

Course: LIN 528 Field methods II – Syllabus
Term: Spring 2006
Instructor: Bohnemeyer
Text: Vaux & Cooper 1999 (copies of selected chapters will be handed out in class)

Aims of the course: This is the second half of a two-semester course that provides thorough hands-on experience in collecting, processing, and analyzing linguistic data for the purposes of language documentation and description. The course should benefit not only prospective field workers, but any student of linguistics interested in working with primary data other than their own native speaker intuitions.

Procedure: The students will work as a collective under the instructor's supervision, with a native speaker of Estonian. The goal is to jointly elaborate, over the course of 30 weeks, a sketch of the language, comprising descriptions of the consultant's mental grammar and lexicon and a small text corpus. This joint project will be divided into a sequence of phases, each defined by a set of local goals and methods. For each phase, each student will be assigned a different task.

Due to the numbers of students enrolled, not every student will be able to elicit each week. Every week we'll have to form six teams, of varying constellations. The students will conduct elicitation and analysis sessions with the consultant, which they prepare in consultation with the instructor. All the other students, as well as the instructor, attend these sessions as observers. Afterwards the students process their data. They regularly present their results to in-class discussion and pool data and description in a web archive maintained by the instructor.

Meetings: Elicitation sessions: Tu 12:00-12:50 (125 Baldy) and Th 11:00-12:50 (105 Baldy); instruction on methods and theoretical issues and presentation/discussion of results: Tu 17:00 – 18:30 (603 Baldy)

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Assessment:

- 50% participation, based on written elicitation plans, carrying out elicitation sessions and processing data, written and oral presentation of results, etc.
- participation will be graded at the end of every one of the first four phases of the course
- 50% term project during the final phase of the course, resulting in term paper

Reading: Selected chapters of Vaux & Cooper 1991 and Newman & Ratliff 2001 will be handed out in class. All the books listed in the bibliography below are of course on reserve in the Undergrad Library, and the chapters and articles listed can be downloaded from online reserve.

Weekly workflow: Our virtual week begins on Tuesday with the 17:00-18:30 session dedicated to instruction on theoretical issues (on ethical, epistemological, or technological aspects of field work, the logistics of planning and organizing a field trip, anthropological and sociological issues, etc.); presentations of elicitation results by the students; and planning for the elicitation sessions of the following virtual week. The planned elicitation sessions are then carried out on the following Thursday 11:00 – 12:50 (4 sessions) and on the Tuesday after that, 12:00 – 12:50 (2 sessions). Students will prepare the sessions, submit a short written script for critique, carry out the elicitation, and afterwards process the data and write up and present the findings in

class. All those who are not eliciting during a session are attentive but quiet observers. At the conclusion of each slot there will be a post-mortem analysis of the elicitation sessions.

Syllabus

Phase VI – Ethnographic documentation – Week 1-2

Practice: Documenting and describing speech events, with special emphasis on politeness; eliciting cultural information

Theory: speech act theory * ethnography of communication * politeness and “face” * kinship term systems

Reading: Foley 1997: ch.s 6, 13-14, 16

Phase VII – Acoustic and articulatory phonetics – Week 3-4

Practice: palatography * creating and analyzing spectrograms

Technology: Praat, Speech Analyzer

Theory: acoustic and articulatory phonetics (;-))

Reading: Week 3: Vaux & Cooper 1999: ch. 5; Ladefoged 1997 **Week 6:** Vaux & Cooper 1999: ch. 6; Ladefoged 1993: ch. 8

Phase VIII – Lexical semantics – Week 5-6

Practice: Folk definitions; association games; implicature reduction

Technology: Another shot at Toolbox

Theory: mental lexicon vs. dictionary; prototypes; semantic vs. pragmatic meaning; archiving

Reading: Week 5: Casagrande & Hale 1967; Dixon 1971 **Week 6:** Clark 1970; Hale 1971

Phase IX – Causal relations and argument structure – Week 7-10

Practice: working with nonverbal stimuli (ECOM, Cut & Break clips, Staged Events clips); coding discourse data; quantitative analysis

Theory: Argument structure, argument realization, grammatical relations * statistical methods * more on documentation, description, typology, and theory * getting funded and published

Reading: Bohnemeyer (ms.); Bohnemeyer, Brown, & Bowerman (2001); Bohnemeyer & Majid (2001); Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: ch. 6; Bohnemeyer, Enfield, Essegbey, & Kita (ms.)

Phase X – Term projects – Week 11-14

Some suggested topics: you can follow up on your fall project or start a new one; you can elicit on any topic that catches your fancy, and as always, you can pick one of the Nijmegen stimulus kits

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