Zorc, Adventures of a Field Linguist (NML 2008.06.14)

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Why do fieldwork? Why would someone leave a 60" TV, a sleep-matic bed, and one's wife's gourmet cooking for a bamboo or hardfloor bed and chicken feet boiled in a tin can, not to mention an endless array of diseases?

"Life in the field is often fraught with personal, political, intellectual, and intestinal difficulties." (Vaux & Cooper 1999:6)
0) Not quite Star Trek "because it's there!"
1) Gathering data on lesser known dialects to see how they fit into a dialect chain.
2) Gathering data on dying languages to preserve something for posterity.
3) To resolve specific linguistic issues such as a point of grammar, or a special kind of speech ("angry speech in Bikol" Jason Lobel, or "male vs. female speech" in Atayal on Taiwan)

2. BASIC TOOLS

Indelible ink (Koh-I-Noor) to prevent any streaking on wet papers.
Loose leaf pads of paper (8 1/2 x 11) or the local large size (A-4)
Samarin's suggestion was to get a small but good recorder. I got a boom box(!) so we could play music and entertain the people in the evening.

3. ETHICAL ISSUES

Acceptance into the community. Being pleasant and not at all impatient.
Leaving something behind for the people (mostly the case in Australia, not so in the Philippines where own-language education was not common, unless SIL was established).

4. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Choosing an informant of the same gender as oneself to avoid sexual innuendos, but one can then miss out major differences between male and female speech.
Working with an overly sophisticated informant (teacher or even a Ph.D.) who may have prejudices about his/her language or some kind of "agenda."
Having other people around (best if of mixed genders and ages) who may agree or disagree with what the primary informant is saying. When I elicited in Tagalog, one Iraya informant kept saying "ganyan din" (Tagalog for 'like that too') and it turned out that while they KNEW the Tagalog word, they had a completely different word for what I was eliciting. He would rather parrot prestigious Tagalog forms because there was no pride in their native language!

5. GOALS OF FIELD WORK [See Attachment 1 - Vaux & Cooper table of contents.]

Phonology (enough vocabulary to determine all significant sounds of the language) [See Attachment 2 - IPA.]
Morphology (major inflectional patterns of nouns, verbs, adjectives, particles)
Morpho-Syntax (determination of cases such as nominative, genitive or possessive, use of tenses, are there adjectives and how do they modify)
Syntax (word order, statements, questions, exclamations)

6. Zorc in the PHILIPPINES (1965-1972)

Crossing a river with waters said to be "navel deep," but in actuality over our heads at that particular fording point. My guide had to carry the tape recorder lifted overhead out of the water! If it had gotten wet it would have become useless.

A Tadyawan girl on Mindoro went to the elders when she heard the recording of our session the next morning claiming that "The American has stolen my soul." There were, needless to say, some difficulties in explaining to the community what a tape recorder is.

Purpose of my fieldwork: to document the difference between dialects and languages in the central Philippines. To create a linguistic family tree for that area.

7. Zorc in AUSTRALIA (1976-1986)

Purpose of the School of Australian Linguistics: to teach Aboriginal students enough about their languages so that they could assist in their bilingual programs.

In local communities, the only means of communication with the outside world was through a radio-telephone. People gathered with blankets and made an "outing" out of my 15 minute conversations with my wife and son. "I love you - over and out."

Yolngu men in northeast Arnhemland who slept on the beach woke each other up with a cursing contest. The goal was to outdo the grossness of a previously uttered curse. To quote from *My Fair Lady* "using language that would make a sailor blush." Some of these may have been too gross for a magazine dedicated to curses called Maldetta.

Once one has been accepted into a tribe, one can be woken up at all hours for "basic" needs, even to borrow frozen food or money at 1:00 a.m. before the bar closes!

My family had been accepted into the Yolngu group:
gapaNbulu was my name, referring to 'Cape Arnhem'
ba:Dawuy was Nellie's name [area rich in a species of vine used as string]
mayku was our son Nicky's name, referring to a 'paperbark tree.'

8. Zorc in BALI (January 1981) at an Austronesian Conference

Informants went with me to help buy batik fabrics straight from the manufacturers. We got lovely ones at local prices to the envy of all my conference colleagues.

9. *** INTERNET SEARCH: "Samarin Field linguistics 1967" *** = 1,120 hits

10. = = = <http://www.ling.udel.edu/pcole/fieldmethods/FM05/syllabus.html>

In analyzing syntactic data, we will attempt to combine two approaches, that of "comparative syntax" and that of traditional linguistic typology. Comparative syntax attempts to use the theory of generative grammar [[Chomsky]] to predict the range of possible variation in syntax among languages. Traditional linguistic typology is more empirically based, and looks at the range of data occurring independently of linguistic theory. While these two approaches may apprear to have incompatible goals, they are, in fact, complementary: Theory adds focus and depth to empirical studies; a broad empirical basis provides an antidote to the sometimes myopic view of language found in theoretical works.

The following works provide a background in linguistic typology. The Comrie and Smith Questionnaire is a good guide to important questions that must be answered in giving a broad

description of a language. The Bickford volume provides a practical guide to the analysis of many grammatical constructions in a new language.

> Bickford, J. Albert. Tools for Analyzing the World's Languages: Morphology and Syntax. Dallas: The Summer Institute of Linguistics. 1998.=
>
> Comrie, Bernard, Language Universals and Linguistic Typology : Syntax and Morphology, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1989. P 204 C6 1989.
>
> Comrie, B. and N. Smith, Questionnaire, Lingua Descriptive Series, Lingua 42: 1-72. P9 .L55

There are few books on field methods. The classic book on the subject is:

> Samarin, William J., Field linguistics; a guide to linguistic field work, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston , 1967.
>
> A new and practical book on field methods is:
>
> Vaux, Bert & Justin Cooper, Introduction to Linguistic Field Methods, Lincom Europa, LINCOM Coursebooks in Linguistics, 1999 <http://home.t-online.de/home/LINCOM.EUROPA/1987.htm>, ISBN 3895861987 .

11. = = = <http://www.springerlink.com/content/x64771152670h271/>
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Department of Linguistics, University of Toronto, 130 St George St, Rm 6076, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5S 3H1
Accepted: 9 September 2006 Published online: 29 November 2006
Abstract: Ethical issues in linguistic fieldwork have received surprisingly little direct attention in recent years. This article reviews ethical models for fieldwork and outlines the responsibilities of linguists involved in fieldwork on endangered languages to individuals, communities, and knowledge systems, focusing on fieldwork in a North American context.
Key words endangered languages - ethics and field linguistics

12. = = = <http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/language/v079/79.2degraff.pdf>
Samarin (1967:42). considers that an informant's 'sophistication' can get in ...
DeGraff, Michel.
Against Creole Exceptionalism
Language - Volume 79, Number 2, June 2003, pp. 391-410

13. = = = Search criteria: "discussion note against creole exceptionalism" => GOBBLEDYGOOK!
<http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/language/v079/79.2degraff.pdf>
DISCUSSION NOTE Against Creole exceptionalism* MICHEL DEGRAFF Massachusetts Institute of Technology 1. A POSTCOLONIAL AGENDA FOR CREOLISTS. 1.1. THE MOTIVATION. Ferdinand de Saussure (1916 [1986:7]) warned us that 'no other subject [outside of language] has fostered more absurd notions, more prejudices, more illusions and more fantasies . . . [I]t is the primary task of the linguist to denounce them, and to eradicate them as completely as possible'. But, what if 'prejudices', 'illusions', and 'fantasies' underlie some of the foundations of Creole studies? Many creolists throughout the history of Creole languages have relied on a variety of dualist assumptions whereby Creole languages constitute a special class of languages apart from 'normal'/'regular' languages (see critiques in DeGraff 2001a,b, 2003a). Some of these assumptions were implicitly handed down to us from (neo)colonial history without any 'break in transmission',

so to speak. In the colonial era, these antiegalitarian assumptions were part and parcel of the imperialist construction of political, cultural, and racial hegemony and the concomitant discursive elaboration of scientific authority through scholarly(-looking) texts (this tradition can be compared with Edward Said's (1979) concept ORIENTALISM). These 'power/knowledge' systems of hegemony would have made it impossible to conceive of any analytical framework whereby Caribbean Creole languages are on a genealogical or...

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ATTACHMENT 1.

Vaux and Cooper. 1999. Contents

 1. Introduction
 2. Transcription
 3. Basic Lexicography
 4. Semantics
 5. Articulatory Phonetics
 6. Acoustic Phonetics
 7. Segmental Phonology
 8. Prosodic Phonology
 9. Nominal Morphology
10. Verbal Morphology
11. Syntax I
12. Syntax II
13. Pragmatics
14. Sociolinguistics and Dialectology
15. Historical Linguistics
16. Text Collection
Appendix: The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)
References

ATTACHMENT 2
IPA = The International Phonetic Alphabet [see final page]

Source: <http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/ipa/IPA_chart_(C)2005.pdf>

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2005)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC) © 2005 IPA

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	N		
Trill	ʙ			r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap		ⱱ		ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	L			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

**CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)**

Clicks		Voiced implosives		Ejectives	
ʘ	Bilabial	ɓ	Bilabial	ʼ	Examples:
ǀ	Dental	ɗ	Dental/alveolar	pʼ	Bilabial
ǃ	(Post)alveolar	ʄ	Palatal	tʼ	Dental/alveolar
ǂ	Palatoalveolar	ɠ	Velar	kʼ	Velar
ǁ	Alveolar lateral	ʛ	Uvular	sʼ	Alveolar fricative

OTHER SYMBOLS

ʍ	Voiceless labial-velar fricative	ɕ ʑ	Alveolo-palatal fricatives
w	Voiced labial-velar approximant	ɺ	Voiced alveolar lateral flap
ɥ	Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ɧ	Simultaneous ʃ and x
ʜ	Voiceless epiglottal fricative		
ʢ	Voiced epiglottal fricative		Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary. k͡p t͡s
ʡ	Epiglottal plosive		

VOWELS
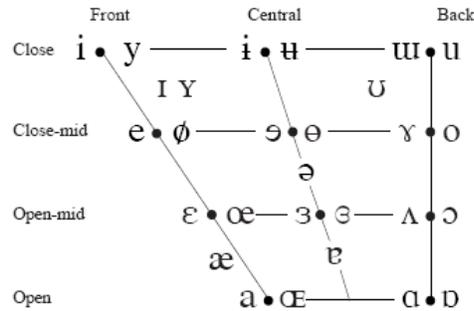
Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ	Primary stress	
ˌ	Secondary stress	ˌfoʊnəˈtɪʃən
ː	Long	eː
ˑ	Half-long	eˑ
˘	Extra-short	ĕ
ǀ	Minor (foot) group	
‖	Major (intonation) group	
.	Syllable break	ɹi.ækt
‿	Linking (absence of a break)	

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

LEVEL			CONTOUR		
e̋ or ˥	Extra high		ě or ˩˥	Rising	
é ˦	High		ê ˥˩	Falling	
ē ˧	Mid		e᷄ ˦˥	High rising	
è ˨	Low		e᷅ ˩˨	Low rising	
ȅ ˩	Extra low		e᷈	Rising-falling	
↓	Downstep		↗	Global rise	
↑	Upstep		↘	Global fall	

DIACRITICS Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. ŋ̊

̥	Voiceless	n̥ d̥	̤	Breathy voiced	b̤ a̤	̪	Dental	t̪ d̪
̬	Voiced	s̬ t̬	̰	Creaky voiced	b̰ a̰	̺	Apical	t̺ d̺
ʰ	Aspirated	tʰ dʰ	̼	Linguolabial	t̼ d̼	̻	Laminal	t̻ d̻
̹	More rounded	ɔ̹	ʷ	Labialized	tʷ dʷ	̃	Nasalized	ẽ
̜	Less rounded	ɔ̜	ʲ	Palatalized	tʲ dʲ	ⁿ	Nasal release	dⁿ
̟	Advanced	u̟	ˠ	Velarized	tˠ dˠ	ˡ	Lateral release	dˡ
̠	Retracted	e̠	ˤ	Pharyngealized	tˤ dˤ	̚	No audible release	d̚
̈	Centralized	ë	̴	Velarized or pharyngealized	ɫ			
̽	Mid-centralized	e̽	̝	Raised	e̝	(ɹ̝ = voiced alveolar fricative)		
̩	Syllabic	n̩	̞	Lowered	e̞	(β̞ = voiced bilabial approximant)		
̯	Non-syllabic	e̯	̘	Advanced Tongue Root	e̘			
˞	Rhoticity	ɚ a˞	̙	Retracted Tongue Root	e̙			