

Ling/Anth 588

Linguistic Elicitation and Documentation

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Thursdays 3:00-6:30, SSCI 114

What it's about:

This class gives you the chance to do real hands-on linguistics with a native speaker of an unfamiliar language.

- Goals:
- 1) Learn elicitation techniques and data management skills
 - 2) Learn ethics of field work
 - 3) Develop linguistic analytical skills
 - 4) Develop an analysis of data related to a topic of your choice in the target language

Language and Consultant: We will be working with Sra. Teresa Damian, a speaker and teacher of **Ngigua**, an Otomanguean language spoken in the province of Puebla, Mexico. She is from San Marcos Tlacoyalco, and her language is often also called "San Marcos Tlacoyalco Popoloca" in documents (including the Ethnologue). However, it is not appropriate to call the language Popoloca, as it is an uncomplimentary outsider's word, a relic of Aztec rule. *Ngigua* is the proper name used by members of the language community.

Prerequisite:

At least one graduate-level course in linguistics.

Materials:

Get: a 3-ring binder to put your notes in, and lined paper to take notes on. I prefer a pad, which is easier to carry around, and then I 3-hole punch it to put it in my binder.

You will also need a dedicated folder on your hard drive *and* in an external backup, which I trust all of you already have.

If you would like to use your own CompactFlash card for audio recordings, that's fine too; they're not too expensive. But we have one that we can use for the class, so this is definitely not necessary.

NB: *There is a fee attached to this course:* \$84 per student, which will be billed to your bursar's account by the university. This normally (collectively) pays for our consultant; in this case, it will pay for materials we will produce in aid of our consultant's work as a teacher in Mexico.

Requirements and evaluation:

5% Meet IRB requirements for social science research, submit CITI form, COI form

15% Lead three elicitation sessions, two in-class, one on your own.

– 9%: submit plan for session **7 days before** each (3% each)

– 6%: conducting sessions appropriately (2% each)

20% Data management for your elicitation sessions:

a) Post the recording of your session to D2L (in a low-density format).

b) Write up transcriptions, glosses and translations of the data from all three elicitation sessions (in Word)

c) Post your transcriptions to the D2L site

(All of this is due: **7 days after** your elicitation sessions — those weeks will be a *LOT* of work)

30% 2 evaluations of your *complete* field notes, 15% each:

(Due: **MARCH 13** and **APRIL 17**)

15% Final paper (involves working independently with consultant)

Topic statement due **MARCH**

Final paper due **MAY 8**, but can be turned in earlier.

10% **10 hours of in-kind exchange work** for the language consultant and her community. Research in the U of A library? IT assistance? Update the Wikipedia page on Ngigua? Take her to the desert museum? Proofread papers? Produce an Ngigua story book? Ask about what might be useful or needed, figure out what you can contribute, and do it! A one-page report on this is due on **APRIL 24**.

Individual time with consultant:

You will get an opportunity to spend up to 45 minutes of individual elicitation time with our consultant, most likely during one of the final two classes of the semester (4/25 or 5/1). This time should be focussed on eliciting data relevant to your paper topic. The same data management requirements apply to this session as to the in-class sessions.

Books (recommended but not required):

Bowern, Claire. 2008. *Linguistic Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan .

Vaux, Bert, Justin Cooper and Emily Tucker. 2007. *Linguistic Field Methods*. Eugene, OR. Wipf & Stock Publishers.

Schedule (subject to extreme revision):

January 16: Ethics of field research. Data management discussion.

Read the following (avail on d2l, both pretty short):

Holton, Gary. 2009. Relatively Ethical: A Comparison of Linguistic Research Paradigms in Alaska and Indonesia. *Language Documentation and Conservation*. Vol. 3, No. 2:161-175

Rice, Keren . 2006. Ethical issues in linguistic fieldwork: An overview. *Journal of Academic Ethics* 4:123-155.x

Assignment (by January 23): Do CITI test, send verification form to me

January 21: Session procedures, plan of topics, scheduling individuals. Discussion of what information on Nguia we can find. Preparatory training with recorder.

January 23: First session with Sra Damian: learn about the language, our consultant, the Nguia people and culture. Greetings, politeness words/phrases. Some basic wordlist/phrase elicitation by Heidi. Identifying basic phonemic contrasts, work on (narrow) phonetic transcription of the language.

January 30 _____

Continued wordlist and phrase elicitation. Identifying basic phonemic contrasts, tones work on (narrow) phonetic transcription of the language. Basic word order in TP and DP

Feb 6 _____

Word and phrase elicitation. Getting closer to (narrow) phonetic transcription of the language. Fill out paradigm of intransitive, transitive, ditransitive sentences.

Feb 13 _____

Morphology & Syntax: Basic inflection -- verbal and nominal (agreement, tense, mood, aspect, case, gender, number). Pronouns.

Feb 20 _____

Matrix vs. embedded clauses (both declarative and yes/no questions). Wh-questions. Negation. Conditionals.

Feb 27 _____

Syntax: arguments vs. adjuncts -- word order possibilities, extraction of, extraction from. Purpose-clauses, raising, control.

Mar 6 _____

Morphosyntax: Valence-changing. Passives, causatives, middles, reflexives. Benefactives? Conditions A and B/obviation.

Mar 13: _____

Morphology: Word-formation processes -- derivation, compounding. Verbal and adjectival participles? Verbal nouns. Adjectival inflection.

Mar 20: SPRING BREAK

Mar 27 _____

Noun phrases: Adjectival, PP, and relative modification, with and without possessives. Alienable/inalienable possession. *One*-constructions (NP ellipsis). Noun phrases: determiners and quantifiers. Cardinal and ordinal numbers. Weak/strong quantification and basic clausal syntax.

Apr 3 _____

Comparatives (adjectival), superlatives. Nominal and verbal comparison. Scope: Generics, definites, specifics and indefinites (opaque contexts). Quantifiers and negation. Deletion phenomena: Coordination, ellipsis, sluicing, swiping, gapping... Parasitic gaps? ACD? Comparative subdeletion?

Apr 10 _____

Semantics: modality, scales, evidentials, telicity, definiteness, presupposition, projective meanings, embedded deixis... Discourse structure?

April 17:

Wrap-up: open topics in any area: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics

April 24: Individual sessions

May 1: Individual sessions