Normativity as a Key Concept in Language and Sexuality Studies

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This paper provides an overview of central developments within the field of language and sexuality studies. Taking well-known discussions revolving around questions of identity vs. desire as a starting point (Bucholtz & Hall 2004, Cameron & Kulick 2003), the paper argues for a stronger theoretical focus on normativity as a key concept shaping the discursive formation of sexuality. The influence of normativity on linguistic practices will be illustrated by means of material from two studies. The first dataset originates from an ethnographically based study of linguistic constructions of non-heteronormativity at Eurovision Song Contest press conferences, i.e. a transnational community of practice of European salience in which macro-level heteronormativity has to face greater competition from the local non-heteronormativity of the context (Motschenbacher 2012, 2013). The second study represents a discourse analysis of the discursive construction of sexuality in conversations about objectophilia, a non-normative form of sexual desire, on the German radio phone-in show *Domian* (Motschenbacher 2014).

Keywords:
language and sexuality, sexual identity, sexual desire, normativity, heteronormativity, non-heteronormativity, Queer Linguistics

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