The Bonn Longitudinal Study on Ageing (BOLSA) as an interdisciplinary research resource

Origin / History

- Initiated in 1964/1965 by Hans Thomae and Ursula Lehr (University of Bonn), funded by VW foundation as a research project in psychology and medicine, continued funding (VW and DFG) until 1984
- Material (paper files and audio tapes) stored at the University of Heidelberg, recovered in 2014 by Christina von Hodenberg, transferred to Historisches Datenzentrum in Halle

Study Design / Data

- Longitudinal Study – up to 8 examinations/subject, 2 cohorts, samples of min. 50 subjects/cohort + gender
- Psychological, medical examinations, field notes ➔ Subject files, documents on methodological background, administrational Files, (correspondence, writing samples, photos)
- Semi-structured interviews ➔ Reel-to-Reel audio tapes
- Wide scope: “(personal) past, present and future”, recurring topics across interviews, 606 recordings remain, others lost, almost all by female speakers

Interdisciplinary Perspectives / Research Data Management

- Original publications in psychology, medicine, social gerontology
- New perspectives for history, social sciences (oral history, event analysis, gender studies, generational research)
- New perspectives for linguistics (language variation, language development in later life, comparative studies)
- Digitisation started, joint dissemination through Historisches Datenzentrum Sachsen-Anhalt, Archiv für Gesprochenes Deutsch, Service Centre eSciences Trier
- Use for research purposes for registered users through platform
- Challenge: no transcripts! – speech technology, crowd sourcing

Katrin Moeller
Historisches Datenzentrum Sachsen-Anhalt
Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg
katrin.moeller@geschichte.uni-halle.de

Thomas Schmidt
Archiv für Gesprochenes Deutsch
IDS Mannheim
thomas.schmidt@ids-mannheim.de