

2. plants and animals;
3. social organization;
4. seasonal and non-seasonal activities;
5. life of the individual;
6. technology.

Each of these categories is further subdivided and accompanied by comments on how these themes and subthemes relate to various genres and how the various kinds of texts can be collected.

Rivierre's categorization is also useful for the creation of a corpus for the grammatical analysis of a previously undocumented language because different themes are talked about in different ways and different genres stimulate the use of different grammatical constructions. In other words, the text type—here defined in terms of themes and genres—determines the frequency of certain grammatical constructions. Consequently, the choice of a particular text type can help to avoid artificial elicitation. Here are a few examples from my own research:

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- In order to investigate how the use of temporal expressions differs in accounts of habitual activities and narratives of past events, I recorded and analysed the ↪ description of how to butcher a rooster, and an anecdote telling how someone butchered a particular rooster.
- Instrumental constructions such as prepositional phrases or applicatives occur quite frequently in procedural texts describing how something is done with certain tools or made from certain materials.
- Narratives focusing on the actions of people usually favour clause structures in which an agentive human participant features as the subject of an active verb. In order to test what kind of constructions the Teop language has to background human agents, I recorded descriptions of plants and what they are used for.
- A convenient text type for the analysis of syntactic behaviour of property words denoting size, colour, and shape are descriptions of fishes, flowers, and fruit.

Text types like procedural texts or the description of plants and fishes may not belong to the traditional genres of the speech community or other kinds of conventionalized language use, but as they reflect the native speakers' linguistic competence and show the expressive power of the language, they can be considered a reliable source for the syntactic analysis of the language.

3.6 Summary and Concluding Remarks

Linguistic fieldwork on a previously unresearched language presupposes a good knowledge of linguistic typology or at least of the grammar of a closely related language (§3.2). Without this background knowledge, the researcher will not be able to analyse the data he or she collects, develop new hypotheses, and accordingly prepare new questionnaires while still in the field. Researchers without linguistic training can contribute to the documentation of a language by compiling lists of words and sentences or doing recordings, transcriptions, and translations with the help of bilingual speakers (§3.3).

The success of a fieldwork trip very much depends on how the researchers interact with their indigenous consultants. The more the consultants understand the aims and the methods of the research project, the