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LING 484.01: North American Indigenous Languages & Linguistics

Leora Bar-el

University of Montana - Missoula, leora.bar-el@umontana.edu

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North American Indigenous Languages and Linguistics

LING 484/584

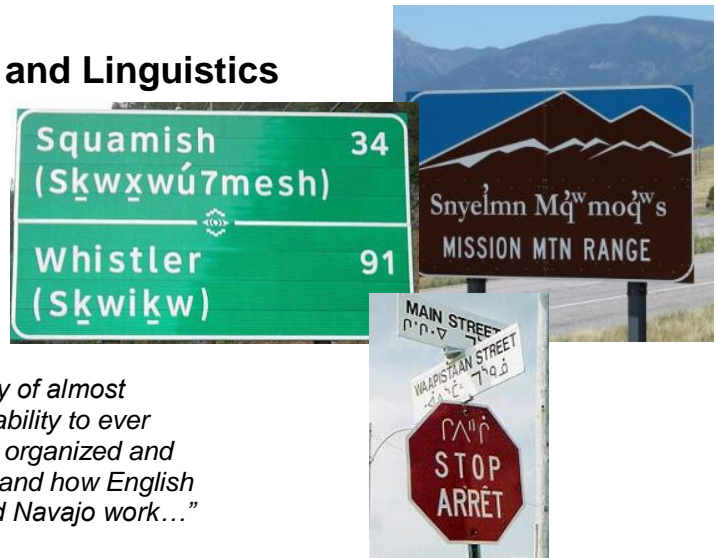
The University of Montana

Autumn 2018

Instructor: Leora Bar-el

SYLLABUS

"The loss of Native American languages is a cultural tragedy of almost unimaginable dimensions, but it also puts at grave risk our ability to ever understand fundamental aspects of how we as humans are organized and function. In a very real sense, we will not be able to understand how English works until we understand how Meskwaki, and Mohawk and Navajo work..."
(Goddard 2004: 8)



Instructor information

✉ <leora.bar-el@umontana.edu>

📍 Social Science Building, Room 210

☎ To reach me by phone, you can leave a message in the Anthropology main office 406-243-2693

Office hours: Mondays 2pm-3:30pm and Wednesdays 10:30am-12pm, or by appointment

Course meeting times and venue

Tuesdays and Thursdays

11:00am-12:20pm

Social Science 258

Course description

This course is an overview of the languages of Native North America from a linguistic perspective. It has been suggested that "[n]early 300 distinct mutually unintelligible languages are known to have been spoken north of the Rio Grande" (Mithun 1999: 1). These languages constitute more than 50 language families and exhibit features that are different from more well-known languages of the world, and show variation among themselves. In this course we will look at a variety of grammatical features of Indigenous languages of North America and the ways in which some of them are described and analyzed by linguists.

Prerequisites and Co-convening

LING 470 is a prerequisite for this course. LING 584 co-convenes with LING 484 (see further information below on graduate student requirements).

Moodle

This course has an [online supplement Moodle site](#) (click on Moodle NetID Login). Slides, handouts, readings, assignments, and other materials will be posted there. You will also upload your assessed work to Moodle. Links to Please inform me if you have any problems accessing the site.

Technical Support

UMOnline: 406-243-4999 or toll-free 866-225-1641; [email](#); [website](#)

IT Central: 406-243-4357; [e-mail](#); [website](#)

Course Structure

Class meetings will include discussions based on the readings, data sets, and other activities that explore the weekly topics, student presentations, and other linguistic training. Slides and other materials presented in class will be available

for downloading from our course Moodle site. Throughout the course we will be **reading** and **discussing** book chapters and articles that explore linguistic properties of Indigenous languages of North America. The readings will be available for downloading from our course Moodle site (see schedule below for the reading schedule). You are required to submit **three article summaries** over the course of the semester. You can choose from a subset of the assigned readings (see details below). Throughout the course you will complete several **short assignments based on the readings**, which may include preparing discussion questions, answering questions, drafting research questions, compiling data, etc. Some of these short assignments may also relate to your research project. This semester we will develop a class **Wiki** in which we draft edits of Wikipedia “stubs” or “starts” relating to Indigenous languages of North America. Finally, over the course of the semester you will develop and write a **research paper**. You will (i) submit a first draft of your **proposal**, (ii) receive feedback on that draft and submit a **revised second draft** of your proposal, (iii) give an in-class **presentation** of your research, (iv) optionally submit a **draft** of your paper for feedback, (v) **submit** your final research paper (see further information and due dates below).

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will:

- Be familiar with some classifications and orthographic representations of Indigenous languages of North America
- Be able to identify and analyze a variety of linguistic properties of Indigenous languages of North America
- Understand the endangerment status of Indigenous languages of North America and some of the ways in which communities are working to document and revitalize these languages.
- Be able to critically read, summarize and discuss claims and arguments from primarily linguistic literature
- Be able to give a presentation of your own linguistic research
- Be able to develop and write a linguistic research paper

Assessment (undergraduate)

Participation	10%
Short reading assignments	20%
Article summaries (3 x 5% each)	15%
Wiki	15%
Research paper proposal (1 st draft)	5%
Research paper proposal (2 nd draft)	5%
Research paper presentation	10%
Research paper	20%

- Participation includes attendance, answering/asking questions in-class, contributions to in-class discussions and activities, etc. Being absent or late to class will result in deductions to your participation grade.
- Short reading assignments: Throughout the course you will complete several small assignments based on the readings, which may include preparing discussion questions, answering questions based on readings, drafting research questions, compiling data, etc. Some of these short assignments may also relate to your research project. Some assignments will be completed/due in class and others will be uploaded to Moodle.
- Article summaries: You are required to submit **three** article summaries over the course of the term. You can choose from the articles marked with an asterisk in the scheduled below. Summaries must be uploaded to Moodle by 11am (before class) on the day that the article is scheduled to be discussed in class. You may want to bring a copy of your summary to class to refer to during our in-class discussion of the article. Further information will be made available during our in-class workshop on **September 13**. In preparation for this workshop, you are required to submit a draft summary of Bird (2012) and bring a copy of your summary to class. Your draft summary will not be graded, but it will be reviewed by fellow classmates and will form the basis of discussion.
- Wiki: We will develop a class **Wiki** in which we draft edits of Wikipedia “stubs” or “starts” relating to Indigenous languages of North America.
- Research proposal: Your proposal is in three phases – you will bring in 3 possible research **topics** to class on **September 27**. You will upload a **first draft** of your research proposal to Moodle by **11am MST (before class) October 11**. You will get feedback on your proposal, and then you will revise and expand your proposal and upload a second draft of your proposal to Moodle by **11am MST (before class) October 30**. Further information about developing a research proposal will be made available later in our course.

- Research presentations will take place in the **last two weeks of classes**. Further information about presenting your research, as well as a presentation schedule, will be made available later in our course.
- Optional paper draft: you have the option of uploading a draft of your paper to Moodle by **11am MST (before class) November 15**. Students who choose to do so will receive feedback from me on their draft.
- Research papers must be uploaded to Moodle by **9am December 11**. Further information on writing research papers will be made available later in our course.

Plagiarism is an offence and is not tolerated. You are welcome (and encouraged) to discuss readings, assignments, research papers, etc. together with classmates, but you must write up your work **on your own**.

Assessment (graduate)

Participation	10%
Short reading assignments	10%
Article summaries (3 x 5% each)	15%
Wiki	15%
Leading discussion	10%
Research paper proposal (1 st draft)	5%
Research paper proposal (2 nd draft)	5%
Research paper presentation	10%
Research paper and abstract	20%

In addition to the undergraduate assessment items, graduate students taking this course are also required to (i) lead discussion of 1-2 of the assigned articles, and (ii) write a conference-style abstract of your research paper. Graduate student work is also expected to be of a more advanced nature. Further information will be made available to graduate students.

Grading criteria

A	93-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%	F	Below 60%
A-	90-92%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%		
		B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%		

Required readings

- Throughout the course we will be reading book chapters and articles on a number of topics. Required readings will be posted in the weekly sections of our course Moodle site. See below for the list of readings and the schedule.
- Several readings are from the following book:
 - Mithun, Marianne. 1999. *The Languages of Native North America*. Cambridge University Press.

You are not required to purchase the book, though you may find it a useful resource and might want your own copy. The Mansfield Library has a copy of the book available for short term loan (see course reserves below).
- Additional readings may be assigned over the course the semester. They will be available from the Mansfield Library or from our course Moodle site.

Library Reserves

- This course has a Library Course Reserves webpage. From the [Mansfield Library website](#), click on the Course Reserves tab in the search window. Books on reserve are available from the Information Centre on the main floor of the library (Level 3).
- There is a copy of *The Languages of Native North America* (Mithun 1999) and a copy of *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 17* (Goddard 1996), both available on 24 hr checkout.
- Find a library resource that you would like me to put on reserve for our class? Let me know.

Other resources

- The following books may be useful additional resources
 - Goddard, Ives (ed.). 1996. *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 17: Languages*. William C. Sturtevant (series editor). Washington: Smithsonian Institution. [on reserve at Mansfield Library]
 - Campbell, Lyle. 1997. [American Indian Languages: the historical linguistics of Native America](#). New York: Oxford University Press. [available as an ebook at Mansfield Library; requires Ebook Central login]
- There are numerous other sources cited in these books as well as in Mithun (1999). You can also find numerous books, book series, journals, etc. that focus on Indigenous languages of North America, such as:
 - [International Journal of American Linguistics](#) [online subscription available through Mansfield Library; permalink; may require NetID login]
 - [University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics](#) (OPL, ICSNL, WSCLA, etc.)
 - Proceedings of conferences focused on Indigenous language families, such as the *Papers of the Algonquian conference* ([papers since 2007](#); [papers prior to 2007](#))
- Note that linguistic research on Indigenous languages of North America is not restricted to journals or books focused on languages of this part of the world, so do not limit your searches either.
- Occasionally I will point you to further readings on the topics we discuss. If you find articles, links or other material that you think the class would benefit from, send them to me and I will post them on Moodle where appropriate.
- If the library does not own a resource that you are looking for, you can request it through [Interlibrary Loan](#) (ILL). See also the Library's [Research and Find Materials](#) page for additional information.
- Looking for more help at the library? Explore the resources on the [Mansfield Library website](#), use their chat or e-mail feature, or visit the Reference Desk in person.

UM Writing and Public Speaking Center

The University of Montana Writing and Public Speaking Center offers students in all disciplines free support as they write or prepare presentations for any course. Welcoming all students, The Writing Center provides a learning environment where students can engage in supportive conversations about their work and receive feedback at any point during their process. To make an appointment or learn more about the center, visit [The Writing and Public Speaking Center website](#) or call 243-2266.

Course Policies and Procedures

- **Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class and be an active participant. Attendance will be taken each class. If you miss a class, inform me by e-mail as early as possible. I also urge you to contact a classmate to catch up on what you missed. Being absent or late to class will result in deductions to your participation grade.
- **Respect your classmates:** Arrive to class on time. You are responsible for all material covered, including announcements, questions/answers, etc., that may occur at the beginning of class. If you are late, please be courteous to your fellow classmates and me – avoid being disruptive. If you anticipate being late to class regularly (e.g., due to a work schedule, a class on the other side of campus, etc.), inform me as soon as possible.
- **Student Conduct Code:** You are expected to be familiar with the UM *Student Conduct Code*, which is downloadable from the [Dean of Students webpage](#). You are also expected to be familiar with UM Academic Policies and Procedures, which can be found on the [Academic Policies and Procedures webpage](#).
- **E-mail:** Course information will be circulated by e-mail to your UM e-mail address (usually via Moodle, but in some cases, directly to your individual e-mail address). Make sure that you check that e-mail account often. **You are responsible for ensuring that you are able to receive any course information circulated by e-mail.** If you have any concerns about this, please contact me immediately.
- **Course Accommodations Statement (DSS):** The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or by calling 406-243-2243 for assistance in developing a plan to address program modifications. If you are already working with Disability Services your responsibilities are to contact me to discuss reasonable and appropriate modifications that may be necessary. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide a reasonable and appropriate modification. For more information, visit the [Disability Services for Students](#) website.

- **Technical Requirements:** Using the Moodle learning environment requires your computer to be set up to view and download documents, webpages, etc. More information can be found on the [UMOnline student support website](#). Contact UMOOnline for assistance: 406-243-4999 or toll-free 866-225-1641; [e-mail](#). For those of you who are new to the Moodle Learning Environment, please visit [UMOnline](#), follow the **Moodle NedID Login** link, and once you have logged in, click on the **Moodle 101 for Students** (under Useful Links).
- **Naming and Submitting Assessed Work:** Assessed work should be uploaded to the relevant section on Moodle as a .pdf, .docx, or .doc file. Use your last name and an appropriate assessment category for file names (e.g., “Smith A1” or “Jones Prop2”). If your operating system does not allow blank spaces in file names, you may use an underscore (e.g., Smith_A1 or Jones_Prop2). Do not use any other symbols in your file name as I may not be able to open the file. Submitted work must be typed. Unless otherwise indicated, handwritten files will not be accepted.

Fonts

- North American Indigenous Languages use several different orthographies and there are also a variety of transcription conventions used in the field, thus special fonts may be needed to create and view some documents in this course. Whenever possible, I use **Doulos SIL** in this course, a free font available for both Mac and PC operating systems. You may want to use this font in your own work. The font can be downloaded from the [Doulos SIL Download webpage](#).
- Instructions on how to download and install the fonts will vary depending on your computer and operating system. Some advice and links are available from the [Doulos SIL Installing and Using Fonts webpage](#).
- You may find websites such as the [IPA Chart Unicode Keyboard webpage](#) useful – this site allows you to copy and paste/insert symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) into your documents. There are similar sites as well as other websites that provide further information about phonetic fonts. Feel free to check them out!
- If you are having any trouble downloading fonts/viewing files, please ask!

Proposed Schedule (subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	Topic	Readings**	Deadlines***
Part I: overview, classification, representation					
1	Tues	Aug. 28	Course overview		
	Thurs	Aug. 30	Introduction: Why study North American Indigenous languages?	Goddard 2004	Questionnaire
2	Tues	Sept. 4	Language classification and contact	Campbell 2013, Ch.6 [§6.1-6.3; p.159-173]; Campbell 1997, Ch.9 [p.330-331; also choose one North American linguistic area from p.331-344 to read]	
	Thurs	Sept. 6	Orthographies & transcription conventions	Hinton 2001	
Part II: Aspects of grammar					
3	Tues	Sept. 11	Phonetics & phonology	Ch.1 [§1.1, 1.3-1.5; p.15-20, 22-30]	
	Thurs	Sept. 13	Writing article summaries	Bird 2012	Draft Bird summaries
4	Tues	Sept. 18	Polysynthesis Interlinearization	Ch.2 [intro and §2.1; p.37-39] (Fortescue 2017)	
	Thurs	Sept. 20	Incorporation & lexical suffixes	Ch.2 [§2.2; p.39-56]	

5	Tues	Sept. 25	Incorporation in Inuktitut	Sherkina-Lieber & Murasugi 2015*	Sherkina-Lieber & Murasugi summaries
	Thurs	Sept. 27	Lexical categories Developing a research proposal	Ch.2 [§2.3; p.56-67]	
6	Tues	Oct. 2	Person, number, gender	Ch.3 [§3.1-3.3; p.68-103]	
	Thurs	Oct. 4	Verbal number in Skwxwú7mesh	Bar-el 2008*	Bar-el 2008 summaries
7	Tues	Oct. 9	Spatial relations Deixis in Skwxwú7mesh	Ch.3 [§3.7.1; p.132-136] Gillon 2009*	Gillon summaries
	Thurs	Oct. 11	Control	Ch.3 [§3.6; p.127-131]	Research proposals draft 1
8	Tues	Oct. 16	Tense, aspect, mood	Ch.3 [§3.8, 3.9.2; p.152-169, 173-180]	
	Thurs	Oct. 18	Tense/Mood in Ktunaxa Tense/Aspect in Cree	Laternus 2011* Wolvengrey 2006*	Laternus and Wolvengrey summaries
9	Tues	Oct. 23	Irrealis in Salish	Baier 2010*	Baier summaries
	Thurs	Oct. 25	Control and aspect in ʔayʔaʔuθəm	Mellesmoen & Andreotti 2017*	Mellesmoen & Andreotti summaries
10	Tues	Oct. 30	Predicates & arguments	Ch.4 [§4.1; p.187-193]	Research proposals draft 2
	Thurs	Nov. 1	Grammatical relations & case	Ch.4 [§4.3; p.204-229]	
11	Tues	Nov. 6	Election Day – No Classes		
	Thurs	Nov. 8	Writing research papers		
12	Tues	Nov. 13	Discourse in Blackfoot	Bliss 2012*	Bliss summaries
	Thurs	Nov. 15	Presenting research		<u>Optional</u> : paper draft
Part III: Further issues, remaining questions					
13	Tues	Nov. 20	The role of linguists/linguistics in language revitalization	Gerds 2017	
	Thurs	Nov. 22	Thanksgiving – No Class		
14	Tues	Nov. 27	<u>Film</u> : <i>We still live here</i> Âs nutayuneân	TBA	
	Thurs	Nov. 29	Student presentations		Schedule TBA
15	Tues	Dec. 4	Student presentations		Schedule TBA
	Thurs	Dec. 6	Student presentations; Course wrap-up		Schedule TBA Research papers due by 9am Dec. 11

* Articles for summaries must be chosen from those in the Readings column that appear with an asterisk (*). Reminder: You are required to submit **three** article summaries over the course of the semester.

** "Ch." refers to sections from *The Languages of Native North America* (Mithun 1999). All readings listed will be available for downloading from our course Moodle site.

*** Unless otherwise noted, assessed work must be uploaded to Moodle by 11am MST (before class) on the day it is due.

Required readings (additional readings may be assigned during the semester)

- *Baier, Nico. 2010. Irrealis Morphology in Montana Salish. *Papers of the 45th International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages, University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics Volume 27*, Joel Dunham and John Lyon (eds.). 124-139.
- *Bar-el, Leora. 2008. Verbal number and aspect in Skwxwú7mesh. *Recherches linguistiques de Vincennes* 37:31-54.
- Bird, Sonya. 2012. Cool thing about ultrasound #17: now I can pronounce /hiqət/! *Papers of the 47th International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages, University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics Volume 32*, Joel Dunham, John Lyon and Natalie Weber (eds.). 1-12.
- *Bliss, Heather. 2012. Marking the boundaries: Blackfoot preverbs in narratives and elicitation. *Papers from the Workshop on Structure and Constituency in Languages of the Americas (WSCLA) 17, University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics (UBCWPL) Vol. 36*. 1-14.
- Campbell, Lyle. 2013. Linguistic Classification (Chapter 6). In *Historical linguistics: an Introduction (3rd edition)*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. 159-186.
- Campbell, Lyle. 1997. [American Indian Languages: the historical linguistics of Native America](#). New York: Oxford University Press. [available as an ebook at Mansfield Library; requires Ebook Central login]
- Fortescue, Michael. 2017. What are the limits of polysynthesis? In *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*, Michael Fortescue, Marianne Mithun and Nicholas Evans (eds.). Oxford University Press. p115-134.
- Gerds, Donna B. Indigenous Linguists: Bringing Research Into Language Revitalization. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 83(4): 607-17.
- *Gillon, Carrie. 2009. Deictic Features: Evidence from Skwxwú7mesh. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 75: 1-27.
- Goddard, Ives. 2004. Endangered Knowledge: What we can learn from Native American Languages. *AnthroNotes* 25(2): 1-8.
- Hinton, Leanne. 2001. New Writing Systems. In Leanne Hinton and Kenneth Hale (eds.), *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* Chapter 19. San Diego: Academic Press. 239-250.
- *Laternus, Rebecca. 2011. Future Expressions in Ktunaxa. *Papers of the 46th International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages, University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics Volume 30*, John Lyon and Joel Dunham (eds.). 157-163.
- *Mellesmoen, Gloria and Bruno Andreotti. 2017. Result state holds! Stative aspect and non-control morphology in ʔayʔaʃuθəm. *Papers of the 52nd International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages, University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics Volume 45*, Andrei Angheliescu, Michael Fry, Marianne Huijsmans, and Daniel Reisinger (eds.). p.195-208.
- Mithun, Marianne. 1999. *The Languages of Native North America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [selected chapters/sections listed in the schedule above]
- *Sherkina-Lieber, Marina and Kumiko Murasugi. 2015. Noun incorporation and case in heritage Inuktitut. *Proceedings of the 2015 annual conference of the Canadian Linguistic Association*, Santa VInerte (ed.). p.1-15.
- *Wolvengrey, Arok. 2006. Prospective Aspect in the Western Dialects of Cree. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 72(3): 397-407.

This syllabus is subject to change