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WORD FAMILIES IN DIACHRONY

An epoch-spanning structure for the word families of Older German

Abstract   The 'Word Families in Diachrony' project (WoDia), for which a funding application to the DFG is in preparation, aims to provide a database-driven online research environment that will enable processes of change in the entire historical vocabulary of German to be investigated by focusing on the changes in word families and the individual means of word formation. WoDia will embed the vocabularies of Old High German (OHG), Middle High German (MHG), Old Saxon (OS), and Middle Low German (MLG) in a database, resulting in a word-family structure for High and Low German from the beginnings up to the 15th century (for High German) and up to the 17th century (for Low German). The basis of the vocabulary is provided by reference dictionaries of the four historical varieties, whereas the word families' historical structure is based on the word-family dictionary of OHG by Jochen Splett (1992). Each lemma in the database will be assigned, where appropriate, to a word family. The individual word-formation elements and the word-formation hierarchy will be mapped in a structural formula. The etymologically corresponding lemmas and word families of the different periods/varieties of older German will be linked so that an analysis across the varieties will also be possible. The annotations of word families in the database (e. g., relating to word structure) will be supplemented by linking their lemmas to the online dictionaries and to the reference corpora of Old German (OS and OHG), MHG, and MLG.

Keywords   Older German (OHG, MHG, OS, MLG); word family database; historical word formation of german

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