

Modern developments in dialectology and variation linguistics

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The focus stream addresses central issues in contemporary dialectology and variation linguistics, including structural and sociolinguistic aspects of language shift, dialect levelling, cross-dialectal convergence and/or dialect-to-standard advergence, as well as aspects of resistance to language shift, which in several cases lead to the emergence of intermediate varieties between (residual) base dialects and the standard (Hinskens, Auer & Kerswill, 2005; Cerruti & Tsiplakou, 2020). An issue of central importance in this regard is the collusion of structural and sociolinguistic factors in spurring on or arresting language shift. The study of the dynamic space where structural factors (often involving aspects of adult or nonadult second language/variety acquisition) collude with sociolinguistic factors (involving not only the expected effects of extralinguistic variables such as age, gender, status etc. but also ideologies and attitudes toward, and indexicalities of, particular variants in socially and culturally shifting linguistic landscapes) is a major theoretical challenge (Britain, 2022). Moreover, teasing apart structural and sociolinguistic effects of dialect shift requires methodological innovation, not only in terms of devising methods for bringing together and critically revisiting existing datasets and corpora but also in terms of re-examining methods of data collection, classification and analysis.

We invite papers exploring structural (micro)variation and its links to both structural-systemic parameters and extralinguistic variables, and discussing approaches to the contextual micro- and macro- level (Guy & Hinskens, 2016); i.e., examining not only broad macro-level categories (e.g. geographical distribution, age, gender, status, as well as literacy and standardization etc.) but also, micro-level categories, e.g. emergent local, youth or professional identities, varying performativities, shifting attitudes and varying notions of local/group allegiance and prestige, the temporally and micro-contextually constrained indexicalities of particular variants and their role in language shift, which call for more nuanced theoretical and methodological approaches to variation.

References

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