

Dictionary Articles and Corpora – a Research Laboratory for Linguistic Diversity

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Workshop description

Under the concept of linguistic diversity, various forms of linguistic variation are explored. These include socio-cultural, ethnic, cognitive or media-specific variation as well as individual and societal multilingualism in the past and present. In order to study linguistic diversity, pre-existing (primarily) written sources are consulted or new data is collected using different methods (e.g. oral or written questionnaires, interviews, experimental tasks etc.). However, the availability of appropriate data continues to be one of the greatest challenges to empirical research.

Despite the fact that lexicography is one of the oldest linguistic sub-disciplines and began to compile extensive corpora early on as the basis for dictionary work, dictionary articles and the corpora underlying these have been used much less frequently for the study of linguistic diversity. This is surprising given that most dictionaries do not only contain simple information about word meanings and grammar, but also deal with variation and diversity in many ways, such as: regional distribution, style level, language contact (e.g. borrowing), language change or pragmatics.

This section explores the potential utility of lexicographical data in the study of linguistic diversity. We therefore invite contributions with a lexicographical/practical or a meta-lexicographical/theoretical focus that deal with different dictionary types for different target groups (e.g. dialect dictionaries, historical dictionaries, contemporary dictionaries, prescriptive and descriptive dictionaries) as well as dictionary corpora as a resource for research. Possible research questions are:

- How is linguistic diversity treated in lexicography?
- How is linguistic diversity represented in dictionaries or in different dictionary types?
- Which levels of a language system (in addition to lexis and semantics) can be studied by using lexicographical data?
- Which methods can be used to access lexicographical material beyond the dictionaries?
- Which tools are available?