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LIN 401F: Field Linguistics (Fall, 2005)
M 4-6, W 4-5
Instructor: 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 weekly sessions. Students will hone their analytic skills and will also learn to efficiently organize their data in electronic form. This training will form the basis for further independent investigations.

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. In addition, students will be asked to demonstrate their understanding of the organization of an electronic data base.

Marks will be determined on the following basis:

Class participation

10%

Data base (3-5 pp)

15%

Short papers (3-5 pp) (three @ 15% each)

45%

Long paper (8-10 pp)

30%

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

Texts

Bouquiaux, Luc & Jacqueline M.C. Thomas. 1992. *Studying and Describing Unwritten Languages*. (Translated by James Roberts.) Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Several duplicated articles.

Paper topics and other assignments

The descriptions which follow are preliminary and will be expanded upon in class. Please remember that late papers lose a third of a mark for every 24 hrs or less they are received after the due date.

Data base

You will be expected to design a data base for your investigation. This involves submitting a print-out of, say, ten entries from that data base, illustrating how the data is entered. Discuss the different fields and how your design will aid in your 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 one-page hand-out for each member of the class (including the instructor) and time your session to run no more than ten minutes. The first session will focus on phonology (including phonetics). I suggest you narrow your topic as much as possible to the testing of a simply stated hypothesis. The second will take place later during the course on a topic more of your own choosing. These elicitation sessions, along with regular participation (preparation, contributions, etc), will form the basis for the class-participation component of the mark.

Short papers (3)

Each of the short papers is to be only 3-5 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 portion of the topics suggested. 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 short papers below.

1. Sound structure.

a) Phonetics and phonemic analysis. Characterize the phonemic inventory of the language to the best of your knowledge. 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 IPA (and

use its symbols) or make clear any deviations you make from the IPA. 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: Tone. Characterize the tonal inventory and tonotactics of the language. Are some tones restricted in where they appear? Which tone is marked? Is tone purely lexical or is it also assigned by the grammar? Are there any tonal sandhi rules?

2. Morphology. In this paper you should look at either the verbal or the nominal morphology. Characterize the functional contrasts registered there and how they are formally manifested. Consult Questionnaire 5 in Bouquiaux and Thomas for possible contrasts and the sorts of questions that can be asked. You may also want to use the two Comrie books (1976, 1985) for guidance as to possible tense and aspectual contrasts that can be marked on verbs, or any of the relevant chapters in Shopen 1985, or even Comrie’s (1981) introduction to language typology.

3. Syntax and/or semantics. For this topic you have a choice. You may also negotiate a topic with the instructor. Besides reviewing the relevant questionnaires in B&T (6-9, 10-17), you may want to regard Comrie 1981 or the articles in Shopen 1985. I give some suggestions below.

a) Phrase and (basic) clause structure. What are the possible phrase structures in the language? Fully characterize the noun phrase, the verb phrase, etc. Characterize basic argument structure. What is basic sentence order and what are the allowable variations? Are there any movement rules?

b) Complement clauses. What are the complementizers in the language? What is the nature of clausal complementation?

c) How do the syntactic facts accord with syntactic universals?

d) Use the framework of lexicalization or grammaticalization to characterize some sub-domain of the grammar.

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 also be approved by the instructor.

References

Comrie, Bernard. 1976. *Aspect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Comrie, Bernard. 1981. *Language universals and linguistic typology: morphology and syntax*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell and Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comrie, Bernard. 1985. *Tense*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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

Shopen, Timothy (ed.). 1985. *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*. vol. 1: Clause structure; vol. 2: Complex constructions; vol. 3: Grammatical categories and the lexicon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press under the auspices of the Center for Applied Linguistics.

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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 The indispensable collaborator Bouquiaux & Thomas 1992 (B&T): 1-26.	2. (Sept 13) Preliminaries Transcription Basic vocabulary B&T: Questionnaires (Q) 1 & 2.
2	3. (Sept 18) Tone Elicitation techniques B&T: 27-94.	4. (Sept 20) The elicitation session Efficiency and ethics Database design B&T: Q4
3	5. (Sept 25) Student elicitations (1) Semantic fields, e.g., farming, cooking, weather, religion, kin terms, colors Consult B&T: Q10-Q17.	6. (Sept 27) Recapitulation Phonemic analysis
4	7. (Oct 2) Prosody Syllable structure and phonotactics Student elicitations (2)	8. (Oct 4) Recapitulation Discussion of Paper 1: Phonology
5	(Oct 9) Thanksgiving	9. (Oct 11) Recapitulation Stress and intonation Due: Paper 1
6	10. (Oct 16) Nominal morphology Student elicitations (3) if needed B&Q: Q5	11. (Oct 18) Recapitulation Discussion of Data base project

Week	Mon, 4:00-6:00	Wed, 4:00-5:00
7	12. (Oct 23) Verbal morphology Tense, mood, aspect Agreement Due: Data base sketch	13. (Oct 25) Recapitulation Discussion of Paper 2: Morphology
8	14. (Oct 30) Morphology Student elicitations (1)	15. (Nov 1) Recapitulation Elicitation of syntax B&Q: Q6-Q7
9	16. (Nov 6) Phrase structure Student elicitations (2) Due: Paper 2	17. (Nov 8) Recapitulation The noun and verb phrase
10	18. (Nov 13) Phrasal syntax Student elicitations (3)	19. (Nov 15) Recapitulation Discussion of Paper 3: Syntax B&Q: Q8-Q9
11	20. (Nov 20) Syntax of the clause Relativization Questions	21. (Nov 22) Recapitulation Discussion of Long paper Due: Paper 3
12	22. (Nov 27) Syntax beyond the clause Subordination, complementizers Reported speech Coordination	23. (Nov 29) Recapitulation Due: Long paper topics
13	24. (Dec 4) Discourse and variation Genres Expressive language Variation	25. (Dec 6) Recapitulation Course evaluation Due: Long paper

Field ix resources and readings

May want to add another Hombert or PHOLIA volume, issue of *Phonology* on expl phy,
Ladd & Docherty lab phy volume

Agar, Michael. 1980. *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. New York: Academic Press.

Albert, Ethel. 1972. "Rhetoric", "logic", and "poetics" in Burundi: culture patterning of speech behavior. *The Ethnography of Communication*, ed. by John J. Gumperz & Dell Hymes. 72-105. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Bourhis, R.Y., H. Giles, & D. Rosenthal. 1981. Notes on the construction of a 'subjective vitality questionnaire' for ethnolinguistic groups. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 2. 145-155.

Briggs, Charles L. 1986. *Learning how to ask: a sociolinguistic appraisal of the role of the interview in social science research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chambers, J.K., & P. Trudgill. 1991. Dialect grammar: data and theory. *Dialects of English*, ed. by P. Trudgill & J.K. Chambers. 291-96. New York & London: Longman.

Cheshire, Jenny.

Comrie, Bernard. 1988b. Role of the field linguist. *California Linguistic Newsletter* 20, 1 (October/November 1988). 17-19. (Reprinted with permission from *Notes on Linguistics*, No. 41, January 1988.)

DeCamp, David. 1974. Neutralizations, iteratives, and ideophones: the locus of language in Jamaica. *Pidgins and Creoles: Current Trends and Prospects*, ed. by David DeCamp and Ian F. Hancock. 46-60. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Dixon, R.M.W. 1990. A changing language situation: the decline of Dyirbal, 1963-89. *Language in Society* 20. 183-200.

Dorian, Nancy C. (ed.). 1989. *Investigating Obsolescence: Studies in Language Contraction and Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greenberg, Joseph H. 1965. Urbanism, migration, and language. *Urbanization and migration in West Africa*, ed. by Hilda Kuper. 50-59. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gudschinsky, Sarah G. 1956. ??.

Gudschinsky, Sarah G. 1964. The ABC's of lexicostatistics (glottochronology).
Language in Culture and Society, ed. by Dell Hymes. 612-623. New York:
Harper & Row.

Holmquist, Jonathan C. 1985. Social correlates of a linguistic variable: a study of a
Spanish village. *Language in Society* 14. 191-203.

Holmquist, Jonathan C. 1989. *Language Loyalty and Linguistic Variation: A Study in
Spanish Cantabria*. Dordrecht and Providence: Foris.

Hornberger, Nancy. 1988. Bilingual education and language maintenance: a southern
Peruvian Quechua case. Dordrecht: Foris.

Kurath, Hans. 1972. *Studies in area linguistics*. Bloomington & London: Indiana
University Press.

Labov, William. 1971. Methodology. *A Survey of Linguistic Science*, ed. by William
Dingwall. College Park, MD: Linguistics Program, University of Maryland. 412-
97.

Labov, William. 1972. The design of a sociolinguistic research project. M.S. (Chapter 2
of the Report of the Sociolinguistics Workshop held by the Central Institute of
Indian Languages, Mysore, India, May-June, 1972.)

Labov, William. 1973a. The boundaries of words and their meaning. *New ways of
analyzing variation in English*, ed. by C.-J. N. Bailey & Roger W. Shuy. 340-73.
Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Labov, William. 1974. What is a linguistic fact? *PdR Press publications in linguistic
theory* 1. Lisse, Belgium: The Peter de Ridder Press. (Also appearing as *Empirical
foundations of linguistic theory in The scope of American linguistics*, 1974, ed.
by Robert Austerlitz. 159-96.)

Ladefoged, Peter, & Anthony Traill. 1980. Instrumental phonetic fieldwork. *UCLA
working papers in phonetics* 49. 28-42.

McEntegart, Damian & R.B. LePage. 1982. An appraisal of the statistical techniques
used in the sociolinguistic survey of multilingual communities. *Sociolinguistic
Variation in Speech Communities*, ed. by S. Romaine. 105-24. London: Edward
Arnold.

Milroy, Lesley. 1980. *Language and Social Networks*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Milroy, Lesley. 1987. *Observing and Analyzing Natural Language*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ohala, John J. & Jeri J. Jaeger. (eds). 1986. *Experimental Phonology*. Orlando, FL:

- Academic Press.
- Ottenheimer, Harriet & Heather Primrose. 1989. Current research on ShiNzwani ideophones. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 19, 2. 77-90.
- Pederson, Lee et al. 1972. *A Manual for Dialect Research in the Southern States*. Georgia State University.
- Rickford, John R. 1980. Analyzing variation in creole languages. *Theoretical orientations in Creole Studies*, ed. by A. Valdman & A. Highfield. 165-179. New York: Academic Press.
- Rickford, John R. 1981d. Sociolinguistic field methods. Course at Stanford.
- Salami, L. Oladipo. 1991. Diffusion and focusing: phonological variation and social networks in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. *Language in Society* 20. 217-45.
- Samarin, William J. 1967. *Field Linguistics: A Guide to Linguistic Fieldwork*. New York.
- Samarin, William J. 1970. Field procedures in ideophone research. *Journal of African Languages* 9, (1). 27-30.
- Samarin, William J. 1971a. Appropriateness and metaphor in the use of ideophones. *Orbis*, 20.2. 356-369.
- Samarin, William J. 1971b. Measuring variation in the use of Gbeya ideophones. Proceedings of the Eighth Congress of the West African Linguistic Society, vol. 2, ed. by M. Houis. 483-88. (Ann. Univ. Abidjan, Série H (Linguistique), Fascicule hors série). Abidjan, Ivory Coast.
- Samarin, William J. 1991. Intersubjective and intradialectal variation in Gbeya ideophones. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 1, 1. 52-62.
- Schatzman, Leonard, & Anselm L. Strauss. 1973. *Field research: strategies for a natural sociology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Shopen, Timothy (ed.). 1985. *Language typology and syntactic description*. Vol. 1: Clause structure; vol. 2: Complex constructions; vol. 3: Grammatical categories and the lexicon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press under the auspices of the Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Shuy, Roger W., W.A. Wolfram, & W.K. Riley. 1968. *Field Techniques in an Urban Language Study*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Ullman, S. 1953. Descriptive semantics and linguistic typology. *Word* 9. 225-240.

- Wald, Benji, & Timothy Shopen. 1981. A researcher's guide to the sociolinguistic variable (ING). *Style and Variation in English*, ed. by T. Shopen and J.M. Williams. 219-249. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop Publishing Company.
- Wimbish, John S. 1990. *SHOEBOX: A Data Management Program for the Field Linguist*. Ambon, Indonesia: Summer Institute of Linguistics & Pattimura University.
- Wolfram, Walt. 1991. Towards a description of a-prefixing in Appalachian English. *Dialects of English*, ed. by P. Trudgill & J.K. Chambers. 229-40. New York & London: Longman.
- Wolfram, Walt, & Ralph W. Fasold. 1974. The study of social dialects in American English. 99-176. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Wolfson, Nessa. 1976. Speech events and natural speech: some implications for sociolinguistic methodology. *Language in society* 5. 189-209.
- Wolfson, Nessa. 1986. Research methodology and the question of validity. *TESOL Quarterly* 20, 4. 689-699.

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Readings of some interest (from K Rice)

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 1992 (?).

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: 345-58.

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).

Yegorlehner, 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.