The cross-linguistic survey database:

Problems, solutions, and new developments

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Abstract

Linguistic databases, while small by database standards, present some challenges and pitfalls. I discuss some of the common characteristics and difficulties inherent in developing a linguistic database, and I present the Cross-linguistic Survey Database, a web-based system originally developed for the project "A typology of reciprocal markers" (Utrecht-FU Berlin). The software combines a structure tailored to cross-linguistic research surveys with a generic, highly configurable design that has allowed it to easily meet the needs of more than a dozen diverse projects across Europe and in the United States.