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LING 475.01: Linguistic Field Methods

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Linguistic Field Methods

LING 475/575

University of Montana

Spring 2019

Instructor: Leora Bar-el

SYLLABUS

"Be open to learn" – Keren Rice (2001:230)

Instructor information

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Social Science Building, Room 210

To reach me by phone, you can leave a message in the Anthropology main office 406-243-2693

Office hours: Mondays 1:30pm-3pm and Wednesdays 10:30am-12pm, or by appointment

Course meeting times and venue

Tuesdays and Thursdays

2pm-3:20pm

SS262

Additional meetings will be scheduled outside of class time (times/venues TBA)

Course description

This course is an introduction to field methods in linguistics. The goal of this course is to become familiar with the practical and technical skills involved in conducting fieldwork in linguistics. In this course we learn how to collect, record, organize, store and analyze elicited linguistic data. The primary focus will be on research in phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, though we may touch on other research areas during the course. We will also be discussing the ethical issues involved in linguistic fieldwork and the communication of fieldwork results. Throughout the course we will be working with a language consultant in order to learn *firsthand* about the target language.

Language focus (subject to change)

This semester, our language focus is **Kirundi**. Kirundi is a member of the Bantu language family. Our language consultant is Evrard Sinarinzi. He will be meeting with us throughout the course.

Prerequisites and co-convening

LING 470 is a prerequisite for this course. LING 575 co-convenes with LING 475 (see further information below on graduate student requirements).

Moodle and Box

This course has an [online supplement Moodle site](#) (click on Moodle NetID Login). Slides, handouts, assignments, and other materials will be posted there. Registered students will also have access to a shared [UM Box](#) folder. You will be uploading recordings, assessed work, etc. to Moodle and to our shared Box folder.

Technical Support

UMOnline: 406-243-4999 or toll-free 866-225-1641; [email](#); [website](#)

IT Central: 406-243-4357; [e-mail](#); [website](#)

Basic organization of the course (subject to change; see also schedule below)

- Generally, in-class elicitation sessions will take place on Tuesdays, and discussions, presentations, etc. will take place on Thursdays.
 - You will be divided into groups of 3-5 students (group assignment will be determined based on a combination of your schedule availability, level of study (i.e., graduate/undergraduate), and research interests). Each group will meet with our language consultant for a one-hour elicitation session each week for 9 weeks of the course. Groups will take turns planning and facilitating the in-class sessions; when a group is not leading the in-class session, they will meet with our language consultant outside of class. Group members will decide amongst themselves how elicitation sessions are structured.
 - Our language consultant will start attending our class in Week 4. Tuesday in-class elicitation sessions will be held 2:20pm-3:20pm (though class still starts at 2pm). Out of class elicitation schedules will be announced as soon as schedules are coordinated.
 - For the first few weeks of the course we will be discussing some of the practical aspects of conducting linguistic fieldwork (see topics in the schedule below). As you start collecting data we will devote some in-class discussions to your research progress, methodological issues, data, analysis, and other issues that arise from your data collection (what works/what doesn't, etc.)
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Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will:

- Have the basic skills to conduct linguistic fieldwork with a fluent speaker of a language, primarily focused on elicitation techniques
 - Be familiar with audio-recording techniques for linguistic fieldwork
 - Know how to organize and analyze your data
 - Understand the ethical practices involved in linguistic fieldwork
 - Be able to communicate your research findings in the form of progress reports, oral presentations, research papers, etc., based on data that you collect
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Assessment (undergraduate)

Participation	15%
Ethics training	5%
Elicitation reports & database maintenance	30%
Project proposal	5%
Progress report & presentation	15%
Final presentation	10%
Final paper	20%

- **Participation:** This is a crucial component of this course. To succeed in this course, you need to attend each class and be prepared for the scheduled activities (elicitation sessions, discussions, presentations, etc.). You are also responsible to the members of your elicitation group and must keep up with schedules and duties. Schedules (blank copies can be downloaded from the Schedules folder on our course Moodle page) are due by **9am Monday January 14**.
- **Elicitation reports:** You are required to write up your collected data on a weekly basis. Elicitation reports must be uploaded to Moodle **by 9am on Wednesdays** (the week following your elicitation). You are also required to maintain the course sound file and elicitation reports databases.
- **Ethics training:** Conducting research with human subjects must be approved by the [UM Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#). Before you can collect data, you are required to complete a [Human Subjects Protection Course](#). For this course you are required to complete Sections 1, 2, and 6 of the [UM Online Research Ethics Course](#). Copies of your assessment certificates (available electronically upon successful completion of the course) must be uploaded to the IRB folder of our course Moodle site by **9am on Monday January 28**. Note: be sure to enter

your name before beginning each assessment so that your name appears on your certificate upon successful completion of the assessment. You cannot collect data before you have submitted your assessment certificates and I have received approval from the IRB. If you have already have ethics certificates that are dated within the last 3 years, you have two options: (i) retake the ethics course and submit your new certificates, or (ii) submit your older certificates and complete a short (~1-page, single-spaced) assignment.

- **Project proposals:** For your project in this course, you will choose a part of the Kirundi grammar to explore. You will write a proposal for your project and uploaded it to Moodle by **2pm (before class) on Thursday February 14**. You will give a brief informal presentation of your research project in class on that day.
- **Progress reports:** You will write a progress report and upload it to Moodle by **2pm on Tuesday March 19**. You will give a brief progress report presentation (incl. a 1-pg handout) **in class on Thursday March 21**.
- **Final papers** and short summaries of your findings for a non-specialist audience (see below) must be uploaded to Moodle **by 9am on Tuesday April 30**.
- **Final presentations** will take place during the last two weeks of classes. A presentation schedule will be circulated later in the term.
- An important component of fieldwork can be communicating the results of your research to a consultant/speech community/wider audience (who may not be linguists), in an accessible way. In addition to your papers, you will also prepare a short summary of your research findings aimed at describing that aspect of the language to a non-specialist audience. More information will be circulated later in the course.

Plagiarism is an offence and is not tolerated. You are welcome (and encouraged) to discuss readings, data, analysis, elicitation techniques, etc. together with classmates, but you **must** write up your work **on your own**.

Assessment (graduate)

Participation	10%
IRB and ethics training	10%
Elicitation reports & database maintenance	30%
Project proposal	5%
Progress report & presentation	15%
Final presentation	10%
Final paper and conference abstract	20%

In addition to the undergraduate assessment items, graduate students taking this course are also required to (i) complete an IRB application for their research project, and (ii) write a conference-style abstract of your research paper. Graduate student work is also expected to be of a more advanced nature. Further information will be made available to graduate students during the semester.

Grading criteria

A	93-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%	F	Below 60%
A-	90-92%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%		
		B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%		

Required text

Bowern, Claire. 2015. *Linguistic Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. [a companion website from the first (2008) edition of the book is available: <http://pamanyungan.sites.yale.edu/linguistic-fieldwork>]

Library Reserves

This course has a Library Course Reserves webpage. From the [Mansfield Library website](#), click on the Course Reserves tab in the search window. Books are on reserve (listed below) are available from the Information Centre on the main floor of the library (Level 3). These books are on 48hr reserve:

- Bowern, Claire. 2015. *Linguistic Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
 Crowley, Terry. 2007. *Field Linguistics: A Beginner's Guide*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Ladefoged, Peter. 2003. *Phonetic Data Analysis: An Introduction to Fieldwork and Instrumental Techniques*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Newman, Paul and Martha Ratliff (eds.). 2001. *Linguistic Fieldwork*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Payne, Thomas. 1997. *Describing Morphosyntax: a Guide for Field Linguists*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Sakel, Jeanette and Daniel Everett. 2012. *Linguistic Fieldwork: A Student Guide*. CUP.
- Thieberger, Nicholas (ed.). 2012. *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Fieldwork*. Oxford: OUP.
- Vaux, Bert, Justin Cooper & Emily Tucker. 2007. *Linguistic field methods*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.

E-book available at Mansfield Library

Chelliah, Shobhana and Willem de Reuse. 2011. *Handbook of Descriptive Linguistic Fieldwork*. Springer.

Some additional online resources

- Stanford University Department of Linguistics: [Resources for Linguistic Fieldwork](#)
- Language and Cognition Group [Field Manuals and Stimulus Materials](#) (from the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen).
- [Typological tools for field linguistics](#) (from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig).
- Linguistic Society of America [Ethics Blog](#)
- University of Toronto's Linguistic [Fieldwork Preparation Guide](#) (not updated regularly, but contains useful links)
- [The World Atlas of Language Structures Online](#) (searchable database of language structures gathered primarily from descriptive grammars).
- [Leipzig Glossing Rules](#) (a set of conventions for interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glosses).
- [Totem Field Storyboards](#) (a site for sharing storyboards that can be used for language data collection).

Other resources

- The resource lists above are by no means exhaustive. You are expected to find books, articles and other resources related to your chosen research topic throughout the course.
- Other relevant materials may be introduced during the course and posted on Moodle where possible. You are always welcome to come speak to me about advice on materials to consult.
- If the library does not own a resource that you are looking for, you can request it through [Interlibrary Loan](#) (ILL). See also the Library's [Research and Find Materials](#) page for additional information.
- Looking for more help at the library? Explore the resources on the [Mansfield Library website](#), use their chat or e-mail feature, or visit the Reference Desk in person.
- Find a library resource that you would like me to put on reserve for our class? Come across articles, links or other online resources that our class might benefit from? Let me know.

Additional materials that you will need

A notebook for transcribing data during elicitations. The type of notebook you use is up to you. I suggest a bound notebook (not loose leaf paper). My own preference is a hard back notebook (for situations where I don't have a surface to write at), with binding (usually spiral) that allows the notebook to be laid flat and folded over easily.

Some campus resources

UM Writing and Public Speaking Center

The University of Montana Writing and Public Speaking Center offers students in all disciplines free support as they write or prepare presentations for any course. Welcoming all students, The Writing Center provides a learning environment where students can engage in supportive conversations about their work and receive feedback at any point during their process. To make an appointment or learn more about the center, visit [The Writing and Public Speaking Center website](#) or call 243-2266.

UM Food Pantry

Any student who is struggling to access food or housing and believes this may affect their academic performance is encouraged to contact the [UM Food Pantry](#) or [ASUM Renter Center](#) at 243-2017 for support. In addition to the UM Food Pantry in the UC West Atrium, Grizzly Cupboards can currently be found on the Missoula College Campus in room 430, Trio Student Support Services in Lommasson Center room 180, the VETS Office at 1000 E. Beckwith, and at AISS in suite 113 of the Payne Family Native American Center.

Course Policies and Procedures

- **Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class and be an active participant. Unexcused lateness or absences will result in deductions to your participation grade. You are responsible for any missed material. You are expected to attend each of your out-of-class meetings with our consultant. If you are late to an out-of-class meeting or miss an out-of-class meeting, you are expected to inform your group members as early as possible. Note that if you miss an in-class or out-of-class elicitation, you will not be able to reschedule with our consultant. Missed work due to excused absences can be made-up upon consultation with me.
- **Respect your classmates and our language consultant:** Arrive to class **on time**. You are responsible for all material covered, including announcements, questions/answers, etc., that may occur at the beginning of class. If you are late, please be courteous to our language consultant, your fellow classmates and me – avoid being disruptive. If you anticipate being late to class regularly (e.g., due to a work schedule, a class on the other side of campus, etc.), inform me as soon as possible.
- **Student Conduct Code:** You are expected to be familiar with the *UM Student Conduct Code*, which is downloadable from the [Dean of Students webpage](#). You are also expected to be familiar with UM Academic Policies and Procedures, which can be found on the [Academic Policies and Procedures webpage](#).
- **E-mail:** Course information will be circulated by e-mail to your UM e-mail address (usually via Moodle, but in some cases, directly to your individual e-mail address). Make sure that you check that e-mail account often. **You are responsible for ensuring that you are able to receive any course information circulated by e-mail.** If you have any concerns about this, please contact me immediately.
- **Course Accommodations Statement (DSS):** The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or by calling 406-243-2243 for assistance in developing a plan to address program modifications. If you are already working with Disability Services your responsibilities are to contact me to discuss reasonable and appropriate modifications that may be necessary. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide a reasonable and appropriate modification. For more information, visit the [Disability Services for Students](#) website.
- **Technical Requirements:** Using the Moodle learning environment requires your computer to be set up to view and download documents, webpages, etc. More information can be found on the [UMOnline student support website](#). Contact UMOline for assistance: 406-243-4999 or toll-free 866-225-1641; [e-mail](#).
- **Naming and Submitting Assessed Work:** Unless otherwise noted, assessed work must be uploaded to the relevant section on Moodle or shared folder on Box as either .doc or .pdf files and named appropriately.

Proposed Schedule (subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	Topics/Activities	Readings* and Deadlines**
1	Thurs	Jan. 10	Course overview and introduction	
2	Tues	Jan. 15	What is linguistic fieldwork?	Schedules due by 9am Mon Jan 14 Ch. 1, Ch. 13
	Thurs	Jan. 17	Ethics	Ch. 11, Ch. 12 (§12.4 only)
3	Tues	Jan. 22	Recording equipment & techniques	Ch. 2
	Thurs	Jan. 24	Elicitation techniques	Ch. 3, 5, 6, 7 (see also relevant chapters in books on reserve, etc.)
4	Tues	Jan. 29	In-class elicitation - Leora	Ethics certificates due 9am Mon Jan 28
	Thurs	Jan. 31	Preparing research proposals; Elicitation techniques (cont'd)	Continue reading on elicitation techniques

5	Tues	Feb. 5	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Feb. 7	Data management	Ch. 4
6	Tues	Feb. 12	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Feb. 14	Informal project proposal presentations	Project proposals due by 9am
7	Tues	Feb. 19	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Feb. 21	Informal group progress updates	Come to class prepared to give us an update
8	Tues	Feb. 26	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Feb. 28	Presenting research in progress	Bring questions, data, etc. to class
9	Tues	Mar. 5	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Mar. 7	Discussion: data/methods/analysis	Bring questions, data, etc. to class
10	Tues	Mar. 12	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Mar. 14	Discussion: data/methods/analysis	Bring questions, data, etc. to class
11	Tues	Mar. 19	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	Progress reports due by 9am
	Thurs	Mar. 21	Progress report presentations	
12	Tues	Mar. 26	Spring Break – No Class	
	Thurs	Mar. 28	Spring Break – No Class	
13	Tues	Apr. 2	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Apr. 4	Fieldwork outcomes	Ch. 14
14	Tues	Apr. 9	In-class elicitation – Group TBA	
	Thurs	Apr. 11	Preparing final papers & presentations	Bring presentation/paper drafts, notes, questions, etc. to class
15	Tues	Apr. 16	Student Presentations	Schedule TBA
	Thurs	Apr. 18	Student Presentations	Schedule TBA
16	Tues	Apr. 23	Student Presentations	Schedule TBA
	Thurs	Apr. 25	Course wrap-up	Final papers due by 9am Tues Apr 30

* “Ch.” refers to chapters from our main textbook *Linguistic Fieldwork: A Practical Guide* (Bower 2015). Additional readings may be assigned or suggested throughout the course. They will be posted on Moodle where available. You are expected to consult additional resources relating to your chosen research topic. See above for further discussion.

** Elicitation reports must be uploaded to our shared Box folder by 9am on Wednesdays, the week following your elicitation.

This syllabus is subject to change