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Field Linguistics (Fall 2004)
LIN 401F
M 5-6, W 4-6

Tucker Childs
Office hours: W 12-2 and by appointment.

Course description

This course investigates the structure of an unknown language by means of elicitation sessions conducted with a native speaker of the language. Students will be trained in elicitation techniques and will practice these techniques by conducting their own elicitation sessions. Students will also learn to efficiently organize their data in electronic form and will further develop their analytic skills. This training will form the basis for further independent investigations.

The language of focus is Sudanese Arabic, one dialect of the Semitic language belonging to the larger phylum known as Afroasiatic. From a linguistic perspective the language has great interest, its morphology, for example, having served as the motivation for multiple tiers in formal representations. Phonetically and phonologically the language also poses some challenges because of its large consonantal inventory and its use of length and secondary articulations.

From a sociolinguistic perspective the language also has some interest in being one of the core examples of *diglossia* (Ferguson 1959). Another point of sociolinguistic interest is that Sudanese Arabic likely forms a continuum with the lingua franca known as Juba (Pidgin) Arabic (Holm 1988), a variety with which our informant is familiar.

Evaluation

Students will be asked to submit a series of short papers over the course of the term, culminating in a longer paper investigating a topic or an aspect of a topic not covered in class. One short paper will come from each of the three following areas: 1) phonetics and phonology; 2) morphology (and syntax); 3) syntax and/or semantics. The long paper will come from an area of the student's choosing after discussion with the instructor.

Marks will be determined on the following basis:

Class participation	10%
Data base (4-6 pp.)	10%
Elicitation (two @ 10% each)	20%
Short papers (4-6 pp.) (three @ 10% each)	30%
Long paper (10-12 pp.)	30%

Late papers will lose a third of a letter mark for every day late (24 hours or less).

Texts

There will be no assigned text. Readings will come from an assortment of articles.

Paper topics and other assignments (Fall 2004)

The descriptions which follow are preliminary and will be expanded upon in class.

Data base

You will be expected to design a data base for your investigation. In your write-up you will need to include a print-out of, say, ten entries from that data base, illustrating how data is entered. Discuss the different fields and how your design will aid in analysis. Briefly discuss the types of sorting you would like to perform and the output you would like to produce. Your data base need not follow the exact pattern of the one discussed in class, although it will likely contain many of the same fields and may build on that pattern. You may, for example, want to articulate a field in which you are particularly interested, e.g., with sub-classificatory information.

Elicitation (2)

You will be expected to conduct two brief elicitation sessions in class. You should prepare a brief hand-out (less than a page) for each member of the class (including the instructor) and time your session to run no more than five minutes. The first session will focus on phonology (including phonetics). I suggest you narrow your topic as much as possible. The second will take place later during the course on a topic more of your own choosing.

Short papers (3)

Remember that each of the short papers is to be only 4-6 pp in length. This fact will restrict how much you are able to say on each topic, so you may want to narrow your discussion to just a part of the assigned topic. Your knowledge of the language at all stages will be only fragmentary, so you can only discuss that about which you have information. I give some ideas for each of the three papers below.

1. Sound structure. There is a choice here.

a) Phonetics and phonemic analysis. Characterize the phonemic inventory of the language to the best of your knowledge thus far. Present your discussion in the form of a chart, discussing the prominent allophones and the environments of each phoneme, using (generative) rules whenever possible. In your chart follow the format of the I.P.A. (and use its symbols). Have the place of articulation going across the top, and "manner" along the left side for the consonants. Present the vowels in the form of a vowel quadrilateral (or triangle as the case may be) separate from the consonants. Support your analysis with minimal pairs whenever possible.

b) Phonotactics: Syllable and word structure. On the basis of what you know so far characterize the syllable and word structure of the language, contrasting the two where they are different. Do different word categories have different structures? Your characterization should present the minimal structures (onset, rhyme, nucleus, coda) needed to describe the language and how each sub-structure can be characterized. What is canonical syllable structure? Are complex onsets allowed? What sort of segments are allowed to fill a coda? What is the status of glides? Be sure to support your discussion with examples throughout.

c) Prosody: Stress. What is the phonetic nature of stress and how is it assigned?

2. Morphology. In this paper you should look at the verbal morphology of Sudanese Arabic. Characterize the functional contrasts registered there and how they are formally manifested. You may want to use the two Comrie books (1976, 1985) for guidance as to possible contrasts.

3. Syntax and/or semantics. For this topic you have a choice. You may also negotiate a topic with the instructor.

a) Phrase and (basic) clause structure.

b) Complement clauses.

Long paper

The topic of this paper may come from any area of the language we've studied but must involve independent work by the student. The topic must be approved by the instructor.

In addition to the topics discussed above, you may want to consider a topic drawn from sociolinguistics or from applied linguistics.

a) Compare and contrast the domains in which Classical Arabic, Sudanese Arabic, and Juba Arabic are used. Discuss these domains with reference to Ferguson's (1959) notion of diglossia.

b) What sort of variation have you been able to identify that is socially conditioned? Briefly describe the nature of that variation (phonological, lexical, or even syntactic) and state the conditioning factors. Alternatively you can control the social factor (sex, age, etc.) and look how it is manifested linguistically.

Some possible applied topics are:

a) Make substantive proposals as to the design of an orthography for Sudanese Arabic, primarily from a linguistic perspective. Would you want to use ideographic

representations, a syllabary, or an alphabet? What letters would you use to represent the sounds of the language and why?

b) What suggestions would you make to language planners in Sudan?

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Schedule

Week	Mon, 4:00-6:00	Wed, 4:00-5:00
1	1. (Sept 11) Preliminaries Bureaucratic details, course goals Background: geographical, genetic, and sociolc The indispensable collaborator Readings: Craig 1979	2. (Sept 14) Elicitation Some elicitation techniques illustrated Recording Transcription Basic vocabulary
2	3. (Sept 19) Organizing an elicitation session Efficiency and ethics Readings: Samarin 1967	4. (Sept 21) Segmental phonology The sounds of Sudanese Arabic Demo: Pharyngeals (J. Anderson) Semantic fields assignment, e.g., farming, cooking, weather, religion, kin terms, colors
3	5. (Sept 26) Phonemic analysis Distributed: Chapter 31 from Davis & Wimbish 1993 Readings: Lindblom 1986, Maddieson 1984, 1986, Stevens 1983?	6. (Sept 28) Prosody Syllable structure and phonotactics Phonology by word category Student elicitation (cont'd) Stress elicitation assignment
4	7. (Oct 3) A typology of prominence Tone vs. accent Stress Readings: Hyman, Lehiste	8. (Oct 5) Stress and intonation Lexical stress and stress beyond the word Intonation Phonology paper topics Student elicitations
5	(Oct 10) Thanksgiving	9. (Oct 12) Recapitulation; Hypercard Phonology review Database design (Carrie Dyk) Readings: Greenberg et al. 1986, Comrie 1989, Shopen 1985
6	10. (Oct 17) Elicitation (TC) Due: Paper 1	11. (Oct 19) Nominal structure Nouns and pronouns Case, gender, number Modifying elements

Week	Mon, 4:00-6:00	Wed, 4:00-5:00
7	12. (Oct 24) Due: Data base sketch Readings: Ibid, Comrie 1976, 1985, (Dahl 1985)	13. (Oct 26) Structure of the verb Verbal morphology, tense, mood, aspect Agreement Student elicitation
8	14. (Oct 31) Readings: Shopen 1985	15. (Nov 2) Derivational morphology Compounds
9	16. (Nov 7) Due: Paper 2 Readings: Ibid	17. (Nov 9) Phrase structure Argument structure Word categories Student elicitation
10	18. (Nov 14) Readings: Ibid	19. (Nov 16) Syntax of the clause Relativization Questions
11	20. (Nov 21) Due: Paper 3 Readings: Heine & Reh 1984, Traugott & Heine 1991	21. (Nov 23) Syntax beyond the clause Subordination, complementizers Reported speech Coordination
12	22. (Nov 28) Due: Long paper topic Readings: Comrie & Smith 1977, Childs 1995	23. (Nov 30) Discourse Genres Expressive language Student elicitation
13	24. (Dec 5) Lexicography Readings: Hartmann 1990	25. (Dec 7) Sociolinguistics Variation Standard Arabic and Juba Arabic Due: Long paper

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Field methods readings (from Keren Rice with additions by T. Childs)

The following is a list of several books and articles that you might find of interest. Three different types of materials are included: linguistic aspects of field work (e.g. eliciting data, organizing data, analyzing data), anthropological and social aspects of field work (working in a different culture, finding people to work with), and miscellaneous material of general interest.

Aitken, Barbara. 1955. A note on eliciting. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 21:83. (response to Harris & Voegelin).

A brief note on the use of pictures drawn by native speakers and of rituals to get linguistic data that is not affected by the presence of the hearer or by translation from English.

Bacon, R.J. 1987. *Clinical Measurement of Speech and Voice*. College Hill.

This is a text used in Speech Pathology. It has a chapter on technical details of taping which might be of interest.

Barnes, J.A. 1973. Some ethical problems in modern fieldwork. *British Journal of Sociology* 14: 118-134.

Can and should laboratory conditions exist in social science field work? Discussion of the need for the field worker to be aware of the effects of field work.

Bouquiaux, Luc & Jacqueline M.C. Thomas. 1992. *Studying and Describing Unwritten Languages*.

See the attached description. Praised by Newman 1993 (?).

Bowen, Elenore Smith (Laura Bohannon). 1954. *Return to Laughter*. Doubleday.

A novel about anthropological field experiences in West Africa.

Craig, Colette Grinevald. 1979. Jacalteco: field work in Guatemala. *Languages and their Speakers*, ed. by Tim Shopen. 3-57. Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop.

A discussion of some of the human dimensions of field work. To be distributed in class.

Darnell, Regna. 1990. Edward Sapir. Linguist, anthropologist, humanist. University of California Press.

An interesting biography of an outstanding linguist and field worker.

DeCamp, David. 1959. Review of S.M. Sapon. A pictorial linguistic interview manual. *Language* 35: 394-402.

A highly critical review of Sapon (see below). DeCamp stresses that different informants are different people, and no single technique will work with all individuals.

Dixon, R.M.W. 1984. *Searching for aboriginal languages: memoirs of a field worker*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

This is a wonderful book; an autobiography describing Dixon's early field experiences in Australia.

Duden. *Das Bildwörterbuch*. 1977. A picture dictionary.

Gudschinsky, Sarah. 1967. *How to Learn an Unwritten Language*. Holt, Rinehart, Winston.

This book is intended for the anthropologist who is not trained in linguistics and who wants to learn to use the language for anthropological purposes. Most valuable for the student with linguistic training is probably the sections of elicitation of data.

Hale, Kenneth. 1965. On the use of informants in field work. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 10. 108-119.

'The native speakers of any language know its structure and the linguist doing field work can make use of this knowledge in ways other than the obvious one of asking an informant to produce utterances, with little or no other direction.' Hale describes a procedure used in a field methods class in which the knowledge of the native speaker was directly used.

Harris, Zellig S., & Carl F. Voegelin. 1953. Eliciting in linguistics. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 9. 59-75.

Discussion of ways of eliciting information, ideas for elicitation techniques, problems with standard elicitation techniques.

Hoijer, Harry. 1958. Native reaction as a criterion in linguistic analysis. *Proceedings of the 8th International Congress of Linguists*. Oslo University Press. 573-583.

How much of native speaker reaction must be observed for the purpose of adequately analyzing linguistic structures?

Kibrik, A.E. 1977. *The Methodology of Field Investigations in Linguistics (Janua Linguarum minor)*. Originally appeared as Monograph 10, *Publications of the Department of Structural and Applied Linguistics*, Moscow State University, 1972. The Hague - Paris: Mouton.

[TC: suffers from bad translating but useful]

Levitt, Martin L. 1989. Preserving linguistic oral records. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 55. 417-423.

A discussion of preserving tape recordings.

Longacre, Robert E. 1964. *Grammar Discovery Procedures: A Field Manual*. Mouton.
This is a step-by-step manual on how to analyze an existing corpus. The basic procedure involves creating charts based on patterns of distribution, co-occurrence, and the like; giving a functional name to each column of the chart; on the basis of similarity of pattern and function, determine which words belong to the same type, which are of different types.

Lounsbury, Floyd G. 1953. Field methods and techniques in descriptive linguistics.
Anthropology Today: An Encyclopaedic Inventory, ed. by A.L. Kroeber.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Overview for anthropologists on the aims of field work. Discussion of aids to data collection (e.g. taping), field techniques for collection of vocabulary, dialect differences, semantic information.

Newman, Paul. 1992. Fieldwork and field methods in linguistics. *California Linguistic Newsletter*. XXIII.2.

An article surveying human dimensions of field work and the status of graduate field methods courses in linguistics departments in the US. The first part is particularly interesting. To be distributed in class. See also the bibliography of this article for other readings of potential interest.

Newmeyer, F.J. & and J. Emonds. 1971. The linguist in America society. Chicago
Linguistics Society 7: 285-305.

The responsibility of the linguist to society.

Nida, Eugene. 1947. Field techniques in descriptive linguistics. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 13: 138-146.

Nida discusses techniques for dealing with an informant (common sense, be careful of too much repetition, watch informant reactions) and an ordered procedure for collecting linguistic data (obtain noun-like words; obtain possessive forms; obtain verb-like words; obtain paradigmatic sentences; obtain texts). He cautions the field worker to be careful not to project English structure on the language of study.

Powdermaker, Hortense. 1966. *Stranger and Friend: The way of an anthropologist*.
New York: W.W. Norton and Co.

Samarin, William J. 1967. *Field linguistics*. Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

A somewhat outdated, but nevertheless excellent, introduction to many aspects of doing field work, including finding informants, eliciting a corpus of data, organizing the corpus, and lots of hints about analysis.

Sapon, Stanley M. 1957. *A Pictorial Linguistic Interview Manual*. Ohio State University.
An attempt to develop 'a common core of linguistic interview procedure in field work ... that is economical of time, low in experimenter-induced error, yielding a high percentage of items directly comparable between subjects, and permitting more realistic quantitative

statements about the language of individuals and groups.’ This is carried out through using pictures for eliciting items.

Shuy, Roger W. 1983. Unexpected by-products of fieldwork. *American Speech* 58: 345-358.

An article of the joys of field work - human benefits, individual benefits, joy of discovery, humor of field work.

Swadesh, Morris. 1965. Language universals and research efficiency in descriptive linguistics. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 10. 147-155.

Swadesh discusses some of the ways in which a theory that is based on a search for universals can make field work more efficient.

Voegelin, Carl F. & Florence M. Robinett. 1959. Obtaining a linguistic sample. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 20. 89-100.

A three part technique for elicitation is described. In the first part, the field worker identifies phonemes and morphemes using pictures. Second, the field worker elicits contrastive pairs and constructs paradigms. Third, the field worker checks previously recorded data, obtaining a wider range of vocabulary from more speakers, and compiles the material in a logical way. They claim that this work can be done in one month.

Waxman, Rosalie H. 1971. *Doing Fieldwork. Warnings and Advice*. University of Chicago Press.

A guide to anthropological fieldwork, dealing with difficulties of fieldwork in three situations (first time fieldwork in Japanese-American relocation centres in World War II; two different field experiences in American Indian communities).

Yegerlehner, J. 1955. A note on eliciting techniques. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 21. 286-288. (response to Aitken and to Harris & Voegelin).

On the use of nonverbal stimuli for eliciting sentences.