

Typological Questionnaire on Biscryptality

for the conference “Biscryptality – sociolinguistic and cultural scenarios”

Please try to give answers and explanations to all the following questions in your presentation. Of course this should not prevent you from describing additional peculiarities you notice even though they are not asked for explicitly.

The questionnaire is based on a linguistic situation with two forms of writing (scripts, typefaces or orthographies). If your case study includes more than two forms of writing, adapt the questions accordingly; alternatively, you might want to break the situation down into several binary oppositions and describe them separately.

1. General data

- 1.1. Which language are you describing?
- 1.2. To which point in time does your description refer (e.g. 2010, 250 B.C.E.)?
(All the following questions refer to this time and might therefore have to be interpreted as historical present.)
- 1.3. To which group of people does the description apply (e.g. a speech community, a nation as part of a speech community, etc.)?
- 1.4. Which forms of writing are used simultaneously for the described language (give the names and further details if necessary)?

2. Graphematics

- 2.1. Are these forms of writing
 - a) different *scripts* (writing systems, e.g. Cyrillic, Latin, Devanagari, Arabic),
 - b) different *typefaces* (graphical forms of a script, e.g. roman type, blackletter, Gaelic type) or
 - c) different *orthographies* (norms for the use of graphemes, e.g. *colour* vs. *color*)?
- 2.2. If they are different *scripts*: Do they belong to the same type of writing system (alphabet, abjad/consonantal alphabet, abugida/alphasyllabary, syllabary, logographic writing)?
- 2.3. If the main difference is at the level of script or typeface: Is it also associated with orthographic differences (e.g. Irish *m* in Gaelic type vs. *mh* in roman type)? What causes these differences?
- 2.4. Is there a difference in complexity between the two forms of writing (e.g. a considerably larger amount of graphemes in one of them, more rules and exceptions for the conversion of speech to writing and vice versa, etc.)?
- 2.5. Is one of the two forms of writing better adapted to the language in question than the other (does the other e.g. lack graphemes for the representation of phonological facts, contain more ambiguities, etc.)?

3. Sociolinguistics

3.1. User-oriented analysis

- 3.1.1. Who can *read both* forms of writing: a) almost all the literate members of the speech community; b) only a certain group; c) hardly anybody?
- 3.1.2. Who can *write both* forms of writing: a) almost all the literate members of the speech community; b) only a certain group; c) hardly anybody?
- 3.1.3. Is the choice of form of writing influenced by factors connected to the person using the language? If so, by which factors (e.g. religious confession, nationality, ethnicity, education, occupation, social status, age, gender, political attitudes, etc.)?

3.2. Use-oriented analysis

- 3.2.1. Is it acceptable to write the same text in different forms of writing?
- 3.2.2. Are there regularly biscriptal texts, i.e. texts written at the same time in both forms of writing? If so, which texts are written biscriptally, and why?
- 3.2.3. Is the choice of form of writing influenced by factors connected to the text? If so, by which factors (e.g. topic, genre, style, censorship, etc.)?

3.3. General conditions of the society

- 3.3.1. Which sociocultural factors contribute to a stabilization of the linguistic situation?
- 3.3.2. How are the forms of writing taught?
- 3.3.3. Which attitudes do the language users have towards their biscriptality?
- 3.3.4. Are there deviations from the situation as described in 2–4 which might indicate a tendency to dissolve the biscriptal situation?
- 3.3.5. Are there calls for an abolition of one of the forms of writing?

4. Semiotics

- 4.1. Is there a difference in prestige between the forms of writing which is acknowledged by all members of the speech community?
- 4.2. Are the forms of writing connected to a difference between religious and secular texts?
- 4.3. Are the forms of writing associated with different cultural areas (e.g. the West, Islam, home, etc.)?
- 4.4. Are the forms of writing associated with ‘chronological’ values (e.g. old vs. new, traditional vs. modern)?
- 4.5. Are there other relevant associations (e.g. an inventor of a script, certain prominent texts written in one form of writing, etc.)?

5. Diachronic analysis

- 5.1. Since when does/did the situation exist with exactly the same characteristics as described in 1–4?
- 5.2. What caused the situation to emerge?
- 5.3. Can the situation be described as rather stable or in flux? What evidence is there to suggest this?
- 5.4. If you are dealing with a situation of the past: When and why was it replaced by a different situation?
- 5.5. If the situation described is followed or preceded by other periods of (different kinds of) biscriptality, you might want to go through the whole questionnaire for these periods as well and shortly present the differences in your paper.