

*The University of Western Ontario*  
*Department of Modern Languages and Literatures*

**“Field Methods”**  
**SP9713B/LIN9237B**



### Course Information

Lecture: Thursdays (2.30-5.30pm) in UC3320

### Contact Information

Professor: Olga Tararova  
Office: UC2313  
Office hours: by appointment  
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### Course Description

This graduate seminar provides a thorough introduction to the principles and practice of linguistic fieldwork. A wide range of topics will be covered, from data collection techniques to the theoretically informed analysis of the collected data in two subfields of linguistics (phonetics and morphosyntax). We will work with a language consultant throughout this course to apply the knowledge we gain to elicitation of data and writing a squib. The seminar is designed for students interested in incorporating linguistics data into research in theoretical linguistics. Course taught **in English**.

### Recommended Course Material

- ◆ Newman, Paul and Martha Ratliff (Eds.). 2001. *Linguistic Fieldwork*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ◆ Payne, Thomas E. (1997). *Describing morphosyntax: a guide for field linguists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ◆ Tagliamonte, S. A. (2009). *Analysing sociolinguistic variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ◆ Vaux, B. & J. Cooper (2003). *Introduction to Linguistic Field Methods*. Muenchen: Lincom Europa.

### Course Goals and Objectives

This course aims to achieve the following:

- Learn to apply linguistic knowledge to the collection and analysis of raw data by working with a speaker of an unknown language
- Learn how to manage and organize linguistic data in both a data base and on paper
- Get familiarized with ELAN software
- Develop best strategies in writing a solid proposal and a grammar squib
- Critically assess previous literature while writing accurate literature review section
- Gain insight and improve interpersonal skills while working with a language consultant

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Critically access the population by creating scientific hypotheses and appropriate research questions
- Organize
- Annotate data in ELAN program
- Use appropriate collecting mechanism while investigating the data of their choice
- Integrate the knowledge students have gained in the course to critically analyze future articles and develop a solid research paper

### Course Evaluation

- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| • ELAN annotations (1x5%, 2x10%)   | 15% |
| • Attendance and participation:    | 15% |
| • Project proposal:                | 10% |
| • Project PowerPoint presentation: | 15% |
| • Project squib:                   | 25% |
| • Project Literature Review:       | 15% |

### **ELAN annotations (15%)**

You will be required to transcribe two separate Russian transcriptions in ELAN. For the first transcription, you will need to annotate 1 minute, whereas for the second transcription, you will have to annotate 2 minutes. The first annotation has to be submitted BEFORE the winter break

### **Attendance & Participation (15%):**

You are expected to attend all the classes and participate **actively** during the discussion period. Inconsistent attendance (including frequent absences and late arrivals) will negatively impact your level of participation and will significantly affect your final participation grade. Attendance **without** active participation will lead to a poor final participation grade.

### **Project (10% - outline, 15% - presentation, 30% - essay squib):**

For this course, students will be gathering and eliciting data from a native Russian consultant. Since this is an unfamiliar language, we will be learning how to collect, assess and analyse given linguistic data.

- **Project outline (15%):** the project outline will consist of the following: 1) presentation of the phenomenon you will be working on, 2) motivation for the study, 3) research questions & hypotheses, and 4) preliminary data report. It is recommended you work with a partner, but individual work is also acceptable. The outline should not exceed 5 pages (Times New Roman, 12 pts, double-spaced). You should also provide the fieldnotes (rough is fine) at the end of your proposal. For Spanish students, the outline has to be **in Spanish**.
- **Oral PowerPoint presentation (15%):** you (and your partner) will elaborate on the aspects presented in your outline, including the addressed feedback that I will have provided, and present the following: 1) presentation of the phenomenon you will be working on, 2) motivation for the study, 3) research questions & hypotheses, and 4) methodology, 5) most of the findings, including discussion.
- **Paper squib (30%):** The final squib will be similar to the oral presentation and will include all the above components. The final squib should also contain all the findings of the studied phenomenon, as well as critical and detailed discussion on the analysed data. The paper should be between 12-15 pages (Times New Roman, 12 pts, double-spaced). A hard copy of the papers together with an electronic copy must be submitted to the instructor by email.

*Please note: this project does not include section on LITERATURE REVIEW*

### **Literature review (15%)**

- Literature review will be a separate document from the project. It will be done after the project has been completed. You will be required to find literature (5-7 sources) on the phenomenon you studied and write a 5- page review (Times New Roman, 12 pts, double-spaced, APA), including the reference page. Remember: it is not a summary, but rather a critical overview of previous work.

### **ELAN download:**

<https://tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan/>

**Late or Missed Tests:**

Students who miss a test will be assigned a **mark of zero** unless they can provide the instructor with appropriate documentation. Please note that the weighting of tests, and class assignments cannot be modified or changed. It is your responsibility to contact me immediately if you miss a midterm or class assignment. No make-ups will be allowed without the presentation of the appropriate documentation UWO's Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

(<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>) for medical absences, or a letter from the College Registrar for other matters. Please note: "Mild colds, non-acute diarrhoea and/or vomiting, headaches, menstrual cramps, insomnia or other non-acute problems may benefit from medical advice and/or treatment but may not warrant a certificate. Non-medical issues, such as a death in the family, should be addressed through your college (if A&S) or faculty registrar." Note also that an illness verification form will not automatically result in alternative arrangements. The physician's report must establish that you were examined and diagnosed at the time of illness, and not after the fact. I will not accept a statement that merely confirms a report of illness made by a student and documented by the physician. If I feel that your condition was not serious enough to miss an assessment you will receive a mark of **zero**. Suspicious medical certificates will be forwarded to the Office of Student Academic Integrity. Extra work cannot be substituted for missed tests or class assignments. In case a midterm is missed for a valid legitimate reason, the weight will be redistributed to the final exam.

**Late Penalties**

A late penalty of **10%** per day (i.e., including weekends and holidays) will be applied on your assignments and online quizzes.

**Classroom Etiquette**

You are expected to come to lecture on time and stay for the entire class to receive the participation mark for that day. Any use of electronic devices will be restricted to note-taking and browsing the digital copy of the textbook. The use of social media, texting, emailing is prohibited and will be treated as a breach of classroom etiquette.

**Communication:**

The Blackboard homepage and the Course Syllabus are your first sources for information and questions about the course. You can email me with more practical questions concerning the course organization. I will try to respond to e-mails within 24 hours. If you do not hear from me within that time, feel free to send a reminder e-mail. To ensure e-mail delivery, please use your @uwo.ca account and state the course code (**SP9717A**) in the subject line.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND SERVICES

**LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT GRADING POLICY**

The Department of MLL follows the University and Grading Practices Policy. Please refer to <http://www.uwo.ca/modlang/undergraduate/policies.html>.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY** is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Western is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and

plagiarism very seriously. The University of Western Ontario outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences (**refer to Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar**). If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources.

### ACCESSIBILITY:

The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs. If you require accommodation for a disability please register with accessibility services as soon as possible so that we can assist you in reaching your academic goals in this course.

### SUPPORT SERVICES

The Web sites for Registration Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca> and Student Support Services is <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> (including the services provided by the USC listed here: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>). The Student Development Services can also be reached at [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)

**Important Notice:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### Course Schedule

TIP: To succeed in this course, you must read the assigned chapter prior to coming to the lecture.

### SCHEDULE

<u>Week/Date</u>	<u>Theme / Structure</u>	<u>Readings &amp; Assignments due</u>
1: Thursday, Jan 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Introduction and syllabus</li> <li>◆ What is Field Methods?</li> <li>◆ <b>Introduction to ELAN</b></li> </ul>	Vaux, B. & J. Cooper (Ch1) R. Keren (2001)
2: Thursday, Jan 16	<p><b>STUDYING PHONETICS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Assessing phonetic variation</li> <li>◆ Methods &amp; Interpretation</li> <li>◆ <b>How to write a paper proposal?</b></li> <li>◆ <b>ELAN training</b></li> </ul>	Milroy & Gordon (2006) Vaux, B. & J. Cooper (Ch2.)

3: Thursday, Jan 23	<b>STUDYING MORPHOLOGY</b> ◆ Assessing morphological variation ◆ Methods & Interpretation ◆ <b>ELAN training</b>	Milroy & Gordon (2006) Payne T.E. (Ch2, Ch4)
4: Thursday, Jan 30	<b>DATA COLLECTION</b> ◆ Where to start, how to access the population ◆ Forming questions & hypotheses ◆ Russian elicitation (1)	Tagliamonte (2006) Ch 2 & Ch 4. Dimmendaal, G. J. (2001)
5: Thursday, Feb 6	<b>POPULATION TYPE: Vulnerable Minorities</b> ◆ <b>Keynote:</b> Tania Granadillo ◆ Methods & interpretation multilingual) ◆ Russian elicitation (2)	ARTICLES TO BE PROVIDED
6: Thursday, Feb 13	<b>VARIATION/VARIABLES</b> ◆ Social & linguistic variables/variants ◆ <b>How to write a paper proposal</b> ◆ Russian elicitation (3)	Walker (Ch.2) Tagliamonte (Ch6)
9 Thursday, Feb 20	<b>WINTER BREAK</b>	
8: Thursday, Feb 27	<b>CODIFICATION &amp; ANALYSIS</b> ◆ Excel ◆ Russian elicitation (4)	<b>Paper proposal is due</b> Rice (2006)
9 Thursday, Mar 5	<b>INTERPRETING THE RESULTS</b> ◆ <b>How to write a paper squib?</b> ◆ Russian elicitation (5)	
10: Thursday, Mar 12	<b>ORAL PRESENTATION</b>	
11: Thursday, Mar 19	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b> ◆ How to write a solid literature review?	<b>Project squib is due</b> <i>Articles to be provided</i>
12: Thursday, Mar 26	<b>ETHICS</b>	
13: Thursday, Apr 2	<b>Now what?</b> <b>Final remarks</b>	<b>Literature review is due</b>

Final project is due **on Dec 6<sup>th</sup>** before 12 pm.

### Required Readings:

1. Vaux, B. & J. Cooper (2003). Introduction. *Introduction to Linguistic Field Methods*. Muenchen: Lincom Europa, pp 5-23.

2. Rice, K. (2001). Learning as one goes. In *Linguistic fieldwork*, ed. P. Newman & M. Ratliff (pp. 230–249). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
3. Vaux, B. & J. Cooper (2003). Transcription. *Introduction to Linguistic Field Methods*. Muenchen: Lincom Europa, pp 26-35.
4. Milroy, L., & Gordon, M. (2006). Investigating phonological variation. In *Sociolinguistics: Method and Interpretation* (Vol. 2, pp. 136-168). Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. doi:10.1002/9780470758359
5. Bowern, C. (2008). Fieldwork on Phonetics and Phonology. In *Linguistic fieldwork: A practical guide*. (pp. 63-72). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan
6. Milroy, L., & Gordon, M. (2006). Beyond phonology: analyzing and interpreting higher level variation. In *Sociolinguistics: Method and Interpretation*(Vol. 2, pp. 169-197). Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. doi:10.1002/9780470758359
7. Payne, T. E. (2010). Morphological Typology. in *Describing morphosyntax: a guide for field linguists*. (pp. 20-31) Beijing: World Publishing Co. Beijing Branch.
8. Payne, T. E. (2010). Constituent Order Typology. in *Describing morphosyntax: a guide for field linguists*. (pp. 71-90) Beijing: World Publishing Co. Beijing Branch.
9. Dimmendaal, G. J. (2001). Places and people: field sites and informants. In *Linguistic Fieldwork*,. (Eds). P. Newman & M. Ratliff (pp. 211-229). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
10. Tagliamonte, S. (2006). Data collection. In *Analysing sociolinguistic variation* ( pp. 17-36). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
11. Tagliamonte, S. (2006). Data, data and more data. In *Analysing sociolinguistic variation* ( pp. 50-69) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511801624.006>
12. Tagliamonte, S. (2006). Formulating hypotheses. In *Analysing sociolinguistic variation* ( pp. 99-127) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511801624.008>
13. Walker, J. (2006) Variation and Variables. In *Variation in Linguistic Systems*. (pp. 5-15). London and New York: Routledge.
14. Rice, K. (2006). Let the language tell its story? the role of linguistic theory in writing grammars. In *Catching language: The standing challenge of grammar writing*, ed. Felix K. Ameka, Alan Dench, and Nicholas Evans, (pp.235–268). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

I hope you enjoy the course 😊