Field Names in the Tyrol (Austria)
Collection, Standardization and Cultural Aspects

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Content

The project „Field Name Survey in the Tyrol“

  Investigation area
  Settlement history and linguistic

Survey method – crowdsourcing aspects

Examples

  Distribution of lexems
  Standardization problems
Area: 12.640,17 km²/4,880 mi²
Municipalities: 279
Capital: Innsbruck
Elevation high: Großglockner 3798m
Elevation low: 465m
Preromance IE tribes in Tyrol

VINDELICORVM .

GENTES

Tropaeum Alpium
La Turbie (France)
Roman settlement

Drusus and Tiberius 15 b.C
Postromance settlement in Tirol

610 battle of Aguntum between Slavs and Bajuwars
Slavs won but stopped expansion
German dialects in Tirol

- Alemannic
- South Bavarian, Alemannic influence
- South Bavarian
- South Middle Bavarian
- South Bavarian

Legend:
- Green: Alemannic
- Orange: South Bavarian
- Yellow: South Middle Bavarian
- Brown: South Bavarian

Countries:
- Germany
- Switzerland
- Italy

Keywords:
- South Bavarian
- Alemannic influence
- German dialects in Tirol
Project history

• 2009: volunteer group Tyrolean Chroniclers came to the Tyrolean Place Names Board and asked for a common project to collect all field names in Tyrol
• Involvement of the University of Innsbruck, Linguistics, to make a feasibility study
• GIS infrastructure, training of a small group of chroniclers (mainly transcription), search for sponsors
• Involvement of the Dispatchcenter Tyrol as a sponsor
• 2010 beginn of the project
Partners

» Dispatch Center Tyrol
» University of Innsbruck
» Tyrolean Chroniclers
» Tyrolean Names Board

» Tyrolean Regional Development (orthoimages)

» Tyrolean Forstry Commission Office
» Austrian Alpine Club Cartography
Field name survey in the Tyrol

- Original title: „Flurnamenerhebung im Bundesland Tirol“
- Main interest: microtoponyms/minor placenames (field names; forest names; names of mountains, hilltops, ridges; alpine pasture names); also farmyard names
- 2010-2016
- Mixed crowd sourcing and 'classical' survey setting
- No involvement of a mapping agency, thus crowdsourcing
Survey methods

- Crowd sourcing: direct collaboration with local chroniclers (local organisation) and municipalities -> indirect communication with locals -> entry in field maps and WebGIS
Survey methods

- 'Classical' survey: direct communication with locals -> entry in WebGIS by university staff

- Basically four fields to fill in:
  - Name
  - Type
  - Alternative name
  - Remarks
„Types“

Mainly to be able to sort out non field names later

1. Flurname field name
2. Waldname forest name
3. Bergname mountain/hiltop name
4. Talname valley name
5. Gebietsname name of region
6. Gebaeudename name of building
7. Fliessgewaesser name of running waterbody
8. Stehgewaesser name of standing waterbody
9. Siedlungsname settlement name
10. Strassenname streetname
Result: ca. 120,000 names were collected, ca. 110,000 field names
Problem: written forms

» Field names have mainly an exclusively oral tradition
» Linguistic training was unsuccessful, decision to record the names
» How would informants write the names?
» What would that mean in terms of standardization?
» Would written forms preserve local colouring at all?
Examples

Examples are all taken from the alpine type of agriculture

- Alp, Alm: alpine meadow
- Glieger, Leger: resting/sleeping place for cattle
- Etze: feeding ground for cattle
- Pleis: steep, longish, grassy slope
- Kaser: alpine hut where cheese is made
- Spitz: peak
Alp, Alm

- Word is of unknown (preromance, non IE) origin
- Both are terms for the same object
- Alp is the Alemanic form
- Alm is the Bavarian form
- Alm is the standard Austrian German form
- alp
- alm
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• Informants mark the different variants in spelling
• Key regions are clearly recognizable
• Key regions fit dialect areas
Kaser

- Two different pronunciation variants exist: [kaso], [kaːser]
- These variants are not from the same origin, one has Bavaric the other Romance origin
- The word does not exist in Austrian German standard
Kaser

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- The variants are not from the same origin, one has Bavarian the other Romance origin
- The word does not exist in Austrian German standard

- The difference between long and short vowel a does not get marked
Glieger, Leger, Etz

- *Glieger* and *Leger* are related to German *legen* ‘lay’
- Both words are not used in standard Austrian German

- *Etz* is derived from Ohg. *ezzen* ‘graze‘ meaning “meadow, pasture”
Glieger, Leger, Etz

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- Informants mark the different variants in spelling
- Key regions are clearly recognizable
- Key regions fit dialect areas
- *Etz, Ötz* – latter a hypercorrect form
Pleis

- *Pleis* the word is of unknown preromance origin
- The word only comes to Bavarian where there was contact with Romance settlers
- The word is not in use in standard Austrian German
pleis
Pleis

- *Pleis* the word is of unknown preromance origin
- The word only comes to Bavarian via Romance settlers
- The word is not in use in standard Austrian German

- There were several spelling variants
  - Pleis, Plaiß, Pleiß, Bleiß, Plaise
Spitz

In standard German only feminin, in dialect masculin

Spelling variants were -spitz, -schpitz, -spitze

In cartography exclusively the standard German feminine form is used.
Written forms were

- not as accurate and reliable as forms from linguistic surveys
- not much influenced by standard German
- relatively consistent in terms of geographical distribution but inconsistent in spelling
Standardization issues

- Immediate standardization was not accepted by the informants (and gave us bad press)
- Dispatch Center Tyrol had completely different requirements (more transcription like)
- Decision for different fields in database (like Swisstopo)
User orientated maps/query possibilities

• Spellings from informants were not changed at all. Production of large-scale maps (one municipality).
• Spelling used in field for queries by Dispatch Center Tyrol are orientated exclusively by phonetic criteria.

• Standardization for use in regional mapping agency. Harmonization of spelling according linguistic criteria but with respecting regional and dialectal traits.
Thank you for your attention!