

# LING 3017: REVIVALISTICS, CROSS-FERTILIZATION & WELLBEING (SEM2, 2020)

*When you lose a language, you lose a culture, intellectual wealth, a work of art. It's like dropping a bomb on a museum, the Louvre.*

(Ken Hale, *The Economist*, 3 November 2001)

The course explores *Revivalistics*, a new trans-disciplinary field of enquiry surrounding language reclamation, revitalization and reinvigoration. It studies comparatively and systematically the universal constraints and global mechanisms on the one hand, and local peculiarities and idiosyncrasies on the other hand, apparent in revival attempts across various sociological backgrounds, all over the world.

A branch of both linguistics and applied linguistics, Revival Linguistics combines scientific studies of native language acquisition and foreign language learning: Language reclamation is the most extreme case of second language learning.

Linguicide (language killing) and glottophagy (language eating) have made Australia an Unlucky Country. With globalization, homogenization and coca-colonization there are more and more groups around the world added to the forlorn club of the lost-heritage peoples. Language revival is becoming increasingly relevant as people seek to recover their cultural autonomy, empower their spiritual and intellectual sovereignty, and improve their well-being. The course analyses the ethical, aesthetic and utilitarian benefits of language revival, e.g. historical justice, diversity and employability respectively.

Revival Linguistics complements the established field of documentary linguistics, which records endangered languages before they fall asleep. It revises the fields of grammaticography (writing grammars) and lexicography (writing dictionaries): Grammars and dictionaries ought to be written for language reclamation, i.e. in a user-friendly way, for communities, not only for linguists, as well as employing a user-friendly spelling.

For linguists, the first stage of any language revival must involve a long period of observation and careful listening while learning, mapping and characterizing the specific needs, desires and potentials of an indigenous or minority or culturally endangered community. Only then can one inspire and assist. That said, there are linguistic constraints applicable to all revival attempts. Mastering them would help revivalists and First Nations leaders to work more efficiently.

**COURSE COORDINATOR & LECTURER:**

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**LECTURES: Tuesdays, 2.10pm-4pm,  
N132, Engineering North Building**

**Online Learning: Lang101x: *Language Revival: Securing the Future of Endangered Languages, Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).***

**[www.facebook.com/Revivalistics](http://www.facebook.com/Revivalistics)**

*Stormy Galinyala (=Port Lincoln), South Australia.  
Wardlada is the Barngarla Aboriginal language word  
for 'tree', resembling the word for 'communication'.  
iPhone Photo: Ghil'ad Zuckermann, Galinyala (Port  
Lincoln), South Australia, 2015*