

Of course, the actual fieldwork will also be affected by pragmatic considerations and particular techniques may well be used iteratively. For instance, stage 4 could actually be carried out in two parts, the first after stage 2 and the second after stage 3. Also, the field methods discussed here were adopted for a medium-sized study; smaller, single-researcher postgraduate projects may not have the resources to utilize all of these techniques. Of crucial importance is that any method should be used in a reflective manner, with the fieldworkers continually questioning the validity of their results and ensuring ethical practice (see sections below). Our approach resembles a Grounded Theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

A summary of the techniques used in the case studies is provided in the following subsections, each representing a 'stage' in the methodology.

16.2.2 Techniques used in stages of method

16.2.2.1 Dictionary work and photo collection

This stage includes scoping the particular linguistic domain and preparing 'instruments' for use in fieldwork. Specific techniques include:

- Review of existing dictionaries (hardcopy and digital) and word lists; e.g. for Yindjibarndi these included: Anderson (1986), Anderson and Thieberger (2003), von Brandenstein (1992), Wordick (1982). For the Navajo study, bilingual Navajo-English dictionaries, principally Young and Morgan (1992), were used; Moser and Marlett (2005) was used for the Seri project. To compile an initial list of landscape terms for a language, we looked up each term in a long list of English-language landscape terms, in the dictionary of the target language. Also, in one case (Yindjibarndi, in Anderson 1986), the dictionary included 'topic codes' for each term, one of which was 'Geographical features'.
- Review of existing written stories and audio recordings relevant to landscape; e.g. for Yindjibarndi these included von Brandenstein (1970).
- Compilation of lists of all geographic terms from dictionaries, wordlists, etc. For the sake of establishing a starting point for discussions, these can be classified into semantic groups ('landscape domains') according to the usual meanings of their English equivalents, using groups such as water features, land forms (convex and concave), land cover types, etc (as discussed in §16.1.2). It is important, however, that these initial classifications do not inhibit the researchers from developing a categorization scheme appropriate for the particular language community. The domains are mainly used to help the researchers organize their approach, and are not necessarily a hypothesis regarding how the speakers would group the terms.
- Consultations with linguists familiar with the target language, or at least with closely related languages. This is especially useful to elicit information about the syntax and grammar of the language, for instance, the likely role of parts of speech other than nouns in landscape terms.
- Acquisition of existing images of representative landscape features and/or taking new photographs in the area occupied by the language community and perhaps in adjacent areas.

There are of course also many tasks associated with obtaining background information about the relevant language community (e.g. history, culture, social structures) and its traditional area of habitation (topography, hydrology, land use, etc.). Appropriate procedures must be used to make contact with the community, to ask permission to conduct fieldwork, as well as obtaining relevant ethical clearances in the case of university-based research projects (see Rice, Chapter 18 below). Some of these issues are discussed further in §16.4 below.