

Words in “Der Brenner” – Lexicographic Searches in a New Scholarly Digital Edition of the AAC

Hanno Biber

Austrian Academy Corpus, AAC – Austrian Academy of Sciences
Sonnenfelsgasse 19/8
1010 Vienna, Austria

Abstract

This paper is about a new scholarly digital edition and its potential as a lexicographic source. The digital edition of the journal “Der Brenner” has been developed within the corpus research framework of the Austrian Academy Corpus in collaboration with my colleagues Evelyn Breiteneder (head), Karlheinz Mörth, Heinrich Kabas and others together with the graphic designer Anne Burdick. How can corpus research methods be applied to textual studies as well as to lexicographic studies in a digital environment? How can the possibilities of search methods and annotation principles given in such an edition be used for lexicographic purposes? What is a scholarly digital edition according to the AAC and which edition principles have been applied? The answers to these questions will give insights into the potentials and the benefits of making corpus research methods and techniques available for scholarly research into language and literature.

1 Introduction

This paper is about a new scholarly digital edition and its potential as a lexicographic source. The digital edition of the journal “Der Brenner”, a literary journal originally published from 1910 until 1954, has been developed within the corpus research framework of the “AAC – Austrian Academy Corpus” in collaboration with my colleagues Evelyn Breiteneder (head of the AAC), Karlheinz Mörth, Heinrich Kabas and other researchers and programmers from the AAC in Vienna together with the graphic designer Anne Burdick from Los Angeles. Several questions will be addressed in this paper about the lexicographic qualities of a digital edition. What is the “AAC – Austrian Academy Corpus” and how can corpus research methods in a digital environment be applied to lexicographic studies? What is “Der Brenner” and why has it been chosen as a model digital edition? What is a scholarly digital edition according to the AAC and which edition philosophy and principles have been applied? How can the possibilities of search methods and annotation principles given in such an edition be used for lexicographic purposes? The answers will give insights into the potentials and the benefits of making corpus research methods and techniques available for scholarly research into language and literature.

2 What is the AAC?

The “AAC – Austrian Academy Corpus” is a corpus research unit at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna concerned with establishing and exploring large electronic text

corpora and with conducting scholarly research in the field of corpora and digital text collections and editions. The variety of texts integrated into the collections of the AAC are predominantly German language texts of historical and cultural significance from the last 150 years. The AAC has collected thousands of texts from various authors, representing many different text types from all over the German speaking world. Among the sources, which systematically cover various domains, genres and types, are newspapers, literary journals, novels, dramas, poems, advertisements, essays on various subjects, travel literature, cook-books, pamphlets, political speeches as well as a variety of scientific, legal, and religious texts, to name just a few forms. The AAC provides resources for investigations into the linguistic and textual properties of these texts and into their historical and cultural qualities. The corpus build-up is constructed according to the specific parameters set by the AAC research group. The selection of texts is made according to the AAC's principles of text selection which are determined by specific research interests as well as by systematic historical, empirical and text typological parameters. More than 300 million running words of text have already been scanned, digitized, integrated and annotated. The annotation and mark-up schemes of the AAC, based upon XML related standards have in the first phase of corpus build-up been concerned with the application of basic structural mark-up and some selective thematic annotations. In the next phase of application development more specific thematic annotations will be made exploring questions of linguistic and textual scholarly research as well as experimental and exploratory mark-up. Specific sources are prepared for analysis by means of annotation in the areas of travel literature, theatre publications, translations, selected authors, whole runs of newspapers of specific interest or of certain periods, and literary journals.

3 What is "Der Brenner"

The literary journal "Der Brenner" was published between 1910 and 1954 in Innsbruck by Ludwig von Ficker. Journals are generally regarded as highly interesting sources for corpus research because they usually comprise a great variety of texts and text types over a long period of time. The text volume of this journal, which is just a small segment of the AAC's overall holdings, is about two million running words of carefully corrected text, annotated and provided with additional philological information. "Der Brenner" deals with themes of religion, nature, literature and culture. Among its famous contributors is the expressionist poet Georg Trakl, the writer Carl Dallago, the translator and cultural critic Theodor Haecker, translator of Søren Kierkegaard and Cardinal Newman into German, the moralist philosopher Ferdinand Ebner and many others: Hermann Broch, Theodor Däubler, Albert Ehrenstein, Karl Borromäus Heinrich, Rainer Maria Rilke, Else Lasker-Schüler, and the caricaturist Max von Esterle. The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein was affiliated with the group around the journal's editor-in-chief Ludwig von Ficker and participated in some of the debates launched by the journal. The journal covers a great variety of subjects and is to be regarded as an important voice of Austrian culture in the pre and post second world war periods.

4 Principles of a Digital Edition

The principles of philological digital editions within the AAC are determined by our conviction that the methods of corpus research will enable us to produce valuable resources and tools for scholars. The AAC has developed such a model digital edition to meet these aims. Our edition of "Der Brenner", a journal of crucial significance for literary scientists, provides a well structured access to its contents. The main task of developing this application was to devise a design and a web interface so that access to the texts and the related information could be fully utilized. All 7800 pages are accessible as electronic text and as facsimile images of the original pages. Various indices and search facilities are provided so that word forms, personal names, foreign text passages, illustrations etc. can be searched for in various ways. And a sophisticated contents display has been developed, in order to show the reader the whole range of the journal ready to be explored. The edition interface has synchronized five frames that can be alternatively opened and closed as required. The "Paratext" section provides additional information about the background of the edition and scholarly essays about the journal, its editor and contributors. The "Index" section gives access to a variety of indices, databases and full-text search mechanisms. The results of these queries and lists are displayed in the adjacent "Results" section. The "Contents" section provides access to the whole run of issues and all of the contents of the journal in chronological order. The "Text" section has a complex and powerful navigational bar at the top so that the reader can easily navigate and read within "Der Brenner" either in text-mode or in image-mode from page to page, from text to text, from issue to issue and with the help of hyperlinks. This philological digital edition will function as a model for further editions and similar applications.

5 Lexicographic Use of a Digital Edition in the AAC

The digital edition of "Der Brenner" has the potential of serving as an interesting lexicographic source. In particular, the "Index" section of the interface, which is based upon database-driven search and indexing tools, offers a wide range of possibilities. The search and index mechanisms given to the researcher provide powerful tools for investigations into a variety of fields. Besides the full-text search module, more than 10 different specialized indices are provided for the user. The most important ones among these indices are the "Index of Word Forms" and the "Inverted Index of Word Forms". In both cases the lexicographic user is given the full account of the material for lexicographic investigations of linguistic items in their actual contexts and its variations. In addition to this, an "Index of Titles" has been constructed, so that special examinations of the use of words in these specific microtexts can be made. The application provides also an "Index of Incipits" in order to allow the user to investigate the opening passages of texts more closely. A substantial "Index of Personal Names" has been created that consists of several parts differentiating real persons from figures and institutions. Foreign text passages have been marked, so that studies of the use of foreign words in a highly sophisticated historical literary source can be made. Finally, abbreviations have been listed. Special search parameters can be chosen by the user according to the needs of the lexicographer, e.g. the search can be restricted to certain periods or to certain authors

or to certain genres etc. The material offers to the lexicographer a well structured and well selected source of lexicographic material in a model digital edition.

References

URL: <http://www.aac.ac.at>