



The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Fieldwork

Nicholas Thieberger (ed.)

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199571888.001.0001>

Published: 2011

Online ISBN: 9780191744112

Print ISBN: 9780199571888

CHAPTER

3 Morphosyntactic Analysis in the Field: A Guide to the Guides

Ulrike Mosel

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199571888.013.0004> Pages 72–89

Published: 18 September 2012

Abstract

This article focuses on existing field guides for morphosyntactic analysis of previously undescribed languages. The first comprehensive modern linguistic field guide was written by Samarin (1967), followed by Bouquiaux and Thomas, Healey (1975), and Kibrik (1977). Apart from Burling's (1984) small but very useful book, *Learning a Field Language*, there were no fieldwork guides published in the 1980s. Since the early 1990s the rising awareness of the imminent global loss of language diversity, the recognition of linguistic typology as an important discipline of linguistics, and the advances in language recording and processing technology have led to an increasing interest in the documentation of endangered languages and fieldwork methods. These guides have to be distinguished from publications that inform students on the diversity of language structures, or train them through exercises in the analysis of linguistic data. This article briefly explains selected areas of the typology of morphosyntactic structures and gives useful recommendations for further study along with her presentation of data gathering methods. In each section, the morphosyntactic characteristics of Indian languages are explained followed by suggestions about how they can be elicited. The sections in this article recommend a number of books that provide basic and specialized information on languages and language structures and then address anthropologists and other non-linguistic researchers who are interested in collecting language data in the course of fieldwork. Finally, the article summarizes the state of the art.

Keywords: [morphosyntactic analysis](#), [language diversity](#), [linguistic typology](#), [endangered languages](#), [language structure](#)

Subject: [Linguistic Anthropology](#), [Grammar](#), [Syntax and Morphology](#), [Linguistics](#)

Series: [Oxford Handbooks](#)

Collection: [Oxford Handbooks Online](#)