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## “BLOODY WORD RIPPING” – PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL PROSPECTS OF A CORPUS-BASED LEXICOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION OF THE TEXTS BY THOMAS BERNHARD

**Keywords** Digital literary studies; text lexicography; author-based dictionaries; corpus linguistics

In the following abstract a research concept will be presented, in which a text corpus of the literary works by Thomas Bernhard (1931–1989) will be used for creating a lexicographic description of the lexical units in his texts to conceptualise the practical and theoretical implications and the prospects for creating a digital author-based dictionary. The author is renowned for his literary work, his novels, novellas, short stories, poems, letters, interviews, micro dramas, dramas, whether tragedies or comedies, which have been translated from the German original into many different languages, and are to be viewed in the historical context of coming to terms with the persistent presence of the Nazi-legacy in Germany and Austria after 1945. The lexicographic description of his language can be used as a paradigm for the description of linguistic elements in actual use in literature. And, it is possible to regard the digital text corpus of his works as an example for a research exploration of how to apply a lexicographic concept based upon corpus-generated data for the purpose of dictionary making and creating a special author-based dictionary out of a text corpus. Such a text corpus of all his works will have to be established as a research resource and taken as a source for the purpose of making an author-based dictionary by giving lexicographic descriptions of the lexical entities, single words or multi word units, used in his texts (Bernhard 2003–2015). The implications of the lexicographic endeavour will have to be assessed to consider the prospects for creating a digital author-based dictionary and its methodological background. The dimensions and constraints of author dictionaries have been laid out (cf. Karpova 2011), as have some of the consequences of this approach for the lexicography of literature (cf. Lobenstein-Reichmann 2016). And the possible options for this method are described in the research field of the intersection of corpus linguistics and literary analysis (cf. Fischer-Starcke 2010) and for the area of “corpus stylistics” (cf. Mahlberg 2013). Following already existing research paths, a projected dictionary of a wider scope would require a concise digital lexicographic documentation of all the lexical entities used by one author and thus provide a large resource also for the research on individual language use, whereby a framework in accordance with “lexical analysis” (cf. Hanks 2013) would be suitable. Such a project can be seen as an actual and vivid process, which the quotation and opening motto refers to by “bloody word ripping” that reads in the full translation from its original version of “Wörterherausreißen blutig” (Bernhard 2003, p. 146) as: “He rips the words out of himself as from a swamp. This violent ripping out of words leaves him dripping with blood.” (Bernhard 2006, p. 126). This passage from a novel about the personal individuality of the artist can also be read as an answer to the question posed by the fictional narrator at the beginning of the chapter: “Can it still be described as language?” (Bernhard 2006, p. 126). For example, an idiomatic dictionary has to be considered prototypical as a model how to explicate the use of multi word units in a text dictionary (cf. Welzig 1999) built on the basis of and

leading to a large text corpus (cf. Biber 2007), in which corpus linguistic searches are possible for lexical explorations (cf. Biber 2015). The descriptions of the lexical entries in a dictionary of literary language use can be pictured as combining literary studies with linguistics, for which the context of each lexical entity is crucial and would provide knowledge about the actual linguistic performance in a literary text. The lexicographic description of such a proposed author-based dictionary would provide data useful also for translators, interpreters, dramatic or narrative performers of the texts of an author famous for his ironic style and narrative compositions, in which author-specific creative compounds, collocations and other lexical formations can be found and be regarded as possible answers given to this research question by means of a digital text corpus together with digital lexicography thereby creating an author-based dictionary of Thomas Bernhard.

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