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Register variation, i.e. functional linguistic variation according to situational context, has been the subject of numerous studies addressing a wide spectrum of features deemed to be characteristic of specific registers (cf. e.g. on the expression of stance in scientific registers (Hunston, Thompson 2000), the self-construal of the scientist (Hyland 1998, 2002), changes in the course of the historical development of scientific registers (e.g. Halliday 1988); register profiling (Biber 1995)).

Many register studies focus on single or relative small sets of texts instead of being based on studies of larger corpora. This limits the possibilities of systematically evaluating register features in larger and more diverse sets of registers and, thus, the wider applicability of the results. Furthermore, most registers are not reliably characterized by features that are exclusively found in a single register, but rather by sets of lexical and grammatical features that are principally found in any text, albeit to varying extent. It has been shown that methodologies based on qualitative as well as quantitative corpus studies are well suited to the study of registers from different perspectives (e.g. synchronic, diachronic, comparative, cross-linguistic etc.).

Advances in corpus-based methodology in combination with the increasing availability of corpora and tools for their annotation and analysis at different levels of linguistic organization make more extensive and systematic register studies feasible. In particular, they enable the investigation of a more diverse set of types and combinations of register features that require qualitative and quantitative corpus analyses.

The main interest of this workshop is the exploration of the methodological possibilities and limitations of present-day corpus-based register studies with a focus on lexico-grammatical and grammatical register features. Central issues are lexical co-occurrence patterns such as collocations and other types of multi-word expressions and lexico-grammatical patterns such as colligations which are postulated to characteristically co-occur in individual registers. Research invited for presentation at this workshop includes lexical, grammatical and semantic analyses of colligation and collocation in registerially diverse synchronic and diachronic corpora and new methods in exploring register features. The focus of this workshop is going to be on methodology in corpus-based register studies, yet contributions on theoretical issues are also welcome.

References:

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