

Linguistics 407-408: Field Methods  
Rice University  
Fall 2014-Spring 2015

## **Syllabus**

Instructor: Dr. Robert Englebretson  
Office: Herring 206  
Office Hours: Thurs. 2-4, and by Appointment.  
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Class Meetings: MWF 2:00-2:50, Linguistics Grad Lounge

## **Course Description**

This two-semester course sequence in field methods addresses techniques for the documentation and description of a field language. The language for A2014-2015 is Gikuyu. Class meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays will consist of collaborative elicitation sessions with the consultant. Class meetings on Friday will not include the consultant, and will consist of data analysis, planning the following week's sessions, and general discussions of issues related to data collection, transcription, analysis, and fieldwork experiences and ethics. IN addition to in-class sessions, students will work individually outside of class. Each student will be allotted one hour per week of time with the Gikuyu consultant for work on individual and group projects. Students will be responsible for entering elicited data into a shared class database, to which all students in the class will have access.

## **Individual Written Assignments**

Two 'provisional' individual written reports will be due each semester, and will be made available to all class members. Because of the emergent nature of a course in field methods, the exact due dates for these reports are flexible and negotiable. During the first semester, the topics of these reports will be: (1) basic phonetic inventory of Gikuyu (due early October); (2) an individually-chosen topic of interest related to Gikuyu phonetics and/or phonology (Due early December). During the second semester, the topics will be: (3) a short Gikuyu text with interlinear glosses and free translation (due early March); and (4) an individually-chosen topic of interest related to morphosyntax, semantics, and/or discourse and grammar (due late April). Each student will make his/her provisional reports available to all members of the class.

Near the end of each semester, students will give in-class presentations related to their individual projects.

## Collaborative Research Projects

In addition to the individual assignments, there will be one collaborative class project due each semester. The topic of the first semester's collaboration will be an overview of Gikuyu phonetics, phonology, and basic morphology, and is due by the last day of finals week. The topic of the collaborative report for the second semester is Gikuyu morphology and syntax. A draft of this report will be due early March, and the final version is due by the end of finals week. Ideally, we will compile both semester's projects into a sketch grammar of Gikuyu.

## Course Requirements and Grading

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| ❑ Actively participate in class elicitation, discussion, and data sessions | 35% |
| ❑ Two 'provisional' written reports                                        | 35% |
| ❑ Individual in-class presentation                                         | 10% |
| ❑ Contribution to collaborative class project                              | 20% |

## Textbook

Bowern, Claire. 2008. *Linguistic Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-0230545380.

We will be discussing this book during our Friday class meetings, one chapter per week beginning the first Friday of the semester.

\* If you require course material in an alternative format or need special accommodations due to a disability, please contact the instructor and the Disability Support Services Office (111 Allen Center).

## Recommended Supplementary Readings

- Agar, Michael H. 1996. *The Professional Stranger: an Informal Introduction to Ethnography*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Academic Press.
- Bowern, Claire. To Appear 2015. *Linguistic Fieldwork: a Practical Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cassell, Joan and Sue-Ellen Jacobs (eds.). 1999?. *Handbook on Ethical Issues in Anthropology*: a special publication of the American Anthropological Association. Arlington, VA: American Anthropological Association. (<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/toc.htm>)
- Everett, Daniel L. and Jeanette Sakel. 2012. *Linguistic Fieldwork: a Student Guide*. Cambridge University Press.
- Himmelman, Nikolaus P., Jost Gippert, and Ulrike Mosel (eds). 2006. *Essentials Of Language Documentation*. Mouton de Gruyter
- Hinton, Leanne and Ken Hale (Eds). 2001. *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*. Academic Press.
- Jones, Mary C. and Sarah Ogilvie (eds). 2013. *Keeping Languages Alive: Documentation, Pedagogy, and Revitalization*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ladefoged, Peter. 2003. *Phonetic Data Analysis: An Introduction To Phonetic Fieldwork And Instrumental Techniques*. Blackwell.
- Ladefoged, Peter and Ian Maddieson. 1996. *The Sounds Of the World's Languages*. Blackwell.
- Payne, Thomas E. 1997. *Describing morphosyntax: a guide for field linguists*. Cambridge University Press.
- Shopen, Timothy (ed.). 2007. *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Vols I-III. Cambridge University press.
- Vol. 1: Clause structure
- Vol. 2: Complex constructions
- Vol. 3: Grammatical categories and the lexicon.
- Thieberger, Nicholas (Ed). 2012. *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Fieldwork*. Oxford University Press.