

**LING 415/LING 610: Field Methods of Linguistics/Linguistic Field Research**  
Winter 2021

**Instructor:** Prof. Martina Martinović

**Contact:** email via MyCourses

**Lecture:** M/W 2:25pm–3:55pm on Zoom

**Office hours:** *on Zoom by appointment*

**Language consultant:** Dorcas O. Otu

**Course description:** This course provides an introduction to linguistic fieldwork. We will work with a native speaker of **Igala**, a minority language spoken in Nigeria, and attempt to determine the basics of the structure of the language, including the phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic systems. We will learn about elicitation techniques, data management, transcription and analysis, and various practical issues surrounding the collection of linguistic data.

Upon successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Learn and use techniques for elicitation of linguistic data.
- Grapple with linguistic analysis of “real” data.
- Practice writing linguistic descriptions.

**Readings** There are two books for this course, available at the McGill bookstore. Payne (1997) is obligatory; please let me know as soon as possible if you are unable to obtain it. Bowerman (2008) is available with unlimited access as an e-book at the McGill library.

- Payne, Thomas E. 1997. *Describing morphosyntax*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bowerman, Claire. 2008. *Linguistic fieldwork: A practical guide*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.

**Requirements and evaluations:** We will investigate the above topics through a combination of readings, short-assignments, in-class discussion, group work, and—most importantly—active elicitation. The classes will be held on Zoom, and will be recorded. If you are unable to participate in synchronous classes, let me know as soon as possible. You will need to schedule a time to work with the consultant outside of class.

	LING 415	LING 610
Assignments	40% (4 x 10%)	28% (4 x 7%)
Discussion posts	10%	10%
Leading elicitation	15%	12%
Final paper	35%	50%

**Class sessions** This course is first and foremost about collecting and analyzing linguistic data and therefore works best when students are actively participating in all elicitation sessions. We will spend a great deal of time collecting and organizing the data, going over our findings, thinking about their implications, formulating analytical hypotheses, and planning ways to elicit more data to test our ideas. After the add/drop deadline, the class will be divided into 7 groups. The groups will meet with Dorcas during out-of-class sessions, and will be responsible for planning and guiding elicitations for one in-class session each (see schedule).

**Out-of-class sessions** Groups will meet regularly with Dorcas outside of class beginning in Week 4 for 45-minute sessions. The extra time will be offset by reduced class meetings for 415 students (details TBD). In out-of-class sessions, you will have the opportunity to delve deeper into certain topics and develop your final papers. After each session, you are responsible for making a short discussion post with notes about what you did and any highlights from the session.

**Leading elicitation** We will talk about the details of elicitations in class, but here are the basics. Each group will be responsible for leading elicitation sessions one week. Together with the instructor, you will be required to come up with goals for the session, the type(s) of elicitation you want to do, and the actual set of things to be elicited (the protocol). You will prepare the protocol in advance so that i) you can review and refine it with the instructor before the session and ii) you can provide other class members with a copy. You therefore need to meet with the instructor by Thursday the week before your elicitation, and submit the elicitation protocol by 5pm on Friday. The group leading the elicitation is also responsible for keeping the online database up-to-date with the material elicited that week.

**Database** We will have a password-protected database for data storage. It will be your responsibility to ensure that all data you elicit is entered into the database. You therefore must update the database by **Friday, 5pm** every week.

**Discussion posts** We will use the discussion board on myCourses to discuss our data. You will need to regularly post (roughly once a week, starting in week 4) your findings, highlight any interesting discoveries, ask question or solicit advice from your instructor and classmates. This will help us design our elicitation sessions, and will be an important part of our research into Igala.

**Assignments** You will have 4 assignments to turn in. They are due on myCourses in PDF format by **5 pm of their due date** (see schedule). If you are in a different time zone, we will agree on a time that is best suited for you.

**Final paper and presentation** You will write a final paper on a topic of your choosing related to any aspect of the grammar of Igala. Final papers are due on **April 25**. In the final week of class, you will hold a presentation on the topic of your paper.

**Right to submit in French** In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

**Territory acknowledgement** McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

## Schedule (Tentative and subject to adjustment)

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	
M	1/11	<i>Bowern (2008): Ch.11; Meakins et al. (2018): Ch.1</i>
W	1/13	<i>Ejeba (2016): Ch.1; Bowern (2008): Ch.1 &amp; 3</i>
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Phonology</b>	
M	1/18	<i>Vaux &amp; Cooper (2003): Ch.2 &amp; 3</i>
W	1/20	<i>Yu (2014)</i> <b>Assignment 1 due</b>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Phonology</b>	
M	1/25	<i>Maddieson (2001)</i>
W	1/27	<i>Meakins et al. (2018): Ch.5</i>
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Typological overview; constituent order</b>	
M	2/1	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.0-3</i>
W	2/3	<i>Matthewson (2004)</i> <b>Assignment 2 due</b>
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Constituent order</b>	
M	2/8	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.4</i>
W	2/10	<i>Vaux &amp; Cooper (2003): Ch.11; Meakins et al. (2018): Ch.6</i>
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>NPs (Group 1)</b>	
M	2/15	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.5</i>
W	2/17	<i>Gillon (2015)</i>
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Predicate nominals (Group 2)</b>	
M	2/22	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.6</i>
W	2/24	<i>Deal (2015)</i>
<b>Reading week</b>		
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Voice and valence (Group 3)</b>	
M	3/8	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.8</i>
W	3/10	<i>Hyman (2004)</i> <b>Assignment 3 due</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Tense, Aspect, Mood (Group 4)</b>	
M	3/15	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.9</i>
W	3/17	<i>Cover (2015)</i>
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Topic, Focus, Negation (Group 5)</b>	
M	3/22	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.10</i>
W	3/24	<i>Bisang &amp; Somaiya (2000)</i> <b>Assignment 4 due</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Questions (Group 6)</b>	
M	3/29	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.10 (10.3)</i>
W	3/31	<i>Uwalaka (1991)</i>
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Clause combinations (Group 7)</b>	
M	4/5	<i>Payne (1994): Ch.11</i>
W	4/7	<i>Collins (1997)</i>
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Student presentations</b>	
M	4/12	TBA
W	4/14	TBA
T	4/15	TBA

## References

- Bisang, Walter and Remi Sonaiya. 2000. Information structuring in Yoruba. *Linguistics*, 38-1. [Library access: Linguistics no.365 2000.]
- Collins, Chris. 1997. Argument sharing in serial verb constructions. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 28(3). 461-497.
- Cover, Rebecca T. 2015. Semantic fieldwork on TAM. In *Methodologies in Semantic Fieldwork*, M. Ryan Bochnak and Lisa Matthewson (eds). New York: Oxford University Press
- Deal, Amy Rose. 2015. Reasoning About Equivalence in Semantic Fieldwork. In *Methodologies in Semantic Fieldwork*, M. Ryan Bochnak and Lisa Matthewson (eds). New York: Oxford University Press
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- Meakins, Felicity, Myfany Turpin, and Jennifer Green. 2018. *Understanding linguistic fieldwork*. London: Routledge.
- Uwalaka, Sr. M. Angela. 1991. Wh-movement in Igbo. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 3.
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- Yu, Kristine M. 2014. The experimental state of mind in elicitation: illustrations from tonal fieldwork. *Language Documentation and Conservation* 8:738–777.