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WAYS OF LIVING, COMMUNICATION AND THE DYNAMICS OF WORD USAGE

How did German dictionaries cope with
socio-cultural aspects and evolution of word usage
and how could future systems do even better?

Abstract Words and their usages are in many cases closely related to or embedded in social, cultural, technical and ideological contexts. This does not only apply to individual words and specific senses, but to many vocabulary zones as well. Moreover, the development of words is often related to aspects of socio-cultural evolution in a broad sense. In this paper I will have a look at traditional dictionaries and digital lexical systems focussing on the question how they deal with socio-cultural and discourse-related aspects of word usage. I will also propose a number of suggestions how future digital lexical systems might be enriched in this respect.

Keywords Digital lexical systems; faceted search; vocabulary organization in dictionaries, forms of representation in digital lexicography

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