

**DOCUMENTARY LINGUISTICS I**  
prof. Nicole Nau, UAM winter 2016/2017



**Fourth lecture**  
07 November 2016

# TOPICS OF THE DAY

1. Bonus track
2. Genres of spoken language
3. How to elicit spoken texts
  - ❖ General
  - ❖ Narratives
  - ❖ Conversations
4. Your second task

# BONUS TRACK


Watch a film about a new method of gathering data (spoken texts) from endangered languages: Aikuma

How does this method work?

What are the advantages of the method?

<http://www.aikuma.org/media.html>

Read more about Aikuma on their website!



«The documentation contains different genres, e.g.:  
elicitation, discourse, description, conversation,  
lullaby, narrative, recitation.»

# TEXT TYPE, GENRE, REGISTER...

Douglas Biber & Susan Conrad. 2009. *Register, genre, and style*. CUP.

«We use the terms register, genre, and style to refer to three different perspectives of text varieties.»

**register** perspective: analyzing linguistic characteristics of texts and the situation of use of the variety

**genre** perspective: focuses on the conventional structures used to construct a complete text within the variety

**style** perspective: linguistic characteristics reflecting aesthetic preferences, associated with particular authors or historical periods

# HOW MANY REGISTERS AND GENRES ARE THERE?

«Since genres and registers are **not universal**, but culture and language specific categories, the identification of genres and registers requires a thorough **linguistic analysis** of texts which starts with sorting the texts according to their **production circumstances**. Subsequently one searches these groups of texts for **fixed expressions** that mark their structure and for **variant frequencies** of certain linguistic features.»

«The theoretical problem of Himmelmann's ideal LD is that **registers and other varieties of speech can only be identified by corpus linguistic analyses of language usage in different speech situations**, which, obviously, presupposes the existence of a corpus. Only after texts have been recorded in different speech situations, transcribed, and translated, can we formulate hypotheses about genre and register distinctions and start a genre and register analysis.»

Mosel, Ulrike, in press. Corpus compilation and exploitation in language documentation projects. To appear in *The Oxford Handbook of Endangered Languages*.

# TRADITIONAL DISTINCTION OF DISCOURSE TYPES (FROM RHETORICS)

- ❖ narration
- ❖ description
- ❖ exposition
- ❖ argumentation

G. Pianese: «Spoken Discourse: Types», in *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. Keith Brown *et al.*, 2nd ed., Oxford, Elsevier, 2006, vol. XII, pp. 84-88.

# DIMENSION DISTINGUISHED BY BIBER (1989) — AS A RESULT OF LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEXTS

- ❖ Involved vs. informational production
- ❖ Narrative vs. non-narrative concerns
- ❖ Elaborated vs. situation-dependent reference
- ❖ Overt expression of persuasion
- ❖ Abstract vs. nonabstract style

Biber, Douglas. 1989. A typology of English texts. *Linguistics* 27, 3-43.



# GENRES DISTINGUISHED BY PAYNE (1997)

PAYNE, THOMAS. 1997. DESCRIBING MORPHOSYNTAX. A GUIDE FOR FIELD LINGUISTS. CUP

- ❖ Conversation
- ❖ Narrative
  - ❖ Personal experience
  - ❖ Historical
  - ❖ Folk stories
  - ❖ Mythology
- ❖ Horatory (attempts to get the hearer to do sth.)
- ❖ Procedural (how to do something) – seldom a natural genre
- ❖ Expository (attempt to explain something) – uncommon genre
- ❖ Descriptive – uncommon genre
- ❖ Ritual speech

# OLAC DISCOURSE TYPES


**Dialogue:** An interactive discourse with two or more participants. Examples: conversations, interviews, correspondence, consultations, greetings and leave-takings

**Narrative:** A monologic discourse which represents temporally organized events. Examples: historical, traditional, and personal narratives, myths, folktales, fables, and humorous stories

**Procedural discourse:** An explanation or description of a method, process, or situation having ordered steps. Examples: recipes, instructions, and plans.

**Report:** A factual account of some event or circumstance. Examples: news reports, essays, and commentaries

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**Formulaic Discourse:** The resource is a ritually or conventionally structured discourse. Examples: prayers, curses, blessings, charms, curing rituals, marriage vows, and oaths.

**Oratory:** Public speaking, or of speaking eloquently according to rules or conventions. Examples: sermons, lectures, political speeches, and invocations.

Other: Drama, Ludic Discourse, Oratory, Singing, Unintelligible Speech.

# INTERVIEWS FOR LANGUAGE DOCUMENTATION

- ❖ often contain several genres (examples?)
- ❖ good practices
- ❖ mistakes to avoid (examples?)

# HOW TO ELICIT NARRATIVES / STORIES? (CHELLIAH & REUSE 2011: 425; [HTTP://COURSES.WASHINGTON.EDU/SOP/ELICIT\\_ANALYZEPERSONALNARR.PDF](http://courses.washington.edu/sop/ELICIT_ANALYZEPERSONALNARR.PDF))

## Personal narratives:

- narrative interview
- story prompts (see handout)
- photographs as prompts

## Fictional narratives:

- picture prompts: create stories with pictures, see
- retelling picture book (ex. "Frog, Where are you?" by Mayer (1969) – «Frog stories»
- retelling films (ex. «Pear story», by Wallace Chafe in the 1997, see <http://www.pearstories.org/>)

## More controlled stories

- Provide a version of a well-known story (such as Cinderella)
- Translate a written story into your language
- Read and paraphrase a written story

# MORE EXAMPLES OF ELICITING SPOKEN TEXTS

<http://fieldmanuals.mpi.nl> (L&C Field Manuals and Stimulus Materials; Language and Cognition Department, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics)

examples:

How people reason about moral: <http://fieldmanuals.mpi.nl/volumes/2003-1/reasoning-in-language/>

How people talk about kinship: <http://fieldmanuals.mpi.nl/volumes/2003-1/interview-on-kinship/>

And think of your second language learning (teaching) experience! How do teachers make students talk?



# TASK 2 FOR GRADING

see handout