(1) Due Thursday, May 27: Select a grammatical topic from the target language of your course project and write it up as a “squib”. A squib is a short description of a couple of paragraphs or so in which you characterize a construction, illustrated with one or (preferably) more examples. The form of your description will depend on the construction that you pick, your background in formal linguistics, and your taste in how to do language description. Here are some examples of the types of topics that I have in mind:

- Word order in main clauses vs. subordinate clauses (if there are interesting differences!)
- Formation of WH-questions versus parallel declarative sentences
- Case marking on nouns to show sentence function (subject, object, indirect object, etc.)
- Agreement patterns in noun phrases (for example, if the language has gender)
- Agreement patterns between noun phrases and verbs, such as subject agreement; for Asian languages, this might involve marking of “politeness levels”
- Formation of passives, causatives, and other “valence changing” constructions
- Formation of some kind of subordinate clause (relative, conditional, purpose, etc.)
- Formation of genitive constructions
- Marking of negation, esp. if this conditions changes in things like verb tense marking, negative polarity items (e.g. *some* vs. *any* in English), word order, etc.

I could come up with more, but this should give you the idea.

(2) For lectures in Week 8: I will probably say a little more about morphology, then move to syntax/semantics studies that I have done based on data collected through field work. Please pick one of the STARRED PAPERS BELOW, look it over, and come with a question or comment. The items below should be active links that open files, but if they don’t work, let me know.

*“Miya as a West Chadic language with V…S word order” (2001)
(My class presentation will not exactly follow this paper, but it will be relevant.)

“Substantitive and anaphoric ‘thing’ in Bole with remarks on Hausa *abu/abin*” (2001)
(I won’t present this paper per se—if you like this topic, look at the next item below.)

*“Anaphors: reflexives, reciprocals, middles, and intransitive copy pronouns” (2009)
(Chapter of a Bole reference grammar. This includes a more succinct version of the information in the paper above plus a broader range of relevant constructions.)

*“Yobe State, Nigeria as a linguistic area” [sections 1 and 4—you can look at the other sections, but I won’t discuss them—unless you want me to!] (2005)


“The totality extension and focus in West Chadic” (2005) (conference paper)