Clusivity in independent pronouns in Mexican languages

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Linguistic areas (‘Sprachbunds’) are distinguished through a class of significant convergences resulting from contact situations in a number of languages spoken in a particular area. In case of the Mesoamerican linguistic area, relevant features include the vigesimal system and the nominal possession construction. The current presentation explores the possibility of including the feature of clusivity (the distinction between inclusive and exclusive ‘we’) into the discussion of the Mesoamerican linguistic area. For this purpose, a sample of circa 60 Mexican languages and dialects is investigated with respect to clusivity in independent pronouns. The pattern of distribution that results from this data will allow us to determine whether this feature is a valid candidate for inclusion into the definition of the Mesoamerican linguistic area, and to draw conclusions about its possible reasons and influences.

Selected bibliography


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