

Intra-writer variation in an Austrian winegrower's nineteenth-century chronicle

The study of intra-individual variation (IAV) focuses on the flexibility of speakers or writers in their use of language, investigating how and why the language use of individuals varies. Ulbrich and Werth (forthcoming) propose a framework with three domains for IAV: 1) non-conditioned, i.e. variation that can neither be attributed to language-external nor to language-internal factors, 2) conditioned, i.e. systematic variation that occurs due to language-internal factors, and 3) functionalized, i.e. the use of different (extra)linguistically meaningful or indexicalized variants. The framework also includes a domain for mandatory forms that do not allow for any kind of IAV. This framework, together with the three key approaches to 'functionalized' or stylistic variation (Labov's Attention to Speech approach (1972), Bell's Audience Design approach (1984), and the Speaker Design approach (Coupland 1996)) will be used as the theoretical basis for this paper.

This paper will focus on the language use of Georg Anger (1773–1829), a winegrower from Ketzelsdorf (Lower Austria), who started writing a chronicle on 4 February 1815. In the preface, he states that the floods of the year 1814 motivated him to start writing. This event and its effects as well as the quartering of French soldiers in 1805 are described in some detail, while other occurrences (often concerning the weather and/or harvest) are mentioned in a sentence or two. The text thus comprises sections of different contents, which may affect language use. A combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses of variation in the use of morphological features in the text (use of final *-e* in feminine and plural nouns, use of the prefix *ge-* in past participles, present tense verb endings) will be used to address the following question:

- Which factors influence variation in the use of these features?
- Can language change in progress be observed in Georg Anger's chronicle?
- To what extent can modern linguistic approaches to intra-individual variation be applied to historical contexts?

References

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