

MISSIONARY LINGUISTICS WITHOUT MISSIONARIES? An attempt at assigning Colonial Linguistics its proper place in relation to Missionary Linguistics

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In this talk, I define the newly developed research program of Colonial Linguistics (German: *Koloniallinguistik*) by identifying the traits it has in common with Missionary Linguistics as well as those properties which keep the two approaches apart. An outline of the main topics of Colonial Linguistics is given. I will touch upon

- the historiography of linguistic thought and practice,
- language contact phenomena,
- the linguistics of colonial discourse,
- language policy

and explain why these superficially disparate areas of interest indeed form a closely knit network of logically related perspective on a commonly shared phenomenon, viz. language and colonialism.

I argue that Colonial Linguistics is not just Missionary Linguistics without the Missionaries. In point of fact, both research programs can be shown to overlap to some extent - but only to a comparatively restricted extent. Beyond this zone of overlap, they complement each other.

To strengthen my point, I focus on a selection of phonological phenomena each of which can be studied from the point of view of the above four approaches (historiography of linguistics, language contact studies, discourse linguistics and language policy). However, only if all four perspectives are combined do we get the full picture. To paint this "full picture" is the aim of Colonial Linguistics.

References

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