

Methodologies in Semantic Fieldwork



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This volume discusses methodological issues in conducting elicitation on semantic topics in a fieldwork situation. In twelve chapters discussing 11 language families from four continents, authors draw on their own fieldwork experience, pairing explicit methodological proposals with concrete examples of their use in the field. Several chapters cover issues specific to semantic topics such as modality, comparison, tense and aspect, and definiteness, while others focus on elicitation techniques more generally, addressing methodological issues such as the creation of elicitation plans, the choice of language in which to conduct elicitation, and the status of translation tasks. Together, the chapters of this volume demonstrate that elicitation on semantic topics, when conducted following sound methodologies, can and does produce reliable results. Given the high number of languages currently classified as endangered, conducting one-on-one fieldwork with native speaker consultants is critical for gathering new empirical findings that bear on linguistic theory.

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