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Herausgeber – Editors

G. Altmann	Univ. Bochum (Germany)	ram-verlag@t-online.de
K.-H. Best	Univ. Göttingen (Germany)	kbest@gwdg.de
R. Čech	Univ. Ostrava (Czech Republic)	cechradek@gmail.com
F. Fan	Univ. Dalian (China)	Fanfengxiang@yahoo.com
P. Grzybek	Univ. Graz (Austria)	peter.grzybek@uni-graz.at
E. Kelih	Univ. Vienna (Austria)	emmerich.kelih@univie.ac.at
R. Köhler	Univ. Trier (Germany)	koehler@uni-trier.de
H. Liu	Univ. Zhejiang (China)	lhtzju@gmail.com
J. Mačutek	Univ. Bratislava (Slovakia)	jmacutek@yahoo.com
A. Mehler	Univ. Frankfurt (Germany)	amehler@em.uni-frankfurt.de
G. Wimmer	Univ. Bratislava (Slovakia)	wimmer@mat.savba.sk
P. Zörnig	Univ. Brasilia (Brasilia)	peter@unb.br

External academic peers for Glottometrics

Prof. Dr. Haruko Sanada

Rissho University, Tokyo, Japan (<http://www.ris.ac.jp/en/>);

Link to Prof. Dr. Sanada: [http://researchmap.jp/read0128740/?lang=english](http://researchmap.jp/read0128740/?lang=english;);

<mailto:hsanada@ris.ac.jp>

Prof. Dr. Thorsten Roelcke

TU Berlin, Berlin, Germany (<http://www.tu-berlin.de/>)

Link to Prof. Dr. Roelcke: http://www.daf.tu-berlin.de/menue/deutsch_als_fremd-und_fachsprache/personal/professoren_und_pds/prof_dr_thorsten_roelcke/

<mailto:Thosten.Roelcke@tu-berlin.de>

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Glottometrics 40, Contents and Abstracts

Alexander Mehler, Rüdiger Gleim, Andy Lücking,
Tolga Uslu, Christian Stegbauer

On the Self-similarity of Wikipedia Talks: a Combined Discourse-analytical and Quantitative Approach

1-45

Abstract: Do the talk pages in Wikipedia, referred to as *Wikicussions*, exhibit effects of mass communication? In order to provide an answer to this question, we assess Wikicussions from the point of view of dialog theory and identify characteristics specific to this webgenre. We then show that webgenres of this sort evolve into a state of multidimensional scale invariance that is simultaneously reflected on several syntactic and pragmatic dimensions – irrespective of the underlying topic being discussed and the composition of the underlying community of discussants. We also show that a system exhibiting multidimensional scale invariance interferes with thematic classification. The resulting *confusability* of the gestalt of Wikicussions in terms of their thematic provenance and their underlying participation structure is not just caused by the predominance of small units. Rather it also concerns larger or even largest Wikicussions. According to these findings, we distinguish two sorts of self-similarity of Wikipedia’s discussion space: horizontally, regarding thematically demarcated subparts of this space, and vertically regarding the gestalt of top-level sections in relation to Wikicussions. Our analysis is exemplified by means of the discussion space of the German Wikipedia. The results suggest that a quantitative *discourse* analysis of *big dialogical data* as provided by Wikicussions is a promising way to explain the peculiarities of this medium: it can be a starting point for a corresponding theory formation.

Anastasia Gnatciuc, Hanna Gnatchuk

Linking Elements of German Compounds in the Texts of Technical Science

46-50

Abstract: In this investigation we deal with the analysis of German compounds in the technical texts. Our attention is drawn to the study of linking elements in Book “Wirtschaftsinformatik” by H. R. Hansen et al (2015). The corpus of our study includes 206 German compounds taken from 20 pages of the book under consideration. The data have undergone statistical processing. The outcomes can be of great use to typological research.

Kosek Pavel, Čech Radek, Navrátilová Olga, Mačutek Ján

On the Development of Old Czech (En)clitics

51-62

Abstract. The presented study deals with the historical development of Czech (en)clitics (AuxP). Based on the data from the previous research (Kosek, 2015a,b, 2017), it focuses on the development of one group the Czech (en)clitics – on the preterite auxiliary forms. In the article, three hypotheses are formulated and then tested on the data gained from selected parts of historical Czech Bible translations. The suggest that there were two significant word order positions of historical Czech

(en)clitics: 1. the post-initial position, i.e. after first word / phrase, 2. the contact position, i.e. an (en)clitic is located immediately before (pre-verbal position) or after (post-verbal position) its syntactically or morphologically superordinate item (the post-verbal position is the more frequent variant of the both variants of the contact positions). Since the time when the oldest analyzed text was translated, the post-initial position has had the status of the basic word order position of the Czech (en)clitic, while the contact position has had the status of a stylistically, pragmatically or textually motivated position. It seems that the contact position begins to retreat only in 19th century and hence the definitive historical change of Czech auxiliary (en)clitics in the sole second position clitics was realized not before 19th or 20th century.

Sergej Andreev, Fengxiang Fan, Gabriel Altmann

Adnominal Aggregation

63-76

Abstract. In the present study we concentrate to one property of adnominals as they appear in Russian texts: their aggregation which can be expressed e.g. by measuring the distances between equal adnominals and as a similarity of adnominals occurring in sentences in distance $x = 1, 2, \dots$

Biyan Yu & Yue Jiang

Probability Distribution of Syntactic Divergences of Determiner *his*-(adjective)-Noun Structure in English-to-Chinese Translation

77-90

Abstract. Studies of translation divergences reveal that lexical divergences in English-to-Chinese translation some regularities which can be modeled by a probability distribution. Besides lexical divergences, we hypothesize that there might be a great number of syntactic divergences since Chinese and English belong to two typologically divergent languages. In this study, we investigated whether the Chinese translation of English determiner *his*-(adjective)-noun structure (DNS (*his*) hereafter) diversifies in syntactic construction and whether the distribution of diversified Chinese translations conforms to the regularity of diversification process introduced by Altmann (2005). It is found that the twenty-two Chinese syntactic constructions corresponding to one single English DNS (*his*) do form a decreasing rank-frequency distribution, which is in comfortable agreement with the usual Zipf-Alekseev function. This diversification process may be ascribed to both linguistic and cultural factors such as contextual factors, translator's subjectivity, functional equivalents, and the tendency for minimal effort in language coding and decoding during translating process.

Yu Yang, Se-Eun Jhang

A Menzerath-Altmann Model for NP length and Complexity in Maritime English

91-103

Abstract. This paper investigates the length distribution and the complexity of Noun Phrases (NPs) in maritime English using a Maritime English Corpus (MEC) as the data source. The results reveal that the distributional patterns of the NP length and the relationship between NP length and complexity obey the Menzerath-Altmann law.

Xinying Chen, Carlos Gómez-Rodríguez, Ramon Ferrer-i-Cancho

A Dependency Look at the Reality of Constituency

104-106

Abstract. A comment on “Neurophysiological dynamics of phrase-structure building during sentence processing” by Nelson et al (2017), Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA 114(18), E3669-E3678.