


### 3.5.2.4 Non-translational elicitation

Non-translational elicitation does not generally exclude the use of the contact language, but only avoids the direct translation of single sentences from the contact language into the target language. In order to avoid all the flaws of translational elicitation mentioned above, I recommend a non-translational approach even in the initial stage of fieldwork: first explain what the word list is used for, and then ask the consultants to list any words denoting persons, things, actions, and properties of a particular semantic domain that come to their mind or that you suggest (Mosel 2006a: 75–6). Once the words of a particular domain like food and food preparation have been collected, e.g. ‘wash’, ‘peel’, ‘cook’, ‘boil’, ‘potatoes’, ‘pot’, ‘water’, ‘dirty’, ‘hot’, the ‘word-to-text technique’ (Samarin 1967: 83) can be applied. This technique requires the native speakers to select a few words from the list and compose short meaningful utterances like ‘boil the water!’, ‘dirty potatoes’. These sentences are then translated by the consultant into the contact language, and can later serve as the basis for the following non-translational techniques, each of which is discussed further below.

1. substitution elicitation (Kibrik 1977: 58; Samarin 1987: 115–17);
  2. paraphrasing (Kibrik 1977: 58; Samarin 1967: 119);
  3. sentence completion (Samarin 1987: 83);
  4.  eliciting examples (Kibrik 1977: 58);
  5. transformational elicitation (Bower 2008: 81–2; Kibrik 1977: 60);
  6. paradigmatic elicitation (Kibrik 1977: 57–8).
1. The **substitution technique** uses phrases and clauses already elicited in the target language as a frame in which a word or a phrase is substituted for another one. If, for example, you want to know how singular and plural are distinguished or whether there is agreement between certain constituents with respect to number, you may take a simple clause with a singular argument and ask, ‘What would you say if it is not only one but several X?’ In a similar way, a wide range of morphosyntactic phenomena can be investigated, for example:
    1. the argument structure of clauses by substituting a verb with various other kinds of verbs that presumably require a different argument structure;
    2. gender by substituting nouns denoting males by nouns denoting females and classifiers by using nouns referring to objects of different shapes, sizes, and substances, human beings, and animals as the head of subject and object noun phrases (Abbi 2001: 118, 123);
    3. the tense, aspect, and mood marking by adding or substituting temporal or modal adverbs (‘today’, ‘yesterday’, ‘never’, ‘always’, etc.) or adverbial phrases (‘a long time ago’, ‘in the future’, ‘for a week’, ‘in a week’, etc.);
    4. the person marking on verbs or in the verb complex by substituting nominal subjects and objects with 1st and 2nd person pronouns;
    5. complement clauses by substituting a complement taking predicate, for example verbs meaning ‘know’, ‘believe’, ‘see’, ‘say’, ‘want’ (Noonan 2007: 149–50).
  2. **Paraphrasing** means that the consultants are asked to say ‘the same thing in a different way’, which may reveal new types of clause structure, if the sentences are ‘related by a common meaning and by sharing the fundamental lexical items’ (Samarin 1967: 119).