

Lexicography_Synthesis

Preconceptions/Misconceptions

Sign Language

- ▶ Pantomime, concrete, can't express abstract concepts
- ▶ Visualized form of the spoken language (e.g. signed German; redundant)

Chinese Writing

- ▶ Ideographic writing system
- ▶ 50'000 Characters in Chinese

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Similarities

Sign Language

- ▶ Arbitrary and iconic signs
- ▶ (manual) homophones
- ▶ homophone calques
- ▶ Part of speech: lexical categories and syntactic functions of signs are less distinct: What is the inflectional paradigm of a sign?
- ▶ High number of visually motivated modifications

Chinese Writing

- ▶ Arbitrary signs
- ▶ Homonyms
- ▶ loan writing
- ▶ Part of speech not important
- ▶ High number of classifiers for "hands and their actions"

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Differences

Sign Language

- ▶ On the spot-built productive signs based on the (visual) experience (iconic mapping)
- ▶ Classifier constructions: not in dictionaries
- ▶ No uniform writing system; if there would be one, how would it influence the sign language system?

Chinese Writing

- ▶ Unaltered inventory of classifiers. Fixed Set for 2000 years
- ▶ Classifiers as lexicographic arrangement structure in a dictionary
- ▶ Writing system independent from actual spoken language

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Wish-list

Sign Language

- ▶ New perspectives on sign language to include:
- ▶ Integration of iconicity in a linguistic and lexicographic model
- ▶ Consideration of the outcome of cognitive linguistics and embodied language for a descriptive theory and lexicology of sign languages

Chinese Writing

- ▶ New radicals for new realities
- ▶ Update of phonetic elements in characters for standard Chinese
- ▶ Update of "radicals"

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