ultimate goal is to get the informant to think about language as the investigator does' and to answer questions in 'the way he should respond' (Samarin 1967: 41) is misleading (see §3.5.2).

In order to get recordings that are as natural as possible (see Himmelmann 1998 on the 'naturalness' of recordings and Samarin 1967: 56–7 on the notion of 'natural speech'), researchers are recommended to train members of the community to do the recordings themselves without the researchers being present at a place where the speaker feels comfortable.

Literate consultants can be trained in doing preliminary transcriptions (Dixon 2010: 322), and literate and bilingual consultants can also be trained in doing translations. Such transcriptions can be done in any kind of orthography—even inconsistent orthographies may be helpful. However, the transcribers must learn to
p. 78 only write down what the speakers have said and not what, in their opinion, they ↳ should have said. Thus all hesitation phenomena, wrong names, code switching, etc. need to be rendered in this preliminary transcription. Transcriptions done by native speakers can be very helpful, especially when they render phonetically reduced and fused forms by their corresponding full forms. They may also reveal the transcriber's metalinguistic intuitions about the morphophonology of the language and the boundaries of linguistic units (Himmelmann 2006b: 254).

If the speakers want the transcriptions to be edited before presenting them to other people, the researchers may give them some advice on how to transform a transcription into a readable text without completely changing its style and adapting it to that of the contact or the written dominant language. Editing texts does not mean rewriting them. Rather, the editors should respect the speaker's way of expression and, for example, remove only those repetitions that are caused by stuttering, or add words and phrases that are absolutely necessary to understand the written text. Nevertheless, some editors will not refrain from changing expressions and will, for example, simplify constructions or make them more complex. Such changes should not be criticized by the researchers but considered as an interesting source for the morphosyntactic analysis of the language, because they show how the same content is expressed by formally different constructions. A parallel corpus of the transcriptions of spoken texts and the corresponding edited versions also provides a new kind of data for the study of the differences between spoken and written language in general. (Bowern 2008: 120–21; Mosel 2006a: 80; 2008; Murray and Rice 1999).

3.5 Collecting Data

The following section reviews a number of fieldwork guides with respect to the methods they recommend for gathering data on the morphology and syntax of the target language. Instead of discussing the strengths and weaknesses of each book in turn, we will scrutinize what they say with respect to the following four kinds of method:

language learning and participant observation;

translational elicitation;

non-translational elicitation;

collection of texts (in the widest sense).

See the chapters in this volume dealing with technology of recording (Margetts and Margetts, Chapter 1), archiving and language data management (Thieberger and Berez, Chapter 4), and experimental elicitation (Majid, Chapter 2).