

Collaboration with Language Centers: An Option for Fieldwork and Research

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Overview


- Challenges to doing fieldwork
- Resources available at language centers
- Negotiating a project
- Identifying your background
- Caveats

Specific examples are drawn from my experience at Wangka Maya Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre






Common Practical Barriers to Fieldwork

- finding accommodations
 - figuring out who to talk to and how to contact them
 - paying consultants
 - choosing a field site to begin with
 - apprehension about going to a new place
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Resources of Language Centers

- Introductions to speakers
 - Advice regarding cultural norms and community relationships
 - On-site materials
 - Funding
 - Housing and transportation
 - Colleagues
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Negotiating Ahead of Time

- Ideology of a language center
 - Clarification of goals and expectations
 - Products
 - Access to resources
 - Hours
 - Working as a volunteer or as a contract linguist
 - Copyright concerns
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Navigating Perspectives

- Passive and active approaches
 - Reconciliation of academic and community interests
 - Expectations
 - Introductory projects
 - Multi-tasking
 - Interruptions to work
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Things to Keep in Mind

- Introductions versus appointments
 - Changing staff
 - Policies and guidelines in flux
 - Giving feedback
 - Expectations of consultants
 - Responsibilities if you leave the umbrella
 - Concluding projects
 - Communicating changed affiliations
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