LINGUIST 274A: Linguistic Field Methods I

Stanford University

Winter 2020

Instructor: Ksenia Ershova
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Office hours: M 12:30-1:20 or by appointment
Margaret Jacks Hall Rm. 112 or Zoom

Language consultant: Dr. Mahire Yakup
Contact info and meeting schedule to be distributed separately.

Class schedule: MW 1:30-3:30PM
Location: 110-101

Description of the Course

This is the first part of a two-quarter sequence aimed at teaching students the practical aspects of data collection in the field. The class has two major goals: (i) providing training in fieldwork methodologies, including elicitation, transcription, data analysis and data management, based on hands-on practice with a language consultant, and (ii) gaining awareness and preparedness for the extralinguistic aspects of fieldwork by focusing on questions of ethics, logistics, and other practical considerations when starting a new project.

This year, we will focus on documenting and analyzing the Uyghur language by working with our language consultant, Dr. Mahire Yakup.

The first part of the sequence (this quarter) will focus on basic approaches to describing an undocumented language in a closed-book setting. If you want to get the most out of this class, please do not read any available literature on the grammar of Uyghur.

The second part of the sequence (274B, spring quarter) will focus on facilitating in-depth individual student projects on a particular topic of Uyghur grammar. This part of the class will be open-book: the projects will be expected to be grounded in both current theoretical work and previous literature on Uyghur and related languages. Students are highly encouraged to commit to both parts of the sequence; completing both parts provides an excellent opportunity for jump-starting your own research project based on novel data.

You will leave this class with the basic tools and knowledge needed to undertake research in the field. Even if independent fieldwork is not in your immediate future, this class will provide you with a valuable set of skills to bring to any project where you are not dealing with your own linguistic intuitions.

Prerequisites

One course in phonetics or phonology and syntax, or permission of the instructor. Open to undergraduates with permission of instructor only.

Course components

Evaluation will be based on the following components:

1. **Class participation (20%)**: attendance of regular class sessions; on a rotating basis: leading class elicitation, board transcriptions; in-class discussion of assigned readings.

2. **Datalogs (20%)**: Due every Sunday. Uploading transcribed audiofiles and datalogs in the form of annotated spreadsheets on time to Box from individual sessions and, on a rotating basis, from the class session.

3. **Field reports (20%)**: due every Monday. Brief (1-2) page handout with summary of findings from previous week's elicitation session and plan for next elicitation.

4. **Final project (40%)**: Consists of two parts: (i) project proposal (1-3 pages), due at the end of Week 5 and (ii) the final project write-up (7-10 pages), due at the end of the quarter. A description of a particular grammatical domain (for details see below).

   *__Adjustment for 3 units:__ Students taking the course for 3 units are not required to submit a final project write-up. However, all students are expected to do an in-class presentation on their project during week 9.

Class schedule (subject to change)

The schedule has been modified to accommodate remote learning for the first two weeks of the quarter.

	Topics & Readings	Due dates
Week 1	**(remote)**	
01/03	Planning first elicitation & recording basics	
	Uyghur basic sound inventory & transcription	
01/05	Transcribing with ELAN, data management	
	Uyghur major phonological processes	
	Bowern 2015:Ch.3; Chelliah and de Reuse 2011:Ch.8.1-8.4	

Week 2   **(remote)**

01/10   Elicitation techniques for morphology and syntax

                Bowern 2015:Ch.6-7

01/12   Ethics in the field

                Bowern 2015:Ch.11; Rice 2011

Week 3

~~01/17~~   **Martin Luther King Jr. Day (no class)**

01/19   Semantic fieldwork

                Cover and Tonhauser 2015

Week 4

01/24   Group analysis: basic clause structure

01/26   Group analysis: morphology & glossing conventions   **choose project topic**

                Chelliah and de Reuse 2011:Ch.11.1-11.2

Week 5

01/31   Finding fieldwork opportunities

                Chelliah and de Reuse 2011:Ch.4

02/02   Group analysis: parts of speech

(02/04)   **project proposal due**

Week 6

02/07   Check-in: discussion of field reports

02/09   Check-in: discussion of field reports

Week 7

02/14   Check-in: discussion of field reports

02/16   Check-in: discussion of field reports

Week 8

~~02/21~~   **Presidents' Day (no class)**

02/23   Applying for grants and IRB approval

Week 9

02/28   **Presentations on project in progress (I)**

03/02   **Presentations on project in progress (II)**

Week 10

03/07   Extra-linguistic considerations

                Macaulay 2011; Chelliah and de Reuse 2011:Ch.5

03/09   Check-in: lingering questions/discussion   **last class**

Final project

The final project should be a typologically-informed descriptive sketch of a particular grammatical domain of Uyghur. The sketch must be based solely on data obtained from our consultant, Dr. Mahire Yakup. You may use data from your own elicitation sessions, class elicitations, or datalogs archived by your classmates. Every datapoint should be unambiguously tagged with the audio file name and time stamp, as indicated in the datalog, and the name of the eliciting linguist should be clearly indicated, if it is not you. For a list of possible topics refer to Appendix D in Bowern (2015); you may select a topic not listed in the reference with the approval of the instructor. The project consists of the following components, with the due dates listed for each component below:

1. Obtain instructor consent for chosen topic by January 26.

2. Submit 1-3 page project proposal by February 4.

   The project proposal should consist of a typologically informed fieldwork plan for investigating the chosen topic, with a clear indication of which questions have already been answered with data collected prior to proposal submission. The student is responsible for finding the relevant typological literature on the topic (but avoid any literature on Uyghur specifically!); see e.g. Chelliah and de Reuse (2011:Ch.11) for references. You may also consult with the instructor prior to the submission deadline regarding suggestions for relevant literature.

   The preferred format for the proposal is an organized list of research questions and a list of references these questions are based on; it does not need to be formatted as a narrative text.

3. Present on the project in progress during Week 9. Allocated time for presentation will depend on the number of students in the class. This presentation serves as an opportunity to get feedback on the project and suggestions for the last few fieldwork sessions of the quarter.

4. The written up final version of the project is due on the last day of the quarter – March 18.

Collaboration and academic integrity

You are expected to follow Stanford's Honor Code in all matters relating to this online course. You are welcome to collaborate and discuss the homework assignments with your fellow

classmates, but you are individually responsible for understanding the material and your written work must be your own in accordance with the University's guidelines on academic honesty. Your submitted work should include the names of those you have discussed it with, and if you make use of someone else's idea, they should be explicitly credited for it. The University provides the following recommendations specifically for upholding academic honesty with remote learning.

Students with Documented Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request, review appropriate medical documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty. The letter will indicate how long it is to be in effect. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. Students should also send your accommodation letter to instructors as soon as possible. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: `http://oae.stanford.edu`).

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The discipline of linguistics, while striving to be as objective and non-discriminatory as possible, is still largely built on a small sample of privileged voices. If any of the language used in the assigned readings or lecture materials strikes you as problematic or there are any other concerns you wish to raise, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly, or via the anonymous survey link available through Canvas which will be active throughout the quarter. Likewise, if something that is discussed in class or said by another student makes you uncomfortable, please let me know via one of the above options. If you are uncomfortable discussing these issues with me, you can also reach out to the Diversity and Access Office or explore the resources provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Finally, as a participant of this course, I ask that you strive to maintain a respective environment and honor the diversity of your fellow classmates.

References

Bowern, Claire. 2015. *Linguistic fieldwork: A practical guide*, 2nd edn. Palgrave Macmillan.

Chelliah, Shobhana L., and Willem J. de Reuse. 2011. *Handbook of descriptive linguistic fieldwork*. Springer. https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/9115242.

Cover, Rebecca T., and Judith Tonhauser. 2015. Theories of meaning in the field: Temporal and aspectual reference. In *Methodologies in semantic fieldwork*, eds. M. Ryan Bochnak and Lisa Matthewson. OUP.

Macaulay, Monica. 2011. Training linguistics students for the realities of fieldwork. In *The Oxford handbook of linguistic fieldwork*, ed. Nicholas Thieberger. OUP. doi:0.1093/oxfordhb/9780199571888.013.0021. https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/9499149.

Rice, Keren. 2011. Ethical issues in linguistic fieldwork. In *The Oxford handbook of linguistic fieldwork*, ed. Nicholas Thieberger. OUP. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199571888.013.0019. https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/9499149.