SYNTAX

1. Constituent order typology

Units under investigation:
• Main clauses
• Adpositions
• Genitive and head noun
• Head noun and modifier
• Relative clauses and head noun
• Comparatives
• Inflected auxiliaries
• Question particles
• Question words
• Affixes

1.1 Main clause

Clause types that are known to exhibit variant constituent orders in some languages:
• Dependent clauses
• Paragraph initial clauses
• Clauses that introduce participants
• Questions
• Negative clauses
• Clearly contrastive clauses (e.g. clefts, answers to questions)

Constituent types
• Direct object
• Oblique object
• Object complement (clause, infinitival)
• Predicate adjective
• Predicate nominal

Questions for the field worker:
For all units of structure:
What is the neutral order of free elements in the unit?
Are there variations?
How do the variant orders function?
What is the pragmatically neutral order of constituents in basic clauses of the language?

1.3 Verb phrase

Auxiliaries: satisfy the morphosyntactic definition of verbs (e.g. inflection) but are semantically empty

Questions for the field worker:
Where do auxiliaries occur in relation to the semantically “main” verb?
Where do verb-phrase adverbs occur with respect to the verb and auxiliaries?
1.4 Noun phrase
Determiners, numerals, genitives, modifiers, relative clauses, noun classifiers, head noun

Questions for the field worker:
Describe the order(s) of elements in the noun phrase.

1.5 Adpositional phrase
Some derive from verbs, some derive from nouns

Questions for the field worker:
Is the language dominantly prepositional or post-positional? Give examples.
Do many adpositions come from nouns or verbs?

1.6 Comparatives
Standard: the elements against which the subject of the clause is compares
Marker: the element that signals that the clause is a comparative construction
Quality: the element (usually an adjective) by which the subject is compared with the standard

Questions for the field worker:
Does the language have one or more grammaticalized comparative constructions?
If so, what is the order of the standard, the marker and the quality?

1.7 Question particles and question words

Questions for the field worker:
In yes-no questions, if there is a question particle, where does it occur?
In information questions, where does the question word occur?

2. Noun and noun phrase operations

Questions for the field worker:
Is there noun-noun compounding?
How do you know it is compounding?
Is there noun-verb (or verb-noun) compounding that results in a noun?
Are these processes productive?
How common is compounding?
Are there any processes forming a verb from a noun?
   An adjective from a noun?
   An adverb from a noun?
Is number expressed in the noun phrase?
Is the distinction obligatory, optional?
If number marking is optional, when does it tend to occur and when does it tend not to occur?
Do nouns exhibit morphological case? If so, what are the cases? (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative...)
Do noun phrases have articles?
If so, are they obligatory or optional and under what circumstances do they occur?
Are they separate words or bound morphemes?
Is there a class of demonstratives as distinct from articles?
How many degrees of distance are there in the system of demonstratives?
Are there other distinctions besides distance?
How are possessors expressed in the noun phrase?
Do nouns agree with their possessors? Do possessors agree with possessed nouns?
   Neither or both?
Is there a distinction between alienable and inalienable possession?
Are there other types of possession?
When the possessor is a full noun, where does it usually come with respect to the
   possessed noun?
Is there a noun class system?
What are the classes and how are they manifested in the noun phrase?
What dimension of reality is most central to the noun class system (animacy, shape,
   function, etc.)? What other dimensions are relevant?
Do the classifiers occur with numerals? Adjectives? Verbs?
Does the language employ diminutive and/or augmentive operators in the noun or noun
   phrase?
Questions to answer for all nominal operations
Is this operation obligatory?
Is it productive?
Is this operation primarily expressed lexically, morphologically or analytically?
Where in the noun phrase is this operation likely to be located? Can it occur in more than
   one place?

3. Non-verbal predication
Questions for the field worker:
How are proper inclusion and equative predicates formed?
What restrictions are there, if any, on the TAM marking of such clauses?
How are predicate adjectives formed?
How are locational clauses formed?
How are existential clauses formed? (give examples in different tense/aspects especially
   if there is significant variation)
How are negative existentials formed?
How are possessive clauses formed?

4. Valency
Syntactic valence: the number of arguments present in any given clause
Transitive verb: a relation between two participants where one acts upon the other
Intransitive verb: a property, state or situation involving only one participant

Valence increasing devices
• Causative: add a controlling participant
• Applicative: upgrade a peripheral participant
Valence decreasing devices

- Reflexive, reciprocal, middle: merge controlling and affected participants
- Subject omission, passive, inverse: downplay a controlling participant
- Object omission, antipassive, object demotion, object incorporation: downplay an affected participant

Questions for the field worker:

How are causatives formed? (lexically, morphologically, analytically)
Give examples of causatives of intransitive verbs and of transitive verbs?
What happens to the causee in each type of causative?
Does the causative morphosyntax also serve other functions?
Are there any other interesting or unusual facts about causatives in the language?
Are there any operations by which a participant which has a semantic role normally expressed in an “oblique” phrase can “advance” to direct object status?
What semantic roles are subject to these operations and how common are these constructions?
Is there a dative shift construction?

What semantic roles can be “dative shifted”?
Is dative shift obligatory?
Is there possessor raising?
How are reflexives expressed?
Are reflexives and reciprocals formally identical?
Are there any “unusual” uses of reflexive/reciprocal morphosyntax?
Does reflexive/reciprocal morphology ever indicate interclausal coreference?
Which type of passive does the language have? (lexical, morphological, analytic)
Exemplify each type.
Are there any impersonal passives?
Is a passive construction obligatory in any particular environment?
Are there grammatically instantiated middle constructions?

5. **Other verb and verb phrase operations**

Questions for the field worker:

Describe the processes (productive or not) the form a noun from a verb. Include at least:
- action nominalizations, agent nominalization, patient nominalization
Is there a distinction between agent nominalizations that refer to characteristic activities (e.g. teacher) and those that refer to specific events (e.g. the one who is teaching)?
Describe any other participant nominalization strategies (e.g. instrument, location)
Can subject, object or other nouns be incorporated into the verb?
Are there verb-verb compounding processes that result in a verb?
Is there a tense system? How does it operate?
How is aspect expressed?
Is there a clear dividing line between tense/aspect and mode? What are the modes?
Is the case-marking pattern influenced by TAM?
Does the language employ verbal affixes or verb-phrase grammatical functors that specify the spatial orientation or grounding of the situation?