

Dialectology meets Language Documentation

Why & how to apply methods of modern
Language Documentation to Dialect
Documentation

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Outline

Preliminary Notes

Defining the Terms

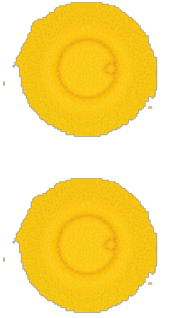
Language Documentation and Dialect
Documentation

Integration

The first Trial of an Integration

Conclusion and Prospects

Preliminary Notes



Research Project

(Morpho)syntactic variation in Bavarian dialects of Austria from a typological perspective

Empirical investigation

Dialectology and typology are both concerned with the empirical investigation of the variability of grammars.

(Seiler 2004: 367)

Defining the Terms

Language Documentation

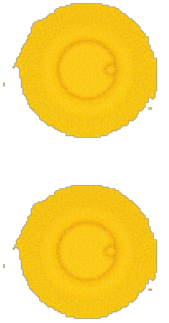
Documentation/empirical investigation of not/little described languages

Dialectology – embedding the discipline

- **traditional**
dialect geography, phonology, lexicon
→ wordlists, questionnaires (e.g. 'Wenker-Sätze')
- **new perspectives**
syntax, discourse structures, typology, testing linguistic hypotheses (e.g. Kortmann (ed.) 2004)
→ questionnaires, audio data



Defining the Terms



Orate vs. Literate Structures (cf. Maas forthc.)

- **orate**: functionally defined (vs. oral)
- **literate**: functionally defined (vs. written)

Orate vs. Dialectal Structures

- **orate**: specific for oral language
- **dialectal**: specific for a particular regionally and/or socially defined oral variety: **dialectal** > **orate**

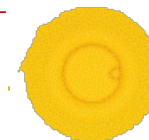
Registers (cf. Maas forthc.)

- **intimate**: family, lovers, close friends
 - **informal public**: friends, supermarket, ...
 - **formal public**: official situations <written language>
- } **orate structures**

Language Documentation and Dialect Documentation

Starting point

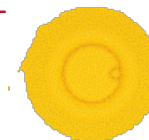
LD	DD	TD
not/little described language/variety	very well described standard (literate) variety; little described dialectal (orate) varieties	
looking for representative informants (sex, age, education)		looking for informants using the 'core-dialect'
cultural differences	no cultural differences	
different contact language	contact language is standard variety	
empirical investigation		



Language Documentation and Dialect Documentation

Linguistic Goals

LD	DD	TD
basis for description of the language/ variety		basis for description of geographical distribution
providing data for typological investigations		
providing data for testing linguistic theories/hypotheses		
data available for various kinds of investigations	specific data for specific analysis	
e m p i r i c a l i n v e s t i g a t i o n		



Integration

Multipurpose investigation

- corpus as basis for various types of approaches

Metadata

- Information about the speaker, situation etc.

Accessability

Spontaneous speech + Elicitation (Questionnaire)

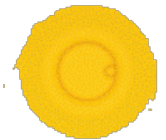
(cf. Lehmann 2004, Chelliah 2001)

Exposing oneself to spontaneous data is, in fact, the safest way of discovering those categories of a language that are peculiar to it and that the researcher did not expect.

(Lehmann 2004: 201)

To certain extent, they [i.e. elicitation methods] are necessary to systematically complete data [...]

(Lehmann 2004: 203)



The First Trial of an Intergration

The Preparation

- equipment, reading, finding informants
- creating a data sheet – sociolinguistic parameters: age, sex, education, mobility, question on attitude towards the variety, evaluation of dialect usage
- Creating a questionnaire for particular structures

The Setting

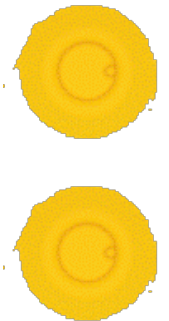
- Interview (guided spontaneous speech)
- Dialogues (spontaneous)
- Questionnaire
- Pear-Story



The First Trial of an Intergration

Problems

- Influence from two standard varieties (German and Austrian)
- Influence from literate structures
- Translation questions rarely possible for morphosyntactic structures
- No corrections
- Grammaticality judgements as primary data?



The First Trial of an Intergration

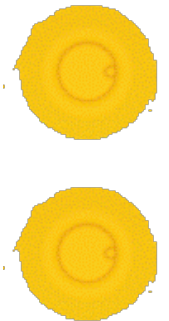
Possible improvement/solutions

- taking switching from non-standard variety to standard variety as part of the investigation (as for example Moosmüller 1991)
- introducing more sociolinguistic parameters (contact with literate and standard variety)
- Multiple choice questionnaire (e.g. Glaser 2000)



Conclusion

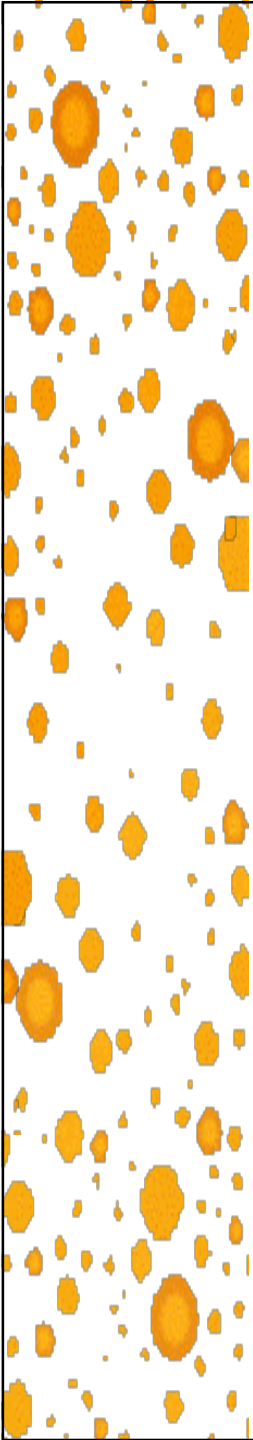
- Apply methods of LD to DD as good opportunity to improve data collection in dialectology
- Data of spontaneous speech for various kinds of investigations
- Metadata as an important method
- Sociolinguistic parameters are essential





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