

## FIELDWORK SESSION PLANNER

Data replicability and transparency are becoming a standard in Science and it is slowly reaching Linguistics. As field linguists, we need to be reflecting on ways for implementing these principles, whilst being aware of all the privacy, consent and ethical issues, which are also part of our work. For these reasons, I would like to share with any field researcher working with human participants the template I use for my grammar elicitation sessions. It is very simple, and probably there are more detailed versions available out there. However, its simplicity and systematicity motivate me to fill it in every day, before and after each session. Apart from keeping the data organised and easily tracing its origins, it is intended to be a space for reflecting on one's performance as a researcher and journal our progress. Most of the templates disregard the human dimension, yet it sometimes has a big influence on the development of the session and the data we obtain as a result. It provides some evidence if we have to make decisions about the reliability or acceptability of different forms in the future. It also sets a basis for acknowledging our possible flaws and inaccuracies in the data for other people checking it (or even ourselves when we review it in 6, 8,... months).

Section 1 includes the objectives of each session. Those expected outcomes very often do not adjust to the final outcomes, so it is okay to strikethrough them (once the session is over), just to leave some evidence on what you tried, and help you calculate time management for next times (which often varies considerably from one participant to another). This is supposed to be filled BEFORE the session (although to be honest, sometimes, I had an idea of a session, run it, and only then included the data... but this is a bad practice, so don't follow it!)

Section 2 is a personal feedback or review of the development of the session. The first aim is to record any possible factors that may have blurred the data (from the speaker being tired or having problems for articulation (because of bad teeth), to power cuts). The second aim is to criticise our own performance and see what can be improved for next sessions (including choosing a different speaker, who may be very kind but a bad language assistant). I strongly recommend filling this RIGHT AFTER the session (so you can better remember how everyone was feeling).

Section 3 is left for answers. This can be filled anytime AFTER the recordings. For a better traceability of the data, I like dividing my recordings into subsections (specified at the heading of each of them). I recommend including the time stamp for the examples, although I understand this is hard work.

### **Some remarks:**

This template is designed for linguistic fieldwork. There is an earlier version of this template that was more fitted to my immediate context at that time (Slavic dialectology).<sup>1</sup> After more experiences with other contexts and having used the templates for a while, I have come up with some improvements. In any case, feel free to adjust it to the needs of other particular field.

I have attached a (shortened) sample of one of my sessions. As you will see, there are blanks in many answers (Section 3), and I have not tried to hide it, as this tends to be the case.

If you have any suggestions, doubts or corrections, please feel free to email to the following address: ronceroATshh.mpg.de

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# FIELDWORK SESSION PLANNER (*TEMPLATE*)

Location		Village code	
Speaker		Date	
Session		Recording(s)	

## 1. SESSION PLANNING

· **Global objective:**

· **Main objective(s) of the session** (e.g. *X feature in Y contexts*):

-  
-

· **Other objective(s) (if there is time)**

-  
-

· **Methodology:** Storytelling    Direct elicitation    Prompts (visual; suggesting situations)

· **Questions:**

-  
-  
-  
-  
-  
-

-**Estimated distribution of the session:**

-  
-  
-  
-

**Estimated working time:**

-**Meeting place:**

-**How well do I know the speaker?**

-**Anything I should be aware of?**

## 2. DEBRIEFING

### 2.1. Development of the session

#### General questions

- On a 1-10 scale, how comfortable did the speaker(s) feel working with me/on the project ?  
.
- Any factors that may have altered their performance (e.g. bad sleep, mistrust, etc.)?  
.
- Any external factors conditioning (for bad) our comfort and performance (e.g. too cold, etc.)?  
.
- Any external factors to be considered for the next sessions (e.g. choosing a less noisy place)?  
.
- On a 1-10 scale, how comfortable did I feel working with that speaker?  
.
- Do I want to keep working with this speaker? Why?  
.

### 2.2. Achievements

- How satisfied am I with the achievement of my main goal?  
.
- Was/were the goal/s too small?  
.
- What prevented me from achieving fully the main goal? (e.g. *too ambitious, lack of time, lack of knowledge, wrong speaker, lack of concentration, other reasons*)  
.

### 2.3. Any unplanned or interesting phenomena discovered?

## 3. ANSWERS

## FIELDWORK SESSION PLANNER (*Example*)

Location	N. Gakvari	Village code	AG
Speaker	AG3 & AG4 <sup>2</sup>	Date	25/09/2019
Session	4	Recording(s)	Session4_1_AG3-4 Session4_2_AG3-4 LexCauc2_AG3-4

### 1. SESSION PLANNING

• **Global objective:** MORPHOLOGY

• **Main objective of the session** (e.g. *X feature in Y contexts*): Verb variations across **TENSE** & **NEGATION** (reconstructing a paradigm)

- Testing the materials on Magomedova (2004) on **TENSE** and **NEGATION**.
- Reconstructing the paradigm for verbs in indicative.
- Testing variations in the form of the verb with different S/A and O.

• **Other possible objectives (if there is time)**

- Eliciting 30 lexical items on kinship for LexCauc database.

• **Methodology:** Direct elicitation

• **Questions:**

- Do the **TENSE** values described in the literature correspond with what Gakvarians use?
- How are **TENSE** and **NEGATION** marked in **INDICATIVE** forms?
- Is (*b*)*isneda* really an auxiliary? How do you inflect it when it just means 'to find'?
- (Elicit kinship terms for the LexCauc database)

-**Estimated distribution of the session:**

**Estimated working time: 40 min**

- Ice-breaking, (5-7min)
- **TENSE** (5-7 min)
- **NEGATION/POLARITY** (7 min)
- The alleged auxiliary (*b*)*isneda* (5-7 min)
- LexCauc: Kinship terms (20 min)

-**Meeting place:** Their home

-**How well do I know the speaker?** We are getting to know each other well.

-**Anything I should be aware of?** People may be getting into the room. I have found out that they have a four gender system (or their fifth gender is almost residual), whilst other people in the village have a five gender system (or at least more morphologically robust).

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<sup>2</sup>Anonymised speakers. I have used a different code than the one they are associated with in my public files and archive, for privacy purposes.

## 2. DEBRIEFING

### 2.1. Development of the session

#### General questions

- How comfortable did the speaker(s) feel working with me/on the project?
  - They seem happy to be involved. They are even helping to convince other people to be interviewed.
  
- Any external factors conditioning (for bad) our comfort and performance? (Too cold, etc.)
  - The light went off in the entire village for a couple of minutes during our session (that's why the recording is split into two). That was a bit distracting, but have to take into account this could happen in the future again (as power cuts are frequent with bad weather). As a safety procedure, never ever use the Marantz with an A/C adapter in this village.
  
- Any external factors to be considered for the next sessions (i.e. choosing a less noisy place)
  - Asking people to turn their phones off.
  
- How comfortable did I feel working with that speaker?
  - Very comfortable. I get on well with them, it is good that we are also being able to spend informal time together outside of the session time, particularly right before (though I should also manage this in order not to start too late).
  
- Do I want to keep working with this speaker? Why?
  - Yes, although for "rough" grammatical questions I may have to find a better time for doing it and/or ask them to turn their phones off. Try my best to start slightly earlier. The lexical bit (with LexCauc) went fairly well.

### 2.2. Achievements

- How satisfied am I with the achievement of my main goal?
  - Normal
  
- Was/were the goal/s too small?
  - I obtained two basic paradigms, but hoping to get a fuller paradigm with more variations (across VALENCY, more GENDER values, and class/non-class verbs).
  
- What prevented me from achieving fully the main goal? (e.g. *too ambitious, lack of time, lack of knowledge, wrong speaker, lack of concentration, other reasons*)
  - Speakers were tired so it was a bit hard to keep their attention.
  
- Mistakes:
  - I should have elicited the TENSE forms of *(b)isneda* 'to find' consistently. I mixed different ASPECT forms.

### 2.3. Any unplanned or interesting phenomena discovered?

Is there a single exponent for NEGATION which may be affected by some phonological (or morphophonological) rules? In Magomedova's (2004) work there are different forms, which seem related, but I only obtained what it sounded like the same morpheme. I understand these exponents may have some minor phonological transformations, but which I could hardly tell from each other.

### 3. ANSWERS

[NB. The answers in red indicate uncertainty, possible mistake/inconsistency]

(See a summary with all the resulting paradigms bellow)

#### 3.1. The verb *-uk-/ida* 'to be'

##### 3.1.1. AFFIRMATIVE/INDICATIVE

[Session4\_1\_AG3-4, 00:20-03:22]

a). *jets'* (IV, *ho-oe*) 'bread'

4\_1      'oɦi                      jets'                      d-iχ

DEM.II.SG.ERG              bread(IV).ABS.SG    IV-buy.PST  
'She bought bread.'

4\_1      'oɦi                      jets'                      d-iχ-idaqχ              ida

DEM.II.SG.ERG              bread(IV).ABS    IV-buy-Q?              BE.PRS  
'She may have bought bread [they say].'

4\_1      'oɦi                      jets'                      uze                      d-iχi                      ida

DEM.II.SG.ERG              bread(IV).ABS    [already]              IV-buy.PST              BE.PRS  
'[I was going to see her] but she had already bought bread.'

4\_1      'oɦi                      zib-                      zimiɦ-iqχ              Agvali-o

DEM.II.SG.ERG              every                      day-LOC?              Agvali-LOC?

jets'                      d-iχ-ida                      ida

bread(IV).ABS              IV-buy-FUT              BE.PRS

'She buys bread in Agvali every day.'

4\_1      'oɦi                      jahade                      jets'                      ida                      d-iχ-ida-qχ

DEM.II.SG.ERG              now                      bread(IV).ABS.SG    BE.PRS              IV-buy-FUT-CONT  
'She is buying bread right now.'

4\_1 'oɦi Set jets' d-iχ-ile ida  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG tomorrow bread(IV).ABS.SG IV-buy-INF? BE.PRS  
 'She is going to buy bread tomorrow.'

4\_1 'oɦi Set jex jets' d-iχ-ile isi:na<sup>3</sup>  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG tomorrow **maybe?** bread(IV).ABS IV-buy-INF? BE.FUT  
 'She may buy [in the future, but we are not sure].'

### 3.1.2. Negative forms

[Session4\_1\_AG3-4 03:23-04:57]

a). **jets'** (IV, *ho-oe*) 'bread'

4\_1<sup>4</sup> 'oɦi Isna 'oɦi d-iχ-ile Isĩ jets  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG BE.FUT? DEM.II.SG.ERG IV-buy-INF? BE.FUT.NEG bread(IV).ABS  
 G?  
 [Vol] 'oɦi d-iχ-ile isn-ek'w jets'  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG IV-buy-FUT BE.FUT-NEG bread(IV).A  
 BS  
 'She may not buy bread.'

4\_1 'oɦi jets' d-iχ-ile ek'w  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG bread(IV).ABS.SG IV-buy-FUT BE.NEG  
 'She will not buy bread [for sure].'

4\_1 'oɦi jahad jets' **d-iχ-ide-χ** iqχ  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG now bread(IV).ABS.SG **IV-buy-FUT-CONT** NEG  
 'She does not is not buying bread right now.'

4\_1 'oɦi d-iχ-ida iqχ jets'  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG IV-buy-BE.PRS NEG bread(IV).ABS.SG  
 'She does not [ever] buy bread.'

<sup>3</sup> She first said *ɦитина*, but later gave this form. AG4 also seemed happier with *i-sina*.

<sup>4</sup> This first form that AG3 gave does not seem to contain any negative suffix or particle.

4\_1 'oɦi jala jets' d-iχi iqχ  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG yet? bread(IV).ABS.SG IV-buy.PST NEG  
 'She has not bought bread yet.'

4\_1 'oɦi jets' d-iχi iqχ  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG bread(IV).ABS.SG IV-buy.PST NEG  
 'She did not buy bread [they say].'

4\_1 'oɦi jets' d-iχ-le-qχ  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG bread(IV).ABS.SG IV-buy-  
 'She did not buy bread at all.'  
 [△AG3 also proposed the previous sentence as a translation of this]

**Summary**

INDICATIVE TENSE & ASPECT forms with their negative forms) -iχ 'to buy (jets' -IV 'bread')

	GENERAL/CERTAIN	NEG. CERTAIN	REPORTATIVE/UNCERTAIN /CONTINUOUS [now]	NEG. REPORTATIVE/ CONTINUOUS
ANT	dixi ida	dixi iqχ?		
PST	Dix	Dixleqχ	dixidaqχ ida	dixi iqχ?
PRS	dixida ida	dixida iqχ	ida dixidaqχ	dixidex iqχ
FUT	dixi:le ida	dixile ek'w	dixi:le isi:na	dixile isnek'w

**[Session4\_1\_AG3-4 04:58-06:23]**

b) **zin** (III, *ho-ob*) 'cow'.

4\_1 'oɦi Zin b-iχ-i ida  
 04:58 DEM.II.SG.ERG cow(III).ABS.SG III-buy-PST BE.PRS  
 'She bought a cow.'<sup>5</sup>

05:07 'oɦi u'ze zin b-iχ-i ida  
 DEM.II.SG.ERG [already] cow(III).ABS.SG III-buy-PST BE.PRS  
 'She had already bought a cow.'

<sup>5</sup> Most likely this is either the ANTERIOR or the UNWITNESSED PAST (in Bokarev's 1959 analysis) form, and not GENERAL (WITNESSED) PAST.

4_1 05:16	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'She bought a cow [they say]	Zin cow(III).ABS.SG	b-iχ-i(i)daqχ	Ida BE.PRS	
4_1 05:25	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'She didn't buy a cow.'	Zin cow(III).ABS.SG	b-iχ-i III-buy-PST	ik'w <sup>6</sup> NEG.PST	
4_1 05:31	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'Once a year she buys a [new] cow.'	ts'vim yearly? cow(III).ABS.SG	zin BE.PRS	ide III-buy-FUT-HAB	b-iχ-ida-qχ
4_1 05:42	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'She doesn't buy a cow [every year...].'	Zin cow(III).ABS.SG	b-iχ-i(i)da-qχ III-buy-FUT-NEG	ik'w BE.NEG.PRS	
4_1 05:47	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'She will buy a cow.'	Zin cow(III).ABS	b-iχ-ile III-buy-INF	id(j)a BE.PRS	
4_1 05:54	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'She will not buy a cow.'	Zin cow(III).ABS.SG	b-iχ-(i)l-eqχ III-buy-FUT-NEG		
4_1 06:01	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'Maybe she will buy a cow.'	Zin cow(III).ABS.SG	b-iχ-i-le III-buy-FUT?	b-is-i:(n)na III-BE-FUT?	
4_1 06:07	'oɦi DEM.II.SG.ERG 'Maybe she will not buy the cow.'	zin cow(III).ABS.SG	bixile	bisnjek'w	

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<sup>6</sup> Probably the ANTERIOR





b) 'ilja (II) 'mother'

4\_1 'ostɫa 'j-isenda<sup>10</sup> 'ilja  
08:18  
II-find.FUT? mum(II).ABS.SG  
'He finds [his] mother.'

4\_1 'ostɫa 'j-is-ã 'ilja  
08:24  
II-find-PST mum(II).ABS.SG  
'He found [his] mother.'

4\_1 'ostɫa j-is'n-jeda 'ilja  
08:31  
II-find-FUT mum(II).ABS.SG  
'He will find [his] mother.'

c) 'musa (III) 'bull/ox'

[Session4\_2\_AG3-4 00:00-01:20]

4\_2 ha'dam ostɫa 'b-is-ã 'musa  
00:15<sup>11</sup>  
man(I).ABS?SG III-find-PST? bull(III).ABS.SG  
'The man finds the bull [right now].'

4\_2 ha'dam ostɫa b-is'n-eda 'musa  
00:41  
man(I).ABS?SG III-find-FUT bull(III).ABS.SG  
'The man will find the bull.'

4\_2 ha'dam os'tɫa 'b-is-a mu'sa  
00:48  
man(I).ABS?SG III-find-PST? bull(III).ABS.SG  
'The man found the bull.'

<sup>10</sup> Unique form.

<sup>11</sup> Based on the rest of the paradigms, this really looks like the GENERAL PAST form, and not the PRESENT, which seem inverted here.

d) *t'aj* (IV) 'pony'

4_2 00:58	ha'dam man(I).ABS?SG 'The man is finding the pony.'	os'tla	'j-i:s-a IV-find-PRS??	t'aj pony(IV).ABS.SG
4_2 01:04	ha'dam man(I).ABS?SG 'The man found the pony.'	s'tla	'j-is-ã IV-find-PST	t'aj pony(IV).ABS.SG
4_2 01:16	ha'dam man(I).ABS?SG 'The man will find the pony.'	s'tla	j-is'-njeda IV-find-FUT	t'aj pony(IV).ABS.SG

*Summary*

The auxiliary/verb **-is(n)-** 'to find'

GENERAL/ CERTAIN	<i>ima</i> (I) 'father'	<i>'ilja</i> (II) 'mother'	<i>'musa</i> (III) 'bull/ox'	<i>t'aj</i> (IV) 'pony'
PAST	vísàã	'jisã	'bisa	'jisã
PRESENT		'jisenda	'bisã	'ji:sa
FUTURE	bis'njeda	jis'njeda	bis'neda	jis'njeda

**3.2. Recap & summary**

INDICATIVE TENSE & ASPECT forms with their negative forms) *-iχ* 'to buy (*jets'* -IV 'bread')

	GENERAL/CERTAIN	NEG. CERTAIN	REPORTATIVE/UNCERTAIN /CONTINUOUS [now]	NEG. REPORTATIVE/ CONTINUOUS
ANT	dixi ida	<i>dixi iqx?</i>		
PST	dix	Dixleqχ	<i>dixidaqχ ida</i>	<i>dixi iqx?</i>
PRS	dixida ida	dixida iqx	<i>ida dixidaqχ</i>	dixidex iqx
FUT	dixi:le ida	dixile ek'w	dixi:le isi:na	dixile isnek'w

INDICATIVE TENSE & ASPECT forms with their negative forms (-iχ 'to buy (zin- IV 'cow'))

	GENERAL/CERTAIN	NEG. CERTAIN	REPORTATIVE/UNCERTAIN /CONTINUOUS [now]	NEG. REPORTATIVE/CONTINUOUS
ANT	bixi ida	<i>bixi ik'w</i>		
PST			bixi(i)daqχ ida	
PRS	ide bixidaqχ	bixi(i)daqχ ik'w		
FUT	bixile id(j)a	bix(i)leqχ	bixile bisi:(n)na	bixile bisn(j)ek'w

INDICATIVE TENSE & ASPECT forms with their negative forms) -od 'to eat (jets' -IV 'bread')

	GENERAL/CERTAIN	NEG. CERTAIN	REPORTATIVE/UNCERTAIN /CONTINUOUS [now]	NEG. REPORTATIVE/CONTINUOUS
ANT	bixi ida			
PST	'odə		o':daqχ ida	
PRS	'ide o'daqχ		<i>'ide o'daqχ</i>	
FUT	o':leda		'o:la jis'njeda	

The auxiliary/verb -is(n)- 'to find'

GENERAL/CERTAIN	<i>ima</i> (I) 'father'	<i>'ilja</i> (II) 'mother'	<i>'musa</i> (III) 'bull/ox'	<i>t'aj</i> (IV) 'pony'
PAST	vísàã	'jisã	'bisa	<i>'jisã</i>
PRESENT		'jisenda	<i>'bisã</i>	<i>'ji:sa</i>
FUTURE	bis'njeda	jis'njeda	bis'neda	jis'njeda

3.3. LexCauc: Kinship terms (items 325-347)

[LexCauc2\_AG3-4]