

Linguistics R1B: Why does linguistic diversity matter? Spring 2022

Course Information

Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 11AM–12:30PM
Location: 1/18–1/30: [Zoom](#) (Password: lingr1b)
1/31 on: Evans 51
Instructor: Raksit Lau-Preechathammarach
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 3-5PM (on Zoom—same link as above) and by appointment

Land acknowledgment

(with thanks to the Native American Student Development office and the Muwekma Ohlone tribe for this statement)

We recognize that Berkeley sits on the territory of xučyun (Huichin (Hoo-Choon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo) speaking Ohlone people, the successors of the historic and sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to the Muwekma (Muh-wek-muh) Ohlone Tribe and other familial descendants of the Verona Band.

We recognize that every member of the Berkeley community has benefitted, and continues to benefit, from the use and occupation of this land since the institution's founding in 1868. Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible the university's relationship to Native peoples. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold the University of California, Berkeley more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.

Course description and learning objectives

The topics of language endangerment and revitalization are particularly pressing, as it is estimated that—if activists do not continue to push back—half of the world's languages will "fall asleep," no longer being actively spoken, by the end of this century. If such a reduction in the number of languages spoken globally were to occur, this would represent a troubling decrease in linguistic diversity, linguistic justice, and human rights. Language loss presents a challenge in the ongoing efforts for decolonization and social justice, and resistance to language loss through language revitalization and reclamation presents an opportunity for greater empowerment and sovereignty. In this course we will ask the questions: What would we lose if a language falls asleep and what do we gain when languages persist? What is the value of linguistic diversity? What are the connections between individuals, groups, languages, and power? What roles can/do/should we take on with respect to promoting linguistic justice? We will examine the various links between language, thought, culture, identity, and power. We will also address some of the causes of language endangerment, and

the issues involved in revitalizing languages, including policy, language documentation, and language teaching pedagogies.

As users of language, we are all involved in one way or another with the processes of language endangerment and revitalization as we make choices about how to communicate through speech, sign, writing, and other forms. I hope we will build the skills and context needed to think critically about our own positionalities as users of language and as writers, and I invite you to keep the idea that language issues are social issues in your mind as we work through the course. I also invite you to take the time that you need for yourself if these topics become upsetting or triggering. You are always welcome to step back from the conversation and return when you feel safe, or to let me know what I can do to help create a more supportive environment for you as a learner and scholar.

In addition to discussions and analyses of language endangerment and revitalization, this course will support you as you develop reading and writing skills that will help you bring ideas effectively to the audience(s) you wish to address. We will work to develop reading, writing, and thinking skills through (i) discussion of readings in class, (ii) written responses to the readings, (iii) original written work, and (iv) peer review of each other's writing. By the end of this course, you will have gained experience in your own personal writing process, from formulating a topic and finding sources, to outlining, drafting, and revising a paper with a specific audience or platform in mind. Throughout the process, I invite you to think about your own goals and ideologies as they relate to writing and producing work for a given audience. One of my goals is for you to create works during this course that you are proud of and which serve your personal goals; please feel free to engage in discussions with me about what your goals are and what kinds of work you hope to produce.

Assignments and grading

Short assignments will be submitted in the form of responses on bCourses. You will be asked to submit a 3–5 sentence summary of most readings before class and, on some days, also a 150–300 word response to a question. At the start of each class, we will start off with writing up answers to discussion questions (also on bCourses, so please bring a computer or you may also type on your phone!) before breaking into smaller groups to discuss them. These exercises will help you practice summarizing concisely and analyzing what you have read. You will be graded on completion of these exercises, not on style, but I hope that over the course of the semester, you will be impressed with your progress!

The larger projects will include a diagnostic paper (3–4 pages), a longer paper (7–9 pages), and a research project (8–10 pages). Further details on the projects will be distributed through bCourses.

Grading breakdown

Participation: 10%

Writing assignments: 25%

Diagnostic essay: 5%

Paper 1: 25%

Paper 2: 35%

Learning objectives: The writing goals of this course include (but are not limited to):

- ★ Concisely summarizing main points and arguments
- ★ Identifying and questioning assumptions
- ★ Evaluating and analyzing arguments
- ★ Finding sources and doing research
- ★ Citing and acknowledging sources
- ★ Organizing your writing and communicating effectively
- ★ Positioning yourself among previous works
- ★ How to peer review and provide feedback
- ★ Understanding the parallels between writing an essay and storytelling

Participation: You should come to class having done the readings and having posted your summary. Participation may include asking questions, volunteering answers, actively working in small groups, engaging effectively in peer review, respectfully listening to everyone in the classroom, and meeting outside of class. Each of us has our own ways of learning best, and I would like to be respectful of these different learning styles. If you have any questions about your participation, please let me know in office hours or via email.

Attendance: Attendance is expected. Participation in class activities and the timely submission of assignments is important for your progress throughout this course. Please communicate with me about absences via email, so that we can make sure you stay caught up on course material. If you know of an absence in advance (for example, due to sports or a conference), please let me know as soon as possible.

Readings and bCourses: All course materials will be posted to the bCourses website. Be sure to check these updates regularly. All readings will be made available on the course site or will be accessible online or through the library eBooks services.

Office hours and email: Office hours are a time that I have set aside to speak with all of you about the course materials, assignments, and your goals and challenges. Please feel free to drop into my scheduled office hours! This is time for you, so take advantage of it! I am also happy to correspond via email.

Academic integrity: All work you turn in must be your own. Plagiarism in any form will be penalized accordingly. However, learning how to properly cite sources and avoid plagiarism is a skill that must be mastered. If you have questions about how to avoid plagiarism and cite sources fairly, please reach out before submitting an assignment! All assignments will be checked for plagiarism against Turnitin. You are welcome to discuss your work and ideas with others, and you should credit them accordingly, whether through formal citation, mention in a discussion post, or acknowledgements in a footnote.¹ For more information, visit:

¹For example, this course is largely modeled off Julia Nee's Fall 2021 syllabus and also builds off versions and input from participants in the 2021 Koshland fellowship, Eric Wilbanks, Erik Maier, Line Mikkelsen, Karee Garvin, Emily Ramirez, Hannah Sande, and Christine Sheil.

<http://sa.berkeley.edu/code-of-conduct>
<http://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/academic-misconduct-intro/>

Accommodations: Special accommodations are provided for students with documented disabilities. For more information, or to obtain an official letter of accommodation, contact the Disabled Students' Program (<http://www.dsp.berkeley.edu/>) . Resources are also available if you find yourself struggling either academically or personally. The Student Learning Center (<http://slc.berkeley.edu>) offers free workshops on study skills and time management. Counseling and Psychological Services provides free and timely consultations; during business hours call (510) 642-9494 or (855) 817-5667 after hours. As your instructor, I am legally obligated to report instances of sexual harassment and sexual violence that I am made aware of, and so while I can offer support, I cannot promise confidentiality. Confidential advocates are available at the PATH to Care Center at (510) 642-1988.

Notification of potentially triggering content: Throughout the course, we will discuss potentially difficult, triggering, and controversial topics as relate to issues of violence and discrimination that are tied to language endangerment and revitalization. I will do my best to announce potentially upsetting topics in advance, and I also invite you to bring any concerns that you have to my about course content or discussions to me, in person or via email. At the beginning of the term, we will establish Community Agreements for maintaining a respectful environment. However, it is likely that we may have conflicts arise throughout the term. My goal is for us to be able to talk through those conflicts and come to an understanding of what was harmful, why, and how we might move forward in the future. You are also invited to bring any issues to other Linguistics faculty who may be able to help, such as Prof. Keith Johnson (Department Chair, keithjohnson@berkeley.edu), Prof. Line Mikkelsen (Head Equity Advisor, mikkelsen@berkeley.edu), or Prof. Peter Jenks (Head Undergraduate Advisor, jenks@berkeley.edu). You can also contact the student Ombuds office (<http://sa.berkeley.edu/ombuds>) for confidential advice or the Academic Accommodations Hub (<http://evcp.berkeley.edu/programs-resources/academic-accommodations-hub>) to talk to someone who is not an instructor.

Schedule

★ This schedule is subject to change over the semester

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
<i>Unit 1: Intro to linguistics & linguistic diversity: what is it & why does it matter?</i>			
T 1/18	What is linguistics?		
Th 1/20	Language diversity I	Lippi-Green 1997; Grenoble 2011	
T 1/25	Language diversity II	NPR “literally” (26-minutes)	
Th 1/27	Language endangerment I	Wong Fillmore 2000; Fishman 1996	
T 2/1	Language endangerment II	Evans 1998; Hinton 1994 (Ch. 1–3)	

Th	2/3	What can educators do?	Wong Fillmore & Snow 2000	Diagnostic paper
<i>Unit 2: Language, identity, culture, and thought: how are they (inter)related?</i>				
T	2/8	Language attitudes I	Green 2004; Oakland Resolution; Applebome 1996; Woo & Curtius 1996	
Th	2/10	Language attitudes II	Harlow 1998; Bokhorst-Heng 2005; Rubdy 2007	
T	2/15	Language & identity	Bucholtz 1996; Cameron & Kulick 2003	Paper 1 proposal
Th	2/17	Language & thought	Wolff & Holmes 2011, Hinton 1994 (Ch. 4, 5)	
T	2/22	Folk taxonomy	Harrison 2007	Paper 1 outline
Th	2/24	Sapir-Whorf	Pullum 1991; Regier et al. 2016	
<i>Unit 3: Language equity & linguistic justice: how do we hear ourselves and others?</i>				
T	3/1	Language & justice	Rickford & King 2016	
Th	3/3	Indigeneity	Roche 2019 ; Deloria et al. 2018	Paper 1 draft
T	3/8	NO CLASS	Davies & Dubinsky 2018 (Ch. 12); Mohanty 2010	
Th	3/10	Language hierarchies & English hegemony	Macedo et al. 2003; Adcharawan 2014	Paper 1 peer review
T	3/15	Language & health	Hallett et al. 2007; Taff et al. 2018	
Th	3/17	Conformity, appropriateness	Flores & Rosa 2015; Montoya 2020	Paper 1 submission
<i>3/21–3/25 Spring Break</i>				
<i>Unit 4: Language revitalization: what can it look like?</i>				
T	3/29	Policy & barriers	Roche & Tsomu, 2018; Premsrirat 2014; watch Âs Nutayuneân, We Still Live Here (56 minute documentary, access through Berkeley)	
Th	3/31	Where to start?	Henderson 2014; Hinton 2011; The Native Seed Pod, Ep. 6: #CafeOhlone (until 17:45)	
T	4/5	Ideology	Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1998	
Th	4/7	Revitalization methods I	Bommelyn & Tuttle 2018 Zahir 2018	Paper 2 annotated bibliography
T	4/12	Revitalization methods II	Smith 2012	Paper 2 outline
Th	4/14	Valorization	McCarty 2011; Beier & Michael 2018	

Unit 5: Ethics: (how) do each of us fit into the landscape of language revitalization?

T	4/19	Reframing & Decentering	Kipling 1899 ; Tuck 2009	
Th	4/21	Collaboration & Storytelling	Ahtone & Lee (2020) ; Leonard & Haynes 2010	Paper 2 draft
T	4/26	PRESENTATIONS		
Th	4/28	PRESENTATIONS		Paper 2 peer review
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<i>5/2–5/6 RRR Week</i>				
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<i>5/9–5/13 Finals Week</i>				Paper 2 submission
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