

Friday 10:00-10:30

Workshop: Dialect standardization: Approaches and Main Issues

The Importance of Identity and Affiliation in Dialect Standardization

Mark Karan

Traditionally, orthographic dialect standardization overemphasized linguistic factors. This paper attempts to present all the factors which must be considered, and then demonstrates the importance that must be given to social identity and affiliation considerations in orthographic dialect standardization. Social identity and associative aspects of language are discussed, leading to a demonstration of the importance of identity and affiliation in orthographic dialect standardization. The paper will conclude by showing that the success of orthographic dialect standardization depends more on whether the dialect groups want to associate with and be identified with each other, much more than on any other factor such as a discovered linguistic middle ground between the dialects. In the same way, in considering similarities between the orthography of a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) and a proposed vernacular orthography, how much the dialect group(s) want(s) to identify with and be associated with the people and culture of the LWC is key.