

# A Synchronic Comparative Analysis of Emotion Metaphors of 爱 (ai) /LIEBE/LOVE in Chinese and German Love Letters

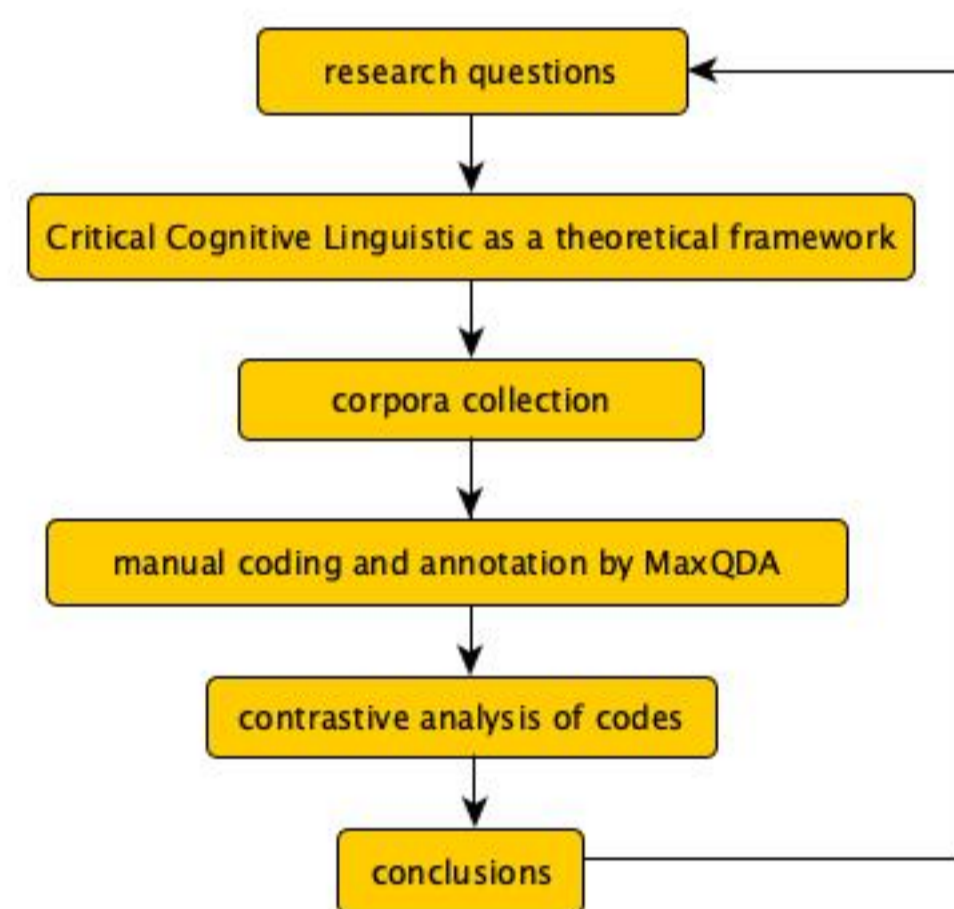
## Introduction

Emotions as general psychological and psychophysiological phenomena exist in all societies and cultures. According to Schwarz-Friesel (2013: 1), emotions determine a large part of our processes of perception, thought and action. They are reflected in all areas of human existential experience. Since emotions are multi-dimensional, internally represented and subjectively experienceable syndrome categories (Schwarz-Friesel 2013: 55), linguistic manifestations can be used to gain a descriptive insight into emotional states, processes and attitudes.

Metaphor as non-literal use of a linguistic expression in a particular communication situation serves as the ubiquitous method of expressing emotions and feelings (s. Skirl/Schwarz-Friesel 2013). The study of emotion metaphors can be seen as a tool to the conceptual systems of emotions (s. Kövecses 2000, Yu 2002, Stefanowitsch 2006 etc.). However, a purely introspective method as usual is regarded as an inadequate methodological procedure in the investigation of cognitive representations and procedures, because the possibilities of our reflective consciousness are relatively limited (Schwarz-Friesel 2009: 109).

When expressing love, which is seen as the most beautiful human emotion, metaphors are always used as the best device to understand the internal content of love. Behind linguistic utterances in different languages hide fundamentally also different, historically conditioned and culturally specific models of thought, ways of life and mentalities. In this work, a contrastive study on German and Chinese love metaphors is carried out in order to find out the metaphorical conceptualization of LOVE in plain language and the linguistic character of metaphors. It aims at a systematic comparison of the similarities and variations of metaphorical expressions in German and Chinese and the cultural and historical factors which are hidden in the expressions will also be investigated.

## Materials and Methods



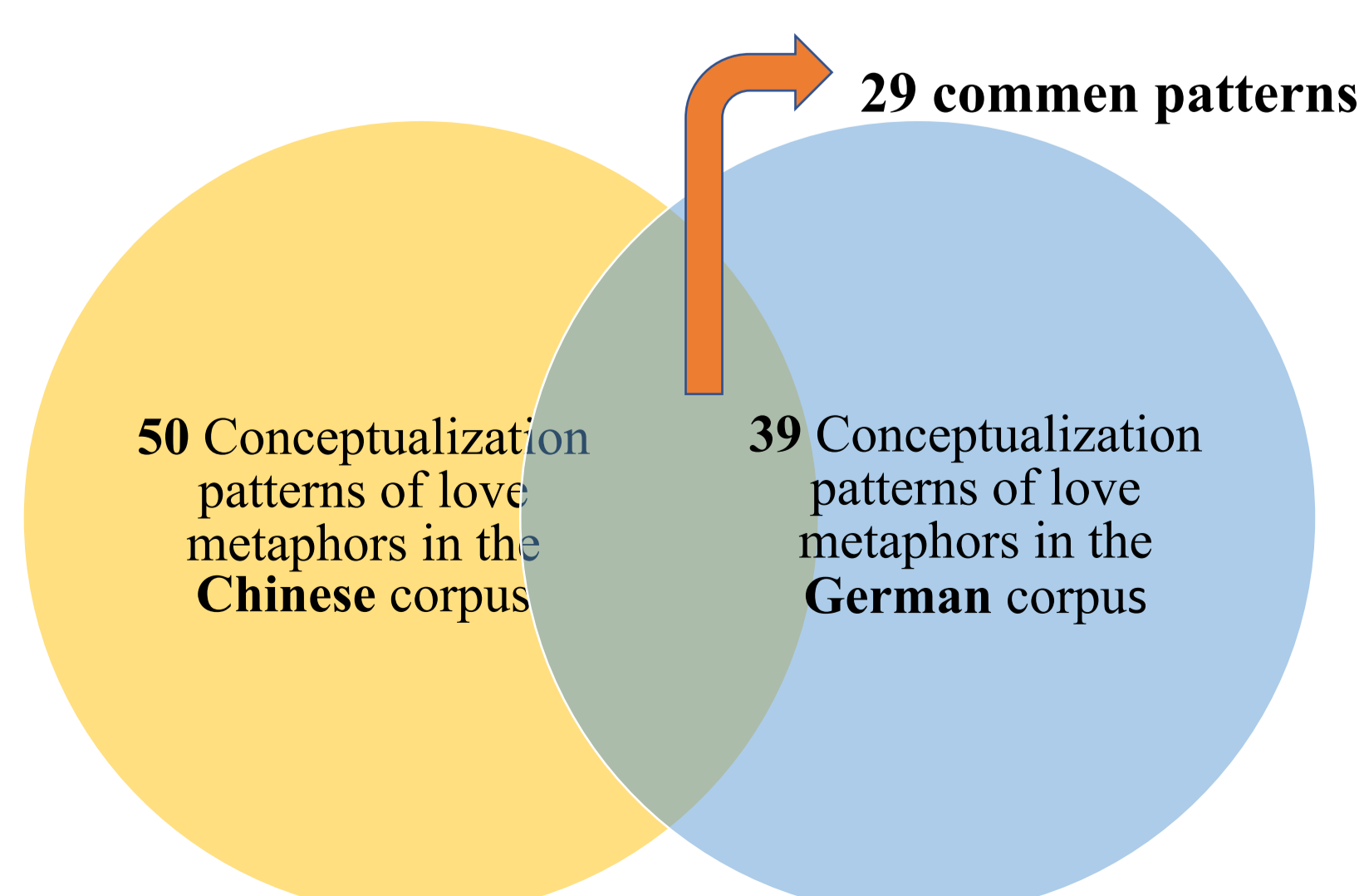
Research subject	Love metaphors in the Chinese corpus	Love metaphors in the German corpus
Text Type	Love letter	Love letter
Topic	Declaration of love	Declaration of love
Source	<a href="http://www.qingshu520.cn">http://www.qingshu520.cn</a>	<a href="http://www.loveletters4you.de">http://www.loveletters4you.de</a>
Time Frame	2001-2016	2001-2016
Total amount	248	326

This corpus-based study will contrast data in three aspects: firstly, whether there are any universal or cultural-specific conceptual correlations of LOVE in both of the languages; Secondly, how metaphorical expressions by degree of conventionality (idiom, lexicalized metaphors, clichéd metaphors, creative metaphors, innovative metaphors) will be distributed; Thirdly, whether there are any metaphors which denote or/and express LOVE in both of data.

## Results

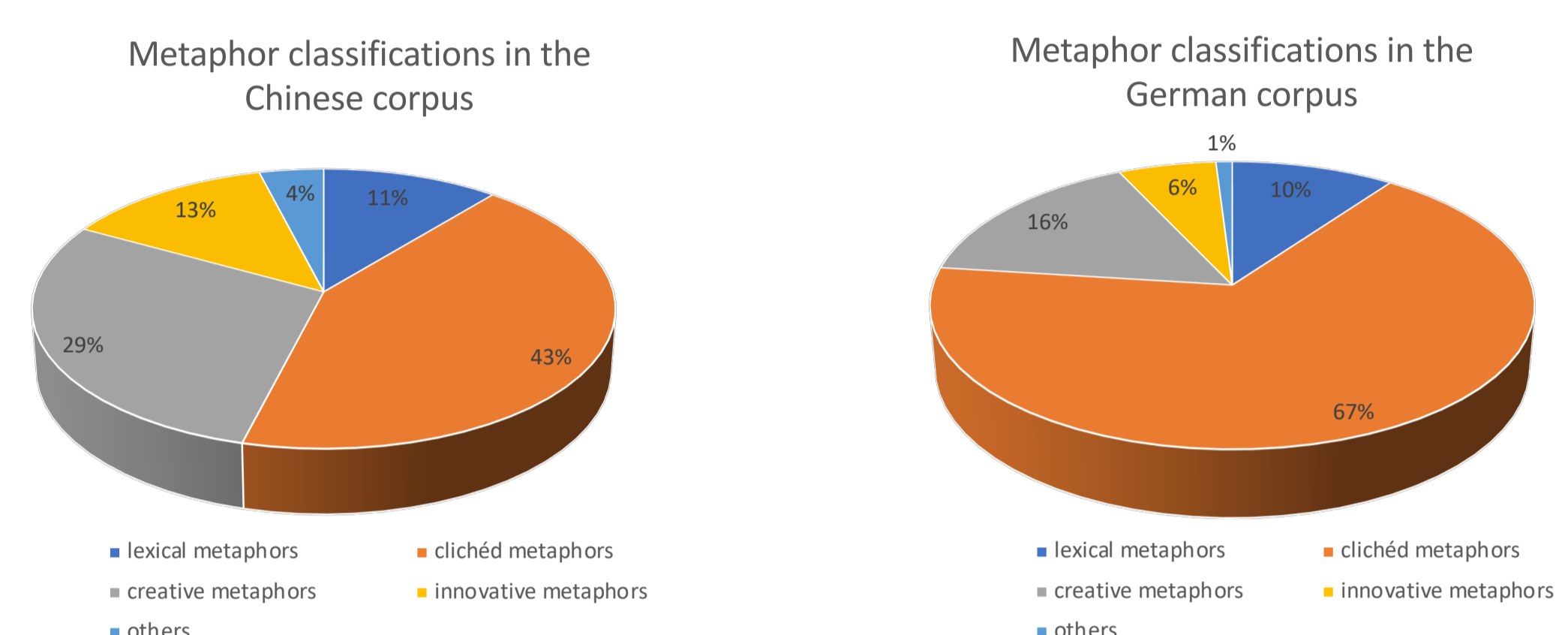
The result shows that most of conceptualization (27) are universal, for e.g. LOVE IS FIRE/ELECTRICITY/AIR/LIGHT etc. There are also some specific correlations in the Chinese corpus, for e.g. LOVER IS MONSTER/IMPERALIST/VAMPIRE etc., which can not be found in German. Additionally, all of the classifications of metaphorical expressions are discovered in the corpora. Among them the lexicalized and clichéd metaphors have the largest proportion. It is difficult to get any similarity of creative and innovative metaphors in the both of the data. Moreover, the study has developed a method to differ denoting from expressive love metaphors.

### ❖ Conceptualization patterns of love metaphors

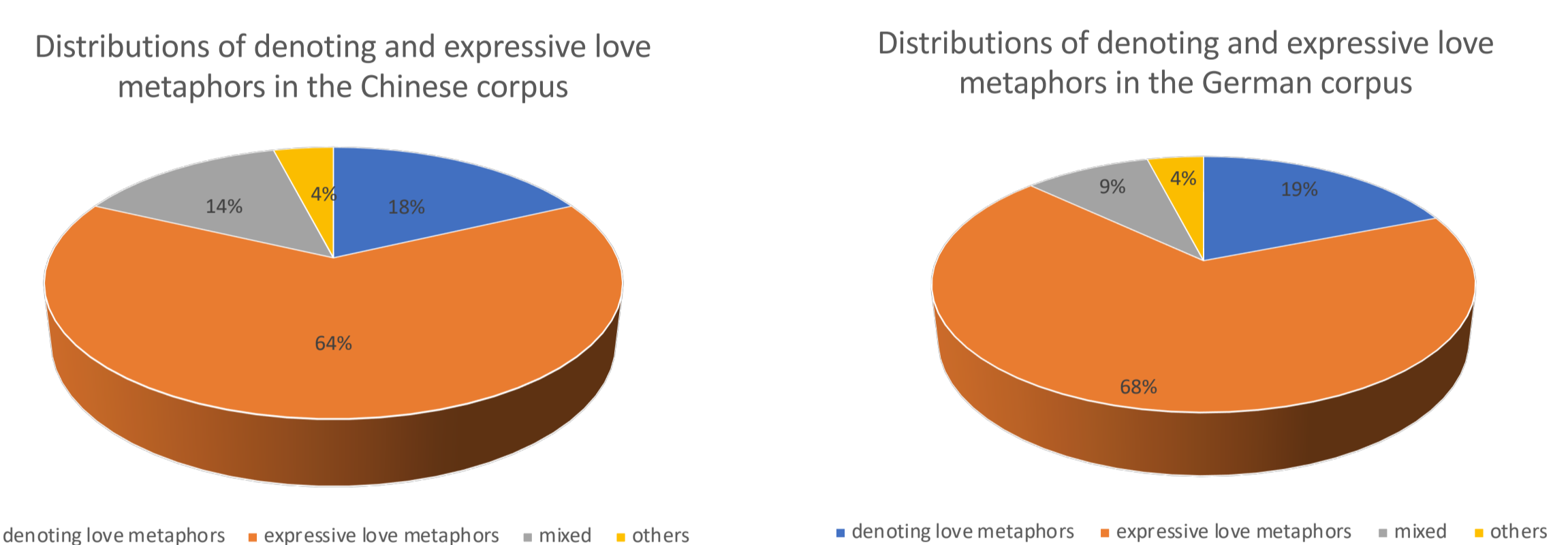


The conceptualization patterns influenced by cultures and traditions should be regarded as a big difference. Schwarz-Friesel and Consten (2014: 8) have already pointed out that the cultural knowledge of entire societies is reflected in texts. Societal norms will be codified by texts and values are thus passed on. Another difference is that a conceptual combination of LOVE (target area) and NEGATIVE ASSOCIATIVE CONCEPTS (source area) is more common in the Chinese corpus.

### ❖ Metaphor classifications



### ❖ Denoting love metaphors vs. expressive love metaphors



## Conclusions

This study on cross-lingual love metaphors has explored how did metaphors conceptualize the same emotion category LOVE in Chinese and German. According to the corpus-based approach the present work has enabled a precise observation of metaphorical phenomena. It turned out that it is common not only in the German but also in the Chinese language community to denote and express emotional processes, states or attitudes with metaphorical utterances. It can be confirmed that metaphors are not only rhetorical formulations, but also open a window to human cognition. Metaphors can be used to observe inaccessible inner states. In both corpora could not only similarities, but also differences in the concrete metaphorical use of language be found. The culture-specific expressions refer to different mentalities and traditions of thought. The two data corpora also confirm that novel metaphors can lend intensity to emotions.

Additionally, The studies on emotional metaphors carried out by linguists can make a major contribution both to the field of application of linguistics and to other disciplines, e.g. computer science. Studies on emotions are in great demand in the research area of AI (artificial intelligence) and for studies on sentimental analysis or affective computing. There is a wealth of evidence that shows sentiment analysis has numerous applications. However, sentiment analysis is based on linguistic research on emotions or emotion metaphors.

## Future works

In order to arrive at more comprehensive research results, the corpora of love metaphors have to be enlarged and have to be investigated in other areas of communication. It would be instructive if the metaphorical utterances were also analyzed in the other types of text (e.g. in postings or literary texts) so that their linguistic applications could be further specified. For a systematic description of the metaphors of love, it is also necessary to carry out a diachronic analysis of the language uses in the respective language community.

## Acknowledgement

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## References

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