the Assistant Dean of Students/Director of the Disability Resources Program at:

P202 Peabody Hall

Gainesville, FL 32611-5055

Phone (352) 392-1261 (V), 392-3008 (TDD)

For stress, emotional and psychological support, please contact the Counseling Center at:

301 Peabody Hall

Phone (352) 392-1575

Or: [www.counsel.ufl.edu](http://www.counsel.ufl.edu)

#### Grading Scale

A 93-100

A- 90-92

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

B- 80-82



C+ 77-79                      C 73-76                      C- 70-72

D+ 67-69                      D 63-66                      D- 60-62

E less than 60%

Please note that minus grades are calculated into your GPA according to the Registrar's formula:

A 4.0                      A- 3.67

B+ 3.33                      B 3                      B- 2.67

C+ 2.33                      C 2.0                      C- 1.67

D+ 1.33                      D 1.0                      D- .67

E 0

WF 0

I 0

NG 0

S-U 0