

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages
First Term, 2021-22

Course Title: LING4402
Special Topics in Applied Linguistics: Endangered languages and language documentation

Description:

We are living through part of the greatest linguistic extinction event in all of recorded human history. By some estimates half of the 6,000–7,000 languages spoken in the world today could be lost within the present century. This course is intended to give students both an understanding of the causes and consequences of language endangerment and loss as well as the practical skills necessary to document languages, especially languages that are at risk.

We will review case studies of language loss past and present, investigate why languages become endangered, and methods used to stabilize and revitalize languages. We will also study both hardware and software used in language study. Hardware will be demonstrated in class. Software will cover the basic software used by most linguists in documentary work.

The final will be a project. The class will prepare a recording from my past fieldwork on the Lebo' Vo' language for archiving in a language archive. The preparation of the recording will involve using all of the software that we discuss in the class. Students who work on the preparation of the recording will be credited by the archive. Students who do not wish to work on this particular recording may work on a similar project with material from a different language with my approval.

Lecture Venue: William M W Mong Bldg, 803

Lecture Time: Wednesday 9:30–11:00

Tutorial Venue: William M W Mong Bldg, 803

Tutorial Time: Wednesday 11:15–12:15

Content, highlighting fundamental concepts

Topic	Contents/fundamental concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language Diversity 	Appreciate the linguistic diversity in the world. Know areas of particularly high linguistic diversity Understand what encourages greater diversity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language Endangerment 	Understand the current endangerment crisis. Critically assess the causes of endangerment. Distinguish between the current extinction event and language loss in prehistory.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language Revitalization 	Understand the goals/challenges of revitalization. Analyze case studies of revitalization projects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language Documentation 	Gain practical knowledge of documentation, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ recording methods and hardware ○ software utilization ○ archiving Understand the goals of language documentation and the methods for developing and implementing language documentation projects.

Learning outcomes

Students should be well equipped to undertake language documentation projects and should have a well-rounded understanding of the underlying causes of language endangerment.

Learning activities

Lecture (hr) in /out class	Interactive tutorial (hr) in /out class	Lab (hr) in /out class	Discussion of case (hr) in /out class	Field-trip (hr) in /out class	Projects (hr) in /out class	Web- based teaching (hr) in /out class	Assignments (hr) in /out class
15	10		5		30		60
M NA	M NA	NA NA	NA NA	NA NA	M NA	NA NA	NA M

M: Mandatory activity in the course

O: Optional activity

NA: Not applicable

Assessment scheme

Task nature	Description	Weight
Class participation	I expect students to be involved in the discussion we have about each reading.	10%
Reading responses	Students will write and submit short informal responses to the readings each week.	15%
Reading presentations	Students will report on a reading from each week. Number of reports depends on the number of students. Each student will do at least one report.	15%
Final: FLEx	Each student will be responsible for contributing a portion of a single FLEx file from a field recording	30%
Final: ELAN	Each student will be responsible for contributing a portion of a single ELAN file from a field recording.	30%

Learning resources for students

Reading materials will be provided by the instructor.

Feedback for evaluation

Students are welcome to give their comments and feedback on this course directly to the course teacher by email or in person. Individual appointments with the course teacher are welcome.

Grade Descriptors

A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes (completion of all readings, and reading based assignments, as well as outstanding performance on the final project)
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. Completion of all readings, and reading based assignments. Perhaps some issues with critical analysis or with performance on the final project.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, or high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Students may have some issues with the project and data analysis, or some issues with reading completion.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. Student may have trouble applying their knowledge to multiple readings and issues with their performance on the final project.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. Student may have trouble applying their knowledge. Lack of adequate input on the final project.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements. Lack of evidence for completing reading assignments and lack of involvement on the final project.

Course schedule

Class/ week	Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1	January 12 th	Introduction Diversity of the world's languages	
Week 2	January 19 th	Overview of the language endangerment crisis	Endangered languages: on endangered languages and the safeguarding of diversity. Ken Hale, 1992, <i>Language</i> . The status of the world's endangered languages. Anna Belew and Sean Simpson.
Week 3	January 26 th	Introduction to language documentation Tutorial: Digital recording background, methods, hardware, and best practices.	The goals of language documentation. Richard Rhodes and Lyle Campbell, 2018. The Design and Implementation of Documentation Projects for Spoken Languages. Shobhana Chelliah, 2018.
Week 4	February 2 nd	No Class.	
Week 5	February 9 th	Historical analysis of language loss Tutorial: Digital recording background, methods, hardware, and best practices.	Terror from the sky: unconventional linguistic clues to the Negrito past. Robert Blust, 2012, <i>Human Biology</i> . Technical questions in language documentation. Joanna Maryniak, 2021. Chapter 13.1, in <i>Revitalizing endangered languages: a practical guide</i> .

Class/ week	Date	Topic	Readings
Week 6	February 16 th	Contemporary language loss How is it different from language loss in the past? Tutorial: Using FLEEx software	A people's history of the United States, Chapter 1. Howard Zinn, 2003. Taking the pulse of Pohnpeian. Ken Reig, 1998, <i>Oceanic Linguistics</i> .
Week 7	February 23 rd	Contemporary language loss continued. Colonization, Corporate governance, loss of traditional societies. Tutorial: Using ELAN software	Linguistic Vitality, Endangerment, and Resilience. Gerald Roche. 2017, <i>Language Documentation and Conservation</i> . Assessing degrees of language endangerment. Nala H. Lee and John R. van Way.
Week 8	March 2 nd	Revitalization overview. Tutorial: More work with FLEEx	Why Revitalize? Lenore A. Grenoble and others, 2021. Chapter 1, in <i>Revitalizing endangered languages: a practical guide</i> . Understanding language vitality and reclamation as resilience: A framework for language endangerment and 'loss' (Commentary on Mufwene). Colleen M. Fitzgerald, 2017. <i>Language</i> .
Week 9	March 9 th	Case studies of revitalization projects. Tutorial: More work with ELAN	'Aha Pūnana Leo Case Study. Ka'e'e Calica and Nāmaka Rawlins. 1999. The Hawaiian model of language revitalization: problems of extension to mainland native America. Andrew Cowell, 2012. <i>International journal of the sociology of language</i> .
Week 10	March 16 th	Case studies of revitalization projects Tutorial: More work with FLEEx	Reviving Siraya: a case for language engineering. Alexander Adelaar. 2013, <i>Language documentation and conservation</i> . Southern Ute Grassroots Language Revitalization. Stacey Oberly, et al., 2015, <i>Language documentation and conservation</i> . Māori: revitalization of an endangered language. Jeanette King. The Klallam language program. Timothy Montler. 2007. Project report given to UNESCO.

Class/ week	Date	Topic	Readings
Week 11	March 23 rd	Rhetoric of language endangerment. Tutorial: More work with ELAN	“Expert Rhetorics” in advocacy for endangered languages: who is listening, and what do they hear? Jane H. Hill. 2002, <i>Journal of Linguistic Anthropology</i> . Facing the rhetoric of language endangerment: voicing the consequences of linguistic racism. Paul V. Kroskrity. 2011, <i>Journal of Linguistic Anthropology</i> .
Week 12	March 30 th	Ethics in language documentation Tutorial: Other software	Endangered language research and the moral depravity of ethics protocols. George van Driem. 2016, <i>Language documentation and conservation</i> . Ethical principles in linguistic fieldwork methodologies — according to whom? Jaime Pérez González. 2021, <i>Language Documentation and Conservation Special Publication No. 23</i> .
Week 13	April 6 th	No Class.	
Week 14	April 13 th	Archiving and other issues.	Archives and audiences: toward making endangered language documentations people can read, use, understand, and admire. Anthony C. Woodbury. 2014, <i>Language documentation and description</i> . Language revitalization and academic institutions: refocusing linguistic field methods courses. Eric Campbell and others. 2021, <i>revitalizing endangered languages: a practical guide</i> . Chapter 11.1
Week 15	April 20 th	Review of final project progress and assessment of the materials.	

Teachers’ or TA’s contact details

Professor/Lecturer/Instructor:	
Name:	Alexander Smith
Office Location:	209 Leung Kau Kui Building
Telephone:	39435199
Email:	alexanderdavidsmith@cuhk.edu.hk
Teaching Venue:	William M W Mong Bldg, 803

Teaching Assistant/Tutor:	Not yet known
Name:	
Email:	

A facility for posting course announcements

Announcements and course materials will be posted on the Blackboard site.

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign on the declaration. For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

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