

LIN 4930/6165 Field Methods

T 5 – 6, Th 6
Anderson 021

Instructor

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Course Description

This course is an introduction to linguistic fieldwork. We will do hands-on investigation of the phonetic, phonological, morphological, and syntactic structure of a lesser-known language and we will explore the techniques used in the elicitation of such information from a native speaker. Much of the course focuses on the following three concerns related to fieldwork: i) practical issues surrounding the collection of reliable linguistic data from native speakers, ii) how to formulate and test hypotheses about the grammatical structure of a language, and iii) linguistic typology. The language this semester is Oromo, a Cushitic macrolanguage of Ethiopia.

Objectives

- Know about different techniques for elicitation of linguistic data
- Use these techniques to elicit data from a native speaker
- Have basic competency in managing language data
- Be able to formulate hypotheses about patterns in “real” linguistic data
- Be able to present data, generalizations, and analyses in a coherent and user-friendly way

Prerequisites

A basic knowledge of morphosyntax and phonology is necessary, including familiarity with the IPA, as is a curiosity about how languages work. For undergraduate students, the prerequisites for this course are LIN3460 Structure of Human Language and LIN3201 Sounds of Human Language. For graduate students, the prerequisites are LIN6501 Syntax 1 and LIN6323 Phonology 1.

Course Materials

The textbook for this course is
Bown, Claire. 2015. *Linguistic fieldwork: A practical guide*. 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

The book has an associated website at pamanyungan.sites.yale.edu/linguistic-fieldwork. Additional course materials will be available on Canvas, lss.at.ufl.edu.

An optional (but expensive) text with a great deal of useful and more in-depth material is the following. Several of the chapters will be available on Canvas.

Chelliah, Shobhana L. and Willem J. de Reuse. 2011. *Handbook of descriptive linguistic fieldwork*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Structure of the Course

Phase 1. Group elicitation and phonology. We will begin by investigating the sound system of the language, largely through elicitation of lexical items and short phrases. Phase 1 will culminate in a phoneme inventory, some understanding of the phonological system, and a practical orthography for the language. This phase will provide a vocabulary and writing system for more advanced elicitations down the road.

Phase 2. Text elicitation and analysis. In Phase 2 we will elicit, transcribe, translate, and annotate a text provided by our speaker. We will not be able to completely analyze the text and so it will provide numerous jumping off points for further investigation.

Phase 3. Targeted elicitation. We will first jointly investigate basic aspects of the language's morphology and syntax. We will then begin more specific, student-led elicitations on topics of your choosing that will lead to final projects. Initial investigation of your topics will be done in class with guidance on your elicitation materials and methodology. You will later have time outside of class to work further with the speaker on your own. The goal of the elicitation is to produce a conference quality paper that can be presented at a research conference and/or published in a working papers volume.

A large portion of the effort involved in doing fieldwork goes into planning the collection of data, collecting the data, and organizing the data afterwards. To aid in the data organization process, we have a dedicated website where we will collectively enter, edit, and store our data. It is a WordPress site available to course participants at <http://lingsite.org/fm/fla/2019a/>. There will be handouts and a class session later in the semester demonstrating how the site works and how to enter data there. Feel free to explore it once I send you login information. There are some basic tutorials.

Course Requirements

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|------------------|-----|
| • homework | 40% |
| • elicitation(s) | 30% |
| • final paper | 30% |

Attendance and participation. This course is largely about collecting and analyzing linguistic data. Although most of the data from class will ultimately be recorded, posted, and shared, you cannot do well if you are not present in class and actively engaged in the collection and analysis.

Homework. There will be several homeworks throughout the semester. They will involve a combination of

- application of elicitation methodologies
- language description
- analysis
- review of readings

You may discuss the content of the homework with other people in the course and you may consult outside sources. Unless explicitly allowed, however, you must write up your homework entirely on your own, without help, in accordance with the University of Florida Honor Code and the academic honesty guidelines. It is imperative that you properly cite outside sources and data in your assignments.

Elicitation. More detailed information about Phase 3 of the course will follow but here are the basics. Each class member will be responsible for participating in at least two in-class elicitation sessions throughout the semester. Graduate students should expect to do additional sessions if there is time. Two people will co-lead each elicitation session.

You will be required to come up with goals for the session, the type(s) of elicitation you want to do, and the actual set of things to be elicited (the protocol). You should plan on developing the protocol well in advance so that i) you can refine it with the instructor before the session and ii) you can provide other class members and the consultant with a copy. The final protocol must be posted on Canvas by midnight the day before the actual elicitation session. During the session, one person will elicit the data and write it on the board while the other will serve as the “scribe” and document everything that occurs in the session.

After the elicitation session, the co-leaders are responsible for posting the data on the WordPress website and creating one or more discussion posts. Once the data and discussion have been posted, others in the class may see it, add comments, and write new posts.

Final paper. The final paper for the course is due on Thursday, December 12 at noon. The paper should be 10-15 pages for undergraduates and 15-20 pages for graduate students. The topic should be fairly focused but may come from any area of the language’s grammar and must be approved by the instructor. It may be descriptive and/or theoretical in nature. More information will follow about various options. The plan is that you will have about two to three hours of elicitation on your own outside of class with the consultant towards the end of the semester to pursue your final paper topic, in addition to any elicitation you do on the topic in class.

Grading

Homeworks will be graded using the letter scale below. The corresponding numerical score on a one hundred point scale is given.

A	96	excellent	C+	78		D	65	marginal work
A-	92		C	75	satisfactory	D-	62	
B+	88		C-	72		E	30	unsatisfactory
B	85	good	D+	68			0	missing work
B-	82							

The course grading scale is as follows:

A	93.3 – 100	B	83.3 – 86.6	C	73.3 – 76.6	D	63.3 – 66.6
A-	90 – 93.2	B-	80 – 83.2	C-	70 – 73.2	D-	60 – 63.2
B+	86.7 – 89.9	C+	76.7 – 79.9	D+	66.7 – 69.9	E	< 60

Further information about UF’s grading policies and the calculation of grade point averages is at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Miscellaneous

Missed/Late Work. You should assume that late work will not be accepted. All requests for exceptions due to illness, religious obligations, unexpected emergencies, or other extenuating circumstances should be made **before** the exam date or homework due date if at all possible.

Academic honesty. Academic misconduct, including but not limited to cheating and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. It may result in disciplinary action and an E for the course. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

If you use outside references in your work, they should always be properly cited. Copying or sharing any part of your homework assignments in any way, shape, or form is strictly prohibited. For computer work, this includes, but is not limited to, using the same file/document as someone else, using a modified file/document, or copying information between files/documents. No written work may be a joint effort unless explicitly permitted and acknowledged.

Accommodations for students with disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Evaluations. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Campus resources. The following health and wellness resources are available to students:

U Matter, We Care, umatter@ufl.edu, 392-1575
Counseling & Wellness Center, <https://counseling.ufl.edu>, 392-1575
Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
University Police Department, <http://www.police.ufl.edu>, 392-1111 (or dial 9-1-1_

Academic resources. The following academic resources are available:

E-learning technical support, 392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu, <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>
Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, <https://career.ufl.edu/>
Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>
Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420, <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138, <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints On-Campus, <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>
On-Line Students Complaints: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

Schedule

The following schedule is a rough estimate of the topics to be covered and our progress. Please be aware that the schedule will be influenced to a large extent by findings during our elicitation sessions, so prepare to be flexible and expect changes – just as in the field.

Readings should be done for the day indicated. Chapters listed below are from the Bower book unless otherwise indicated. Please also refer to the materials for each chapter on the textbook's webpage: <http://pamanyungan.sites.yale.edu/linguistic-fieldwork>. Other materials will be available on Canvas under Files > Readings. Handouts listed should be read as well. Readings listed as optional provide more information about the topic that week if you would like to know more.

The typical pattern will be that we will discuss field methods-related and language-related topics during period 5 on Tuesday and will do elicitations in period 6 on Tuesday and Thursday. Blank days in the schedule are tentatively dedicated to elicitation.

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS	READING/WORK
1	8/20	syllabus, goals of fieldwork, getting started	Bowern ch. 1, Hyman 2001 (optional) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oromo_language https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Afaan_Oromo handout 1-Components of Fieldwork
	8/22	getting to know the consultant, first elicitation	Bowern ch. 3 handout 2-Bowern fieldnotes suggestions protocol 1-Swadesh list and basic phrases
2	8/27	audio technology, phonetics/phonology	Bowern ch. 2, 5 Chelliah and de Reuse ch. 10 (optional), Ladefoged 2003 (optional) billposer.org/Linguistics/Computation/LectureNotes/AudioData.html
	8/29	Swadesh vocabulary	HW1
3	9/3		
	9/5		HW2
4	9/10	organizing the elicitation session	Bowern ch. 4, Chelliah and de Reuse ch. 8 (optional) handout 3-The elicitation process
	9/12		HW3
5	9/17	elicitation methodologies 1	Bowern ch. 6
	9/19		HW4
6	9/24	working with texts	Bowern ch. 9 Chelliah 2001 (optional), Chelliah and de Reuse ch. 13.4 (optional) handout 4-Text elicitation
	9/26		
7	10/1	elicitation methodologies 2	Bowern ch. 6, 7 Chelliah and de Reuse ch. 12 (optional)
	10/3		HW5
8	10/8	linguistic description	Weber 2005, Noonan 2005 handout 5-final paper
	10/10		
9	10/15		HW6
	10/17		
10	10/22		
	10/24		
11	10/29	library work	Bowern ch. 13

	10/31		HW7
12	11/5		
	11/7		
13	11/12	ethical field research	Bowern ch. 11, Chelliah and de Reuse ch. 6, Rice 2012
	11/14		
14	11/19	minority & endangered languages	Bowern ch. 11, Grinevald 2007
	11/21		
15	11/26	real fieldwork projects	Bowern ch. 10, Chelliah and de Reuse ch. 5, 7 (optional)
16	12/3		
	12/12	final paper due at noon	

Resources

You are free to consult materials on any topic related to this course: the language itself, related languages, linguistics, terminology, grammar, fieldwork, language description/documentation, etc. Some general references are below. Those with a * are available on Canvas.

General Linguistics References

SIL glossary of linguistics terms, <https://glossary.sil.org>

Field Methods References

See in particular the following for references:

Rice, Keren. 2011. Fieldwork. In *Oxford Bibliographies Online*.
<http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com>

- Abbi, Anvit. 2001. *A manual of linguistic field work and structures of Indian languages*. Munich: Lincom Europa.
- Aikhenald, Alexandra Y. (ed.). 2007. Focus on linguistic fieldwork. *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 60.
- Bouquiaux, Luc and Jacqueline M. C. Thomas. 1992. *Studying and describing unwritten languages*. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics.
- Chelliah, Shobhana L. and Willem J. de Reuse. 2011. *Handbook of descriptive linguistic fieldwork*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Craig, Colette. 1979. Jacalteco: field work in Guatemala. In Timothy Shopen (ed.). *Languages and their speakers*. Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop, 3-57.
- Crowley, Terry. 2007. *Field linguistics: A beginner's guide*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 2007. Field linguistics: A minor manual. *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 60, 12-31.
- Everett, Daniel L. 2004. Coherent fieldwork. In: Piet van Sterkenberg (ed.), *Linguistics today*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 141-162.
- Grinevald, Colette. 2007. Linguistic fieldwork among speakers of endangered languages. In Osahito Miyaoka, Osamu Sakiyama, and Michael E. Krauss (eds.). *The vanishing languages of the Pacific Rim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 35-76.
- Hale, Kenneth. 1965. On the use of informants in field work. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 10, 108-119.
- Harris, Zelig S. and Carl F. Voegelin. 1953. Eliciting in linguistics. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 9. 59-75.
- Kibrik, Alexander. E. 1977. *The methodology of field investigations in linguistics*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Ladefoged, Peter. 2003. *Phonetic data analysis: An introduction to fieldwork and instrumental techniques*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lounsbury, Floyd G. 1953. Field methods and techniques in descriptive linguistics. In A.L. Kroeber (ed.) *Anthropology today: An encyclopedic inventory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Matthewson, Lisa. 2004. On the methodology of semantic fieldwork. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 70, 369-415.
- Newman, Paul. 1992. Fieldwork and field methods in linguistics. *California Linguistic Newsletter*. XXIII.2.
- Newman, Paul, and Martha Ratliff (eds.). 2001. *Linguistic fieldwork*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Nida, Eugene. 1947. Field techniques in descriptive linguistics. *IJAL* 13, 138-146.
- Sakel, Jeanette, and Daniel L. Everett. 2012. *Linguistic fieldwork*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Samarin, William J. 1967. *Field linguistics*. Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Thieberger, Nicholas. (ed.). 2012. *The Oxford handbook of linguistic fieldwork*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Vaux, Bert, and Justin Cooper. 1998. *Introduction to linguistic field methods*. Munich: Lincom Europa.
- Vaux, Bert, Justin Cooper, and Emily Tucker. 2007. *Linguistic field methods*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers.

Language typology

- Dixon, R. M. W. 2010a. *Basic linguistic theory: Volume 1, Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 2010b. *Basic linguistic theory: Volume 2, Grammatical topics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 2012. *Basic linguistic theory: Volume 3, Further grammatical topics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haspelmath, Martin, Matthew Dryer, David Gil, and Bernard Comrie. 2005. *World atlas of linguistic structures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Payne, Thomas E. 1997. *Describing morphosyntax: A guide for field linguists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shopen, Timothy. *Language typology and syntactic description*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Song, Jae Jung. 2010. *The Oxford handbook of linguistic typology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swadesh, Morris. 1965. Language universals and research efficiency in descriptive linguistics. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 10. 147-155.

Language documentation

- links on language documentation and description: <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/tools-at-lingboard/links.php>
- Gippert, Jost, Nikolaus P. Himmelmann, and Ulrike Mosel (eds.). 2006. *Essentials of language documentation*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Himmelmann, Nikolaus P. 1998. Documentary and descriptive linguistics. *Linguistics* 36, 161-195.
- Himmelmann, Nikolaus P. 2006. Language documentation: What is it and what is it good for? In Jost Gippert, Nikolaus Himmelmann, and Ulrike Mosel (eds.), *Essentials of language documentation*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1-30.
- Woodbury, Anthony C. 2003. Defining documentary linguistics. In Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language documentation and description, Vol. 1*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 35-51.
- Woodbury, Anthony C. 2007. On thick translation in linguistic documentation. In Peter K. Austin (ed.), *Language documentation and description, Vol. 4*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 120-135.

Grammar writing

Ameka, Felix K. Alan Dench, and Nicholas Evans (eds.). 2006. *Catching language: The standing challenge of grammar writing*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Payne, Thomas E., and David J. Weber. (eds.). 2007. *Perspectives on grammar writing*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. [originally published as 2005, Special issue of *Studies in Language* 30]. See especially the papers by Noonan, Rice, and Weber.

Tools/Software

IPA fonts: <https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/content/ipa-fonts>

Audacity audio editing software: <https://www.audacityteam.org>

Praat phonetic analysis software: <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>

Fieldworks Language Explorer (FLEx): <https://software.sil.org/carla/flex/> (for Windows)

ELAN multimedia annotator: <https://tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan/>

glossing rules: <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>

questionnaires: <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/tools-at-lingboard/questionnaires.php>

*Comrie, Bernard and Norval Smith. 1977. *Lingua Descriptive Studies: questionnaire*. *Lingua* 42, 1-72.