

Final: Language Preservation Project

Worth: 30% (of which 25% for the essay and 5% for the presentation)

Due Dates: Informal proposal: Tuesday, April 10

Shitty first draft: Tuesday, May 1

Draft of 3-Minute Thesis: Thursday, May 3

Final Essay and 3-Minute Thesis Presentation: Thursday, May 10 at 9am

Basic Requirements: Research-based essay that is at least 2,000 words (about 7 pages, double-spaced) and a 3-Minute Thesis presentation. MLA, Chicago, or APA citations.

Prompt: For your final project for this class, you will investigate the case of a dying or threatened language, and the efforts of a community/nation to preserve that language. Your goal is to create and share a case history of this threatened language by researching the following:

1. Language Information: Where has this language traditionally been spoken? How many people speak it today? Is it a written language? Can you find examples of the language?
2. Culture/History: What is the cultural and political context or history? Why is this language threatened?
3. Revitalization and Preservation: What efforts are being made to preserve this language? What challenges do they face? What are the prospects for survival?
4. Purpose of Language Revitalization: Using scholarship on the goals and purpose (or value) of language preservation/language diversity, make an argument about the purpose of preserving this specific language. What would be the consequences of this language disappearing? What is the cost of preservation? What is the “payoff” of preservation or revitalization?

Note: You will probably find that this essay requires sections (with headings); *however, you do not need to follow the order of the questions above*. Depending on the language you choose, some issues (#’s above) may be emphasized more than others; *however, #4 is not optional and must be developed*.

Essay Format: You have options for the format of your essay: you can either use a traditional Word document, or you can construct a digital essay on either Voices or Moodle (wiki). No matter the format, like a traditional research essay, you will need to write an articulate, well-supported, and organized text answering the questions above. Unlike a traditional essay, you can (and should) include links to resources (websites, YouTube, etc.), and may also want to include visual or audio components as part of your discussion.

Resources for Getting Started:

The Endangered Languages Project: <http://www.endangeredlanguages.com/>

Indigenous Languages Links: <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/links.html>

