## Syllabus

## Field Methods

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LING 4800/5380 | Dr. Shobhana Chelliah | University of North Texas

Spring 2017 | M 6:30-9:20pm | NTDP212

## Course Description

We will learn about language documentation by documenting as much as we can of one language through consultation with a native speaker, taking a holistic approach that focuses on as many facets of the language as possible, and that follows the format—albeit in miniature—of a full-blown language documentation project.

Our work will be aimed toward the production of basic archivable language documentation via elicitation interview and the recording, transcription, annotation, and analysis of naturalistic texts; as well as toward the creation of a thumbnail grammar and rudimentary lexicon for Lamkang.

Each week, with Sumshot Khular  in class and we will conduct explorations of specific topics, so-called “guided elicitation.”  Towards the end of the semester, you will work individually two hours a week. There you’ll work on specific elicitation assignments and (eventually) projects.

## Significance (from Anthony Woodbury)

Documenting and describing languages—making lasting records and compiling grammars and dictionaries—serves an array of stakeholders, including community language advocates with social, political, economic, aesthetic, and spiritual motivations for language investigation and preservation; the wider public, with a range of commitments to and curiosity about linguistic and cultural diversity; and scholars of various stripes, including of course linguists--whether or not they also community members—with scientific and humanistic interests in linguistic diversity and universality; in language acquisition and processing; and in language use, change, and prehistory.

For a community under pressure (of one kind or another) to abandon its ancestral language, language maintenance can be a heartfelt issue. While linguists cannot “save” endangered languages—only individual speakers and communities can do that—the experience and skills of linguists as documenters, archivists, lexicographers, grammarians, sociolinguists, historical linguists, and educators can help.

On a global level, the preservation of linguistic diversity is often linked to the preservation of cultural and intellectual diversity, both because of the role language and speaking have as emblems of cultural identity, and because of the dependence of culturally significant linguistic practices (including verbal art) on lexical and grammatical details of individual languages.

For general linguistics, linguistic diversity is a key issue. We know that our theories often are vague or silent, when asked to make predictions about new languages. They are likely to do better once informed by the greatest possible slice of the human languages that have evolved over history.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the course you should how linguistic fieldworkers:

* Plan and carry out a language documentation project
* Create, process, archive, and work with original texts
* Interact with a speaker of a language you don’t know to discover basic features of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and the lexicon
* Describe and disseminate your results in a variety of formats for varied audiences, including database, thumbnail grammar, topical squib, textual analysis, and popular text presentation
* Discover the basic features of clause-level grammar
* Engage with prior literature on a language as well as with general literature on language documentation.

## Office Hours and Communication with Instructor

My office is NTDP G178 D. My office hours are Monday 5-6 at NTDP and by appointment. You can make an appointment by calling me at 940 565 2054 or emailing me at shobhana.chelliah@unt.edu. I want to hear from you!

**Online Course Resources**

**Blackboard Learn**: Articles, class handouts, elicitation tools, and other material will be available for direct download from Blackboard Learn.

Please make sure to check your UNT mail daily. If you mail is full of junk mail and you have trouble seeing the trees for the forest, then ask IT help how to assign junk mail to a generic junk mail folder. All announcements and details on assignments will be provided on Blackboard and via your UNT email.

## Course Requirements for LING 4800 and 5380 (difference noted below)

**1. Participation (20%):** You will be expected to be active and thoughtful in your participation in class activities and discussion. You will be expected to stay focused on the task for each class period and work towards mastering that task. You will be expected to help others with the task if they are having difficulty. Obviously, if you are absent you cannot contribute to discussions, so a high level of attendance is required for a good grade. If you have more than one unexcused absence, your grade will go down. If you miss two out of the first three classes, you may be dismissed from class.

Students are responsible for all materials and announcements presented in class, whether or not they were there. If you miss a day, you should first obtain class notes from a classmate. If you still have questions after that, you are welcome to contact me.

**2.** **Assignments (50%):**

1. **Spreadsheet Assignment**  (10 points): This assignment is due every week that we meet. Each Thursday you should upload a spreadsheet in which your session data is transcribed. This is basically going to be your notes categorized and labeled. Upload to BB. It was also discussed in class that you would upload your spreadsheets to a shared drive so that you can check your transcription. You should place your spreadsheets [here](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B2j0mhAl5myoTkJHWW1YckZieXc?usp=sharing). The spreadsheets are due on the Thursday after the Feb 13, Feb 20, Feb 27, March 6 and April 3 class.
2. **Metadata and Recordings Assignment** (10 points, Graduate Students only)**:** Making recordings available with appropriate metadata. Each graduate student has the responsibility to this on a rotating basis. The files must be saved with appropriate metadata on to a file in a dedicated computer in the linguistics lab and backed up onto a dedicated hard drive. We will discuss this procedure further but remember that your classmates are counting on you to put the files up by Thursday each week.. You should upload the sound files [here](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B2j0mhAl5myoRVUxRDQxV20tdUk?usp=sharing). The schedule for recording backup is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Charlie | Jared | Nathan | Wally | Christine | Mary | SLC |
| Jan 16  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jan 23 |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jan 30 |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| Feb 6 |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| Feb 13 |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| Feb 20 |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| Feb 27 | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| March 6 |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |
| March 20 |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| March 27 |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| April 3 |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| April 10 |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| April 17 |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |
| April 24 |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |

Save as wav files. Name files following metadata sheet reviewed in class.

1. **Analysis Assignment** (30 points)**:** Submit an analysis of your session data as listed on the assignment sheet (there will be six of these, topics on the schedule below)

**3. Final Project (30%)**

Final project:  your portion of a sketch grammar due on April 10th.  I will serve as the general editor and stitch this together for you to comment on before the end of the semester

**Points for LING 4800**:

Participation: 20%

Assignments: 70% (Spreadsheet Assignment (10 points); Analysis Assignment (60 points)

Final Project: 10%

So by the end of the semester you will have done the following

1. Spreadsheets labeled with the date with your data for the day typed into EXCEL
2. 6 write-ups of 2 page minimum with examples based on the questions in the assignment sheet
3. Final project with sketch grammar piece
4. Participation and backup

## Plagiarism Policy

For information on the University’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>. For more information on how to avoid plagiarism and how to use citations, see <http://anthropology.unt.edu/resources-writingpaper.php>.

## Non-Discrimination and Accommodation Policy

It is the policy of the University of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the university through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and education goals. Direct questions and concerns to the Equal Opportunity Office, 940 565 2456, or the Dean of Students, 940 565 2648. TDD access is available through Relay Texas, 800 735 2989. If you have a disability, you are strongly advised to contact the Office of Disability Accommodations (UU 318A) or by telephone at 940 565 4323. It is the responsibility of the student to make the necessary arrangements with the instructors.

##  Course Schedule

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|  | **Topics** | **Readings to Complete Before Class** | **Due**  |
| **WEEK 1**Jan 16 MLK |  |  |  |
| **WEEK 2**Jan 23 | Discuss requirements, student interestsWhat is fieldwork, Roles in the class; class set up. Discuss readingsField noteso Data logs and spreadsheet data formats o Unicode and the use of IPA characters in spreadsheets, writing systemo Analysis: Presenting a phonetic inventory | Bowern, Claire. 2015. *Linguistic fieldwork: a practical guide.* Second Edition. Palgrave McMillan. Chs. 1-5; 8; 11; 13 (Try to read this beforehand, even though this is the first class day!) |  |
| **WEEK 3**Jan 30 | Crash course in Kuki-Chin phonology and morphologyReview information on data logs and spreadsheet formats and blogDiscuss Nida chapterDiscuss Notebooks, blogs, scans, spreadsheets | Ladefoged, Peter. 2005. A course in phonetics. [IPA Chart online.](http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/course/chapter1/chapter1.html) Nida, Eugene A. 1946. *Morphology. The Descriptive Analysis of Words.* Ann Arbor: U Michigan P. Ch. 7 |  |
| **WEEK 4**Feb 6 | Crash course in Kuki-Chin syntaxDiscuss Woodbury chapter, listen and audit transcript of a text, discuss orthography, Review elicitation schedule and methods. | Woodbury, Anthony C. 2011. Language documentation. In Peter K. Austin and Julia Sallabank (eds.), *Cambridge handbook of Endangered Language*s. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Gives an overview of documentary linguistics as a field, traces its emergence, and discusses the prospects of a highly inclusive, heterodox vision of documentation |  |
| **WEEK 5**Feb 13 | Consultant arrives: introductionsElicitationWord listsDiscuss hearing and transcribing | Ladefoged, Peter. 2005. A course in phonetics. [IPA Chart online.](http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/course/chapter1/chapter1.html) Anderson, Deborah. 2003. *Using the Unicode Standard for Linguistic Data: Preliminary Guidelines.* UC Berkeley ms |  |
| **WEEK 6**Feb 20 | Determining the phones of Lamkang, Phonology and Tone, phonationDiscuss methods and challenges of phonological/phonetic fieldwork. | Nida, Eugene A. 1946. *Morphology. The Descriptive Analysis of Words.* Ann Arbor: U Michigan P. Ch. 7 | Analysis of sound system due today |
| **WEEK 7**Feb 27 | Topic: Verbs, verb categories, pronouns and clauses  · Discussion of verb issues, begin elicitation     o Discuss basic valency (to be continued in more detail next week): transitive, intransitive, ditransitive verbs.      o Discuss some of the differences among semantic classes of verbs: active vs. stative; causative vs. non-causative (one or the other may be derived).     .      o Begin elicitation of verbs in simple sentence contexts  | Bowern, Chs. 6 & 7 [On morphological and syntactic field work] |  |
| **WEEK 8**March 6 | Verb agreement overview. What do we know so far? Review homework. Discuss basic aspects of paradigms: person, number, tense, aspect; determining pronouns in the context of verb elicitation (possibility of finding both free PNs and pronominal affixes/clitics). Elicit paradigms.  ·  | Margetts, Anna & Peter K. Austin 2007.  *Three-participant events in the languages of the world: towards a cross-linguistic typology*. SOAS Ms.  [Read pp. 1-10 only, as background for this week's work] | Analysis of phonological processes due |
| **WEEK 9** | SPRING BREAK |  |  |
| **WEEK 10**March 20 | Noun morphology, LexicographyDiscuss Readings, discuss spreadsheet and blog. What are we hoping to learn from the lexica collected. Metadata issues. | Chelliah, Shobhana & Willem de Reuse 2010. *Handbook of descriptive linguistic fieldwork. Springer.* Ch. 9.andNichols, Johanna, Ronald L. Sprouse (2003). Documenting Lexicons: Chechen and Ingush. In Peter K. Austin (ed.) LDD, vol 1. London: SOAS. pp. 99-121 | Analysis of verb agreement due  |
| **WEEK 11**March 27 | Case | Chelliah, Shobhana. 2016 Responsive Methdology. Journal of South Asian Language and Linguistics. Volume Number: 3 Issue Number: 2, 175-196.Comrie, Bernard, and Norval Smith. 1977. Lingua descriptive studies: questionnaire. Lingua 42.1.[Scan for the gist]Chelliah and HyslopChelliah OUP |  |
| **WEEK 12**April 3 | Subordination and DeixisUse BowPed picture set (Bowerman & Pederson, 1992), topological configurations positioning target object in relation to a reference object | Genetti, Coupe, Bickel | Analysis of case marking due |
| **WEEK 13**April 10 | Phonetics/phonology revisited. Using PRAAT, tone and phonation | Maddieson Cf also Bowern, Ch. 5, Chelliah & de Reuse Ch. 10 | **Final project draft due** |
| **WEEK 14**April 17 | Wilkins1999-Demonstrative questionnaire | Wilkins, David. 1999. The 1999 Demonstrative Questionnaire: “THIS” and “THAT” in comparative perspective. ms, MPI NijmegenMajid, Asifa. 2012. A guide to stimulus-based elicitation for semantic categories. In Thieberger, ed. The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Fieldwork. | Analysis of subordination due |
| **WEEK 15**April 24 | Texts. A little more transcription and translation, Analysis and ancillary elicitation, FLEx versus EXCEL | Chelliah, Shobhana. 2001. The role of text collection and elicitation in linguistic fieldwork. In Newman & Ratliff. |  |
| **WEEK 16**May 1 | Gestures | Seyfeddinipur, Mandana. 2012.Reasons for documenting gestures and suggestions for how to go about it. In Nicholas Thieberger (ed.),  *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Fieldwork.* | Analysis of tense, aspect, and mood due |
| **WEEK 17**FINALS | ElicitationMore transcription, translation, analysis and ancillary elicitation; archiving and metadata | Woodbury, Anthony. 2014. Archives and audiences: Toward making endangered language documentations people can read, use, understand, and admire. In David Nathan & Peter K. Austin (eds) Language Documentation and Description, vol 12: Special Issue on Language Documentation and Archiving. London: SOAS. pp. 19-36 | Final projects second submission and presented  |