Multilingual Europe:
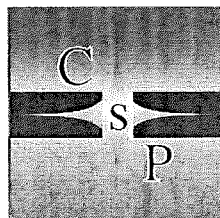# Reflections on Language and Identity

Edited by

Jane Warren and Heather Merle Benbow

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I: Language Policy

Part II: Language and Identity in Film

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

JANE WARREN
AND HEATHER MERLE BENBOW

As Europe continues to expand and integrate through the European Union, it faces the challenge of ever increasing multilingual and multicultural contact, within and across its borders. This volume presents recent research on European language policy, language contact and multiculturalism that explores how Europe is meeting this challenge. It considers the relationships between language and cultural identity in Europe at a time of increasing multicultural complexity, with contributions on Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Ukraine and the linguistic and imaginative spaces between and beyond.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I focuses on language policy, and opens with an analysis by Michael Clyne of contradictions in language policy in present-day Germany. The increasing use of English in academic fields of research and teaching and as a/the language of major multinational companies of German origin is detracting from the status of German internationally, especially in central eastern European countries in which the German language has enjoyed a long tradition. Within education, the diversity of language teaching is giving way to such a strong emphasis on English at both primary and secondary levels that programs in other languages are becoming quite subordinate. In order to develop Germany's language potential and ensure the continued status of German, Clyne argues, an explicit, coherent language policy is essential.

Chapter Two, by Guus Extra and Massimiliano Spotti, takes as its departure point the concepts of language, nation, and citizenship in a European context of migration and minorization, and the European discourse on foreigners, integration, and citizenship. It explores the Dutch discourse on newcomers and Dutch testing regimes for admission (*toelating*), integration (*inburgering*), and citizenship (*naturalisatie*). The chapter investigates the development of each of these testing regimes, the

content of the closely related *Nationale Inburgeringtest* and the attitudes of Dutch citizens to the cultural content of this test.

In Chapter Three, Oksana King examines the changing status of Ukrainian and Russian in Ukraine. Since Ukraine has become an independent state, the place of languages has acquired new meaning in Ukrainian society. Current government policy is to pursue integration into the European Union, away from the more traditional orientation towards Russia. This new situation provides increasing incentives for foreign language learning. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian language has been strengthening its position in education, media and commerce. The Russian language, which for a long time enjoyed the status of *lingua franca* under the Soviet regime, has rather abruptly attained the status of a "foreign language", despite the fact that Russian is still widely spoken in most of Ukraine's regions.

Chapter Four, by Catrin Norrby, gives an overview of Sweden's recently adopted language policy, and discusses the rationale behind its goals. One of the core issues in the debate—whether to give Swedish legal status as the official majority language of Sweden—should be seen in light of the growing fears of Swedish losing domains to English. The policy aims to ensure that official Swedish is "refined, but simple and easy to understand", and to safeguard everybody's right to languages. This latter aim can be viewed as an attempt at implementing the EU goal of mastery of three languages, while at the same time paying attention to the fact that Sweden is a multicultural society with some 200 languages spoken within its borders.

Part II contains three chapters on the relationship between language and cultural identity as represented in contemporary European cinema. In Chapter Five, Heather Merle Benbow examines the German film *Happy Birthday, Türke!* (1991) by Doris Dörrie, which depicts a Turkish-German hero negotiating the rigid stereotypes of self and other, German and "foreigner", that pervade 1990s Germany. The question of identity and belonging is central to the film's meaning and was prominent in its reception. The implausibility of Kayankaya's identity as the son of Turkish migrants who himself speaks no Turkish but who is fluent in German is the film's challenge to Germany's relationship with its Turkish population.

Chapter Six, by Andrew McGregor, analyses the role and use of language in the representation of cultural identity in Tony Gatlif's 1998 film *Gadjo Dilo* (*The Crazy Stranger*). The film offers a rare cinematographic representation of the language and culture of the Roma— a people who have long challenged notions of the cultural integrity of

nation states within the European Union. The chapter discusses Gatlif's use of language as a marker of cultural delineation and assimilation, with particular reference to the role of music and singing as a means of defining and also transcending perceived cultural boundaries. Critical responses to the film are examined, as well as Gatlif's claim to have authored a film that reveals a "truthful" representation of a largely misunderstood and often resented cultural and linguistic minority.

In Chapter Seven, Jane Warren examines contemporary cinematic portraits of multilingual Europe. The films selected—Cédric Klapisch's *L'Auberge espagnole* (*The Spanish Apartment*; 2000) and its sequel *Les Poupées russes* (*Russian Dolls*; 2005) on the one hand, and Michael Haneke's *Code inconnu: Récit incomplet de divers voyages* (*Code Unknown: Incomplete tales of various journeys*; 2000) on the other—offer two radically different representations. Klapisch's *The Spanish Apartment* gives voice to a "congenial" Europe of consensus, peopled by members of the EU inner circle, all represented by national archetypes, and for whom bilingualism—or trilingualism—is a natural state of affairs. The only jarring presence is William, a young Englishman whose monolingualism confines him to a grossly stereotyped view of other nationalities, and who undergoes a metamorphosis in *Russian Dolls* through language. Bilingualism in the second film is the key to producing intercultural understanding, extending beyond the boundaries of the EU. In *Code Unknown*, in contrast, language cannot be said to produce intercultural understanding; indeed, the film itself focuses on "dissensus" and the difficulty of connection and communication among its protagonists, whatever their mother tongue.

Part III presents three portraits of language contact and multilingualism. Chapter Eight, by Claudia Riehl, examines three German-speaking minority groups in Romance-speaking countries: the German-speaking communities in South Tyrol (Italy), East Belgium, and Alsace (France). Each group has a different history and faces different conditions concerning its minority status. The Tyrolians and part of the East Belgian community enjoy specific minority rights such as schooling in the mother tongue and public representation, whereas the Alsatians and the other part of the Belgian community are conceded only some "facilitations". The chapter discusses the impact of these different conditions on the intensity of language contact (language contact phenomena at different levels) on the one hand, and the sociolinguistic background on the other, focusing on language conflict and linguistic identity.

In Chapter Nine, Doris Schüpbach provides an overview of sociolinguistic research on the Franco-German language border in

Switzerland, with particular emphasis on one "bilingual" town—Biel-Bienne—where French and German have co-existed as de facto official languages for over 150 years. The chapter traces the historical and demographic development and outlines the relevant language policies at national, cantonal, and local levels. In outlining language practices and language attitudes in Biel-Bienne, particular attention is given to the complicating fact that two varieties of German—Swiss Standard German and a local dialect—are used concurrently but for clearly separated functions.

Chapter Ten by John Hajek completes the volume by investigating language use and attitudes within the European Union. Official EU policy actively promotes the spread of multilingualism amongst its citizens. A key part of this initiative is close monitoring—as part of its regular Eurobarometer surveys—of language knowledge, practice and attitudes. The most recent results seem overwhelmingly positive, with high levels of reported multilingualism, and a generally positive view towards languages. They also confirm the spread of English as the preferred European *lingua franca*. However, Eurobarometer results appear in some cases to give a picture that differs somewhat from current reality, such that some caution is needed in interpreting results. There is significant regional variation in responses, with glaring omissions in some cases and overstatements in others. Hajek highlights some of these issues and sets about providing explanations for them.

Most of the chapters in this volume are drawn from papers given at an international workshop at the University of Melbourne in October 2006, entitled "European Multilingualism and Multiculturalism Today". We are very grateful to the contributors for agreeing to have their papers published here, and to the other authors who accepted the invitation to contribute a chapter. We must also thank John Hajek for organizing the workshop and for providing invaluable advice and unstinting support throughout the editing process.

In this International Year of Languages, this volume highlights the ongoing significance of language and identity for an expanding Europe, and the ways in which situations of linguistic hybridity, interlocution and language contact continue to define Europe and its others.

July, 2008

CHAPTER EIGHT

GERMAN-ROMANCE LANGUAGE CONTACT AND LANGUAGE CONFLICT IN ITALY, BELGIUM AND FRANCE

CLAUDIA MARIA RIEHL

Introduction

Radical changes after World War I led to the restructuring of many European nations, one of the consequences being that the former territories of Germany and Austria were greatly reduced. Thus, German-language areas originally belonging to either of the two countries became part of another nation, e.g. Italy, France or Belgium. As a result, the linguistic and the political borders between Germanophone and Romanophone speech communities do not coincide in the present day (Figure 8.1).

The German-speaking communities in Italy, France and Belgium became linguistic minorities based on completely different sociolinguistic conditions (Nelde 1986). First, they have a diverse historical and political background. Second, the minority language has a different status in each. The presence of media in the minority language plays a significant role in the linguistic identity of minorities—despite the possibility of purchasing newspapers and receiving television programs produced in neighboring countries (Germany or Austria). The same holds true for the presence of the minority language in the public domain (e.g. bilingual public signs). The most important factor, however, is schooling in the minority language. Instruction in the mother tongue has a noticeable impact on linguistic competence, especially the mastery of a standard variant of the minority language. The educational contexts are extremely different in the three territories under consideration here, that is, the German-speaking

communities in South Tyrol (Figure 8.1, area 5), Alsace (area 6) and East Belgium (area 7).

Figure 8.1. German-Romance linguistic border (bold line) (Riehl 1999a, 47)

This chapter discusses to what extent language policy and minority status influence the degree of language contact and language conflict in these three communities. In the first part, I provide an overview of the historical and sociolinguistic situation. The second part illustrates language use and language contact and considers relevant factors for different types of development.

Historical and sociolinguistic background

Italy (South Tyrol)

A large German-speaking minority is located in the very north of Italy, in the region of South Tyrol (Alto Adige). This region encompasses about 290,000 German speakers (68% of the entire population of the area; another 28% are Italian speaking, 4% Ladinian speaking). In addition, there are about 8,000 bilingual families, who are not counted in the statistics. The region had been German-speaking from the seventh century.[1] In 1919, it became part of Italy. From 1922, the fascist regime tried to assimilate the German-speaking population and to decrease their relative numbers in proportion to Italian speakers, by way of immigration of Italian-speaking compatriots from the South and expulsion of the autochthonous population. At that time, a significant number of people from poor territories in the South relocated to South Tyrol. Most of them settled in towns, especially in the industrialized areas around the provincial capital, Bolzano/Bozen.[2] In 1941, a contract between Hitler and Mussolini, the so-called "option", forced German-speaking South Tyroleans to opt for either assimilating into Italian culture or emigrating to Austria or Germany (75,000 people chose the latter option and only some returned after World War II). After the war, the so-called Gruber-de Gasperi contract granted Austria a protective role towards the South Tyrolean minority. Due to enormous international pressure, the minority was granted the Autonomy Statute (*Paket*) in 1972 which includes, among others:

- proportional representation (social care and positions in public institutions are distributed according to the percentage of the language groups);
- bilingualism (German is equal to Italian);
- ethnic presence (all authorities are constituted according to proportional representation).

The Autonomy Statute is manifest in a broad range of advantages for the minority, among others, the presence of its own media institutions, including two German-language newspapers, weekly journals, special journals for women, young people and cultural concerns, broadcasting programs, and local and private radio stations. In the German-speaking minority schools, German is the single language of instruction, and Italian is taught as a second language from the second grade (the same holds true

for the Italophone group, with Italian as the language of instruction, and German taught as a second language). In October 1997, a trilingual university (German-Italian-English) was founded at Bolzano, specializing in the educational sector, and thus, teacher training can also be conducted in German.

East Belgium

The German-language area in East Belgium encompasses two types of German-speaking territories: the so-called *Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft* ("German-speaking community"), where German has official status; and cantons that are part of the French-speaking region and have undergone significant language shift (Nelde 1979). The "German-speaking community" consists of the two cantons Eupen and St. Vith, with 65,000 inhabitants today. Most of them are German speaking (over 90% of the population). This area originally belonged to the Prussian regime and became part of Belgium in 1920, in contrast to the older regions which were annexed in 1830. That is why the territory is called *Neubelgien* (New Belgium), whereas the older territories are termed *Altbelgien* (Old Belgium).[3]

In contrast to the Italian regime in South Tyrol, the Belgian government pursued a liberal language policy: German was used as primary language of instruction, and French was introduced only at secondary school. However, in 1940 the Hitler regime annexed the German-speaking regions of Belgium. After being reintegrated into the Belgian State in 1945, the population actively decided on assimilating to French—at that time, in the French-speaking areas German was stigmatized (Hinderdael and Nelde 1996). Finally, the language conflict between the Flemish and Walloons led to a territorial distribution of the country in 1962-1963 and some of the German-speaking communities in East Belgium were also included in this process, thus becoming the *Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft*. The "German-speaking community" has its own parliament and German is the official language. However, since the area is economically dependent on the Walloon region, a good command of French is also required.

Having its own administration within the Belgian federal system means that legislature and administration are carried out monolingually in German. The same is true for public signs. The community edits a German-language newspaper and some advertising papers, produces a German-speaking television program (20 minutes a day, hosted by the state-owned channel), as well as a regional German-language radio station.

In schools, the language of instruction is German. French is taught as a second language from the first or the third grade. In the last three grades of secondary school there is an immersion program. Some of the subjects (especially sciences and mathematics) are taught in French. The choice of subjects is the responsibility of the respective schools. They are required to teach up to two-thirds of the subjects in French. Teachers are trained at Belgian universities, which are, for the most part, French speaking. Unfortunately, there is no teacher training in German as a mother tongue, and teachers are therefore instructed in German as a foreign language.[4]

Alsace

In contrast to South Tyrol and East Belgium, the territory of Alsace has a history full of movement. Originally, the area was German speaking and became part of France in 1648. At that time, Alsace was culturally attached to Germany, while French functioned as the language of administration, trade and diplomacy. Finally, the region was reincorporated into the German Reich after the 1871 war. Consequently, the Alsatian people became German, using a regional variety of German as their everyday language. However, after World War I, the population was reintegrated into France. Since the French government does not have a minority language policy, German plays a more marginal role in the everyday life of Alsatian people than in South Tyrol or East Belgium.

This political attitude is mirrored in the status of the German language in Alsace. Since there is no special legal minority protection (only in the context of the European Charter of Minority Rights), media, instruction at school and public signs are—with some exceptions—monolingually French. There are no purely German-language newspapers, only bilingual editions. In these editions, 25% of the articles have to be written in French, among them the sports section and a section for young people (Harnisch 1996, 426). The TV channel France 3 broadcasts two hours a week in the Alsatian dialect, and the same holds true for radio stations, which also transmit some programs in dialect. The bilingual radio station Radio France Alsace is broadcast only on AM and reaches no more than 10,000 listeners.

After World War II, the only instruction in German was in the form of optional lessons (three hours a week, from fourth to sixth grades). Later, lessons in German were also provided by a private initiative of the René-Schickele-Circle, a group of intellectuals committed to the maintenance of the Alsatian language and culture. The nation-wide campaign of teaching so-called *langues et cultures régionales* ("regional languages and cultures"),

beginning in 1982, was only partly successful in Alsace. In order for the program to be implemented, it was necessary that both teachers and students volunteer for it, and thus, in many cases, the initiative simply failed (Lösch 1997, 30). It was only in 1993 that an initiative from the parents' organization BCM (*Association pour le bilinguisme en classe dès l'école maternelle* "Association for bilingual schooling from kindergarten") succeeded in introducing bilingual education programs (13 hours per week in German and 13 hours in French starting from kindergarten). In 2000, this type of education was already implemented in 300 classrooms, comprising about 7,000 students (Hartweg 2000, 52). In addition, there are other kinds of extended instruction in German (*erweiterter Deutschunterricht*). Unfortunately, only private German-language classes are taught by native speakers, since all positions in state schools are filled following the *concours* system (i.e. teachers are employed by the State and can be sent all over France). In 1994, the *Office régional du bilinguisme* ("Regional office for bilingualism") was founded, which co-ordinates authorities and promotions within the school system.

The different conditions of the respective minorities illustrated in this section also lead to different attitudes towards the minority language. These attitudes and their impact on language use are discussed in the following section.

Language use and language attitudes

South Tyrol

The interplay of languages and varieties in South Tyrol can be described as a triglossic situation. In spoken conversations, the South Tyrolean dialect is almost the only medium of communication among all generations. Standard German, in contrast, is only used in official communication, with tourists, and sometimes with Italian-speaking compatriots. In the latter case, however, speakers prefer the Italian language. Bilingual domains in South Tyrol are politics, public administration, and state authorities such as the post and the railway (Egger and Heller 1997, 1350). German enjoys equal rights with Italian in written texts. It is used in official and unofficial correspondence, and in administration and legal proceedings, following the bilingualism rule formulated in the *Paket* (see previous section). The majority of German minority speakers use German more often than Italian (Eichinger 1996, 223ff; Gubert and Egger 1990, 255f).

A survey conducted by the author in Bolzano, South Tyrol, in the mid-1990s among high school students[5] demonstrated that the Tyrolean dialect plays a predominant role in the minority society. Almost 100% of the students use it in the private domain (with family and friends), among them 80% exclusively and more than 10% often. In public domains, the dialect is also used quite frequently (28% always use it and 40% often), and only with authorities, such as teachers, do they use it less (but 63% selected "sometimes"). In this context, it becomes evident that the school setting produces a strong norm orientation (Riehl 1999b). The distribution of dialect use is illustrated in Figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2. Dialect use in Bolzano (Riehl 1999b, 148f.)
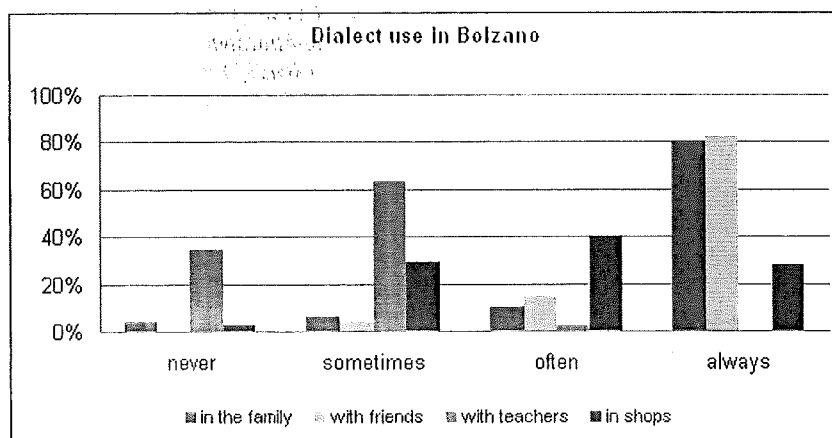
East Belgium

In East Belgium, the German-speaking group speaks a dialectal variety that its speakers call *Platt*. In the area of St. Vith, a Mosel Franconian dialect is used that belongs to the Middle German dialect group, whereas in the Eupen area, Low German dialects are spoken (the " East Limburg" dialects). The use of dialect is much more frequent in the southern parts and among the older generation, whereas in the northern parts and among the younger generation a regional variety (koiné) is preferred. Written communication is mainly conducted in German, but due to the small size of the area and its economical dependency on the Walloon region, transregional correspondence is carried out in French. With francophone compatriots, speakers prefer communication in French, and nearly all professions require bilingual competence.

The survey mentioned above (see note 5) was also conducted in Eupen and St. Vith (220 students participated). It turned out that dialect use differs not only between the two areas—South Tyrol and East Belgium—but also within the Belgian territory between the two cantons Eupen and St. Vith. In the family domain, only 3% of students in Eupen declared that they always speak dialect and 60% never do so. In contrast, in St. Vith, 42% opted for always and 22% for never. The use of the dialect among friends is even more reduced. In Eupen 72% said that they never employ it in this context. In St.Vith, however, 28% declared that they always speak it, 18% often and 27% sometimes. Here the above-mentioned differences in dialect use between Eupen and St. Vith become evident. While almost two-thirds of the students in the Eupen area do not speak dialect, in the area of St. Vith only 22% seem to have no command of it. Here, the dialect enjoys significant prestige in informal domains.

In public domains, however, we face a different situation. In shops, Eupen students very seldom use dialect (0% always, 3% often, 15% sometimes and 82% never), whereas 38% of St. Vith students opted for never and 30% for sometimes (only 4% selected "always"). With authorities, 94% of the Eupen students never use dialect, whereas in St. Vith 70% never use it and 30% sometimes. This distribution is illustrated in Figures 8.3 and 8.4.

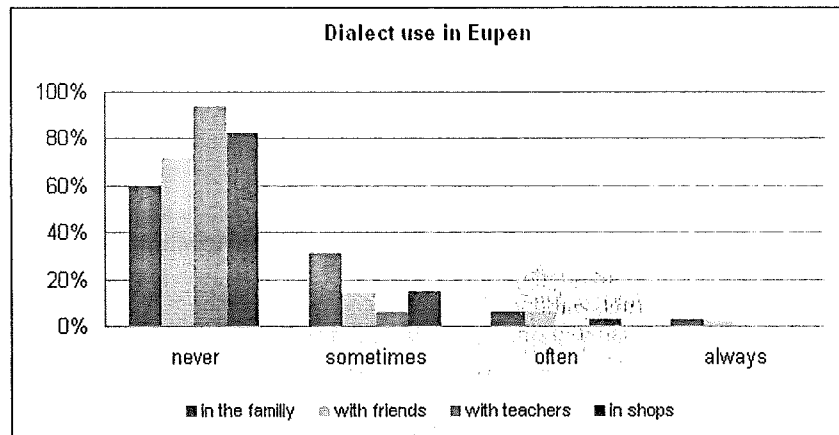**Figure 8.3. Dialect use in Eupen (Riehl 1999b, 148f.)**

Figure 8.4. Dialect use in St. Vith (Riehl 1999b, 148f.)

Dialect use in St. Vith
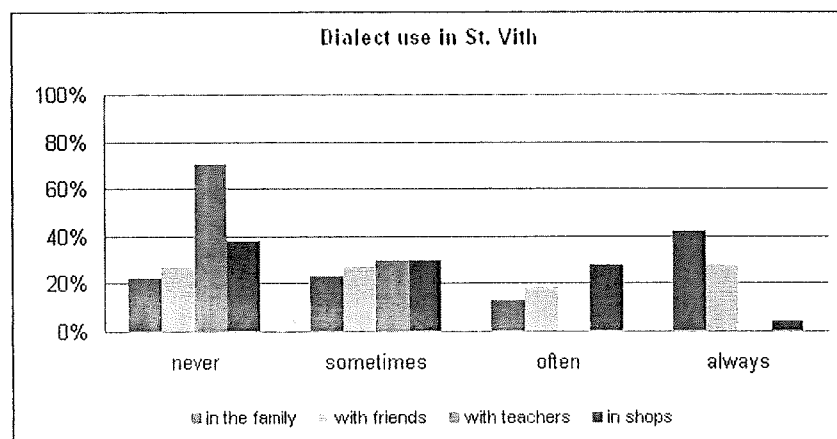
Alsace

Again, the situation is extremely diverse in Alsace. There is practically no official communication in German. The German language only retains some limited functions in church and in the educational field or top management. In private domains such as family and friends, the German-speaking community uses the Alsatian dialect, a High German dialect of Alemannic origin. Since formal communication is conducted in French, the Alsatian dialect is considered a so-called "roofless dialect". The notion "roofless" goes back to Kloss (1977), and means that the standard counterpart of the respective dialect is of "other-language" origin.

This is one crucial reason why we can observe a generational shift in Alsace. The grandparent generation still speaks the Alsatian dialect, whereas the younger generations speak French, only using dialect in conversations with their grandparents (some with parents, too, but its use is apparently declining). Studies conducted by Bister-Broosen and Helfrich in the late 1990s demonstrated that young people adopted the language used by grandparents and parents, that is, a variety characterized by a large amount of code-switching between dialect and French (Bister-Broosen 1998; Helfrich 1999). Only in cross-border communication and communication with tourists did they use the Standard German variety learned at school as a second language.

The surveys (e.g. Bister-Broosen 1998; Finck and Staiber 1996) also reveal that in the towns only a small percentage of the children speak dialect, even in traditional dialectophone areas. Dialect use in a typical

dialectophone region was documented in a survey by Uta Helfrich (1999) who examined 81 high school students in Wissembourg. In Helfich's study, it becomes evident that even in schools with a high percentage of students from rural areas, only about 23% of the young people always speak dialect with their parents and about 15% use it with friends. They typically use it when communicating with their grandparents (see Figure 8.5). It should be noted that the Wissembourg area is a traditional rural area where dialect use is still widespread, and thus the data are not representative of the whole territory of Alsace. The tendency towards dialect decline is even stronger in less traditional environments.

Figure 8.5. Dialect use in Alsace (adapted from Helfrich 1999, 63)
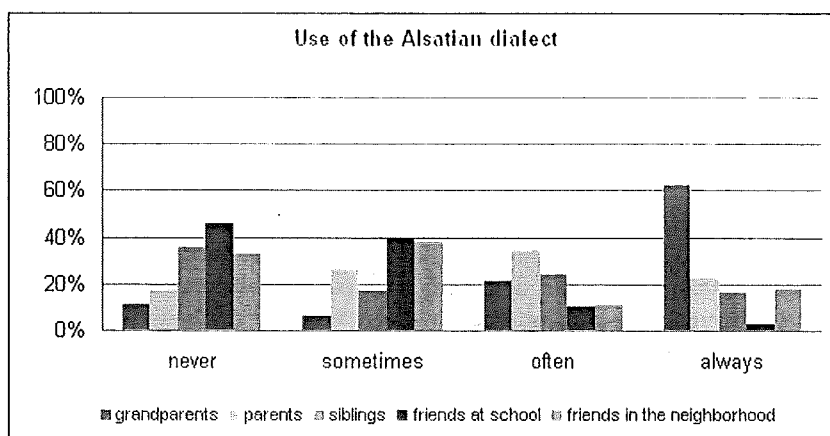
The decline of the dialect, both in the Eupen territory and in Alsace, is mainly motivated by non-linguistic factors. In Alsace, the main factors are the decrease of occupations in the rural sector, the overall mobility of people and the migration of non-dialectophone speakers. The same holds true for Eupen, but here other factors also come into play. In contrast to Middle and Southern German dialects, Low German is habitually considered to be a manner of speaking of rural populations or working-class people and thus less prestigious. In addition, its conspicuous linguistic distance from the standard also contributes a great deal to its decline. There is, however an essential difference between the development in the Eupen area and the situation in Alsace. Whereas in East Belgium the dialect is replaced by a regional German variety (Rhenish koiné), in Alsace it is replaced by the roofing language, French. This means that the decline of the dialect in East Belgium does not imply

language shift, since German varieties still have high status in the community and are used in official contexts. In Alsace, however, no longer using the Germanophone dialect automatically implies losing the whole "diasystem" of the German language, that is, the range of varieties from basic dialects to Standard German. Thus, German increasingly has the status of a second language used for communication across the border and the status of a "language of the neighbor"[6] (Finger 2000).

To convey a picture of the significance of the regional dialect (or regional koiné) in the minority setting and its essential role for language maintenance, the following section comments on excerpts from student interviews conducted in the above-mentioned surveys.

Dialect use and linguistic identity

As the following excerpts from student interviews demonstrate, both in South Tyrol and East Belgium the German dialect or regional variety plays a significant role in supporting the minority identity. The first example illustrates the common opinion of South Tyrolean speakers in an apposite way:

> *ich glaub, dass sich die die deutschsprachigen Südtiroler jetzt eine eigene Identität irgendwie aufgebaut haben, indem sie ihren Dialekt noch sprechen, sie identifizieren sich da mit allen anderen, die diesen besonderen Dialekt dann sprechen, dies sind dann die Südtiroler. [...] und nicht äh und nichts zu tun mit den Österreichern, und Italiener sind Italiener, italienischsprechend. wir sind Deutsche, deutsch im Sinn von deutschsprachig.* (South Tyrol, male speaker, 18 years old)
> [I think that German-speaking South Tyroleans have now established their own identity, somehow, by speaking their dialect. They identify themselves with all other people speaking this particular dialect. These are the South Tyroleans [...] and have nothing to do with Austrians. And Italians are Italians, Italian-speaking. We are Germans in the sense of speaking German.]

This passage not only reveals the importance of the dialect, but also exposes the attitude of the speaker towards being German. Speakers identify themselves as German speaking and stress explicitly that they are not part of the German nation. As the student in the above example points out, South Tyroleans have now established their own identity by using their particular dialect. In this example, the dilemma of defining a national language becomes evident.[7]

In contrast, for the East Belgian speakers identity is expressed by way of constructing their own variety of German. The following speaker describes this in the following way:

> *Nein wir sprechen eigentlich hier, eigentlich eher unser Deutsch. Das ist klar, dass es hier abhängig von Deutschland is, aber ich mein, wie ich jetzt momentan spreche, das ist eben unser Deutsch. Ich kann auch versuchen, ein dialektfreies Deutsch zu sprechen. Das geht auch. Oder einen anderen deutschen Dialekt zu imitieren, aber äh + ich mein, das ist dann nicht mehr unser Deutsch hier. [...] Weil ich glaube, die meisten könnten auch so wie in Köln oder so oder so ähnlich sprechen, aber das wird bewusst nicht gemacht.* (East Belgium, female speaker, 17 years old)
> [No, we speak, I would say, we speak our own German. It is clear that it is dependent on Germany, but, I think, the way I presently speak, that's just our German. I could also try to speak German without traces of dialect. That would be possible. Or imitate a German dialect. But, I think, that is not our German from here anymore. [...] Because, I think, most of us could speak like people in Cologne or something like that. But they deliberately do not do that.]

In this excerpt the student talks about the minority's construction of its own variety of German ("unser Deutsch"). This variety is not a German dialect, but a contact variety between the Rhenish koiné (*Rheinische Umgangssprache*) and French. In other parts of the interview it becomes obvious that speakers deliberately mix French words into their German utterances in order to dissociate themselves from German speakers across the border (Riehl 1997).

Unfortunately, there was no opportunity of conducting similar interviews in Alsace. However, as the above-mentioned studies by Bister Broosen, Helfrich and others demonstrate, the Alsatian dialect is no longer prestigious. Whereas the students in South Tyrol and East Belgium emphasize the importance of using dialect or a regional variety of German, students in Alsace show a rather disapproving attitude towards the Alsatian dialect. This can be illustrated by the following statement quoted in Helfrich (1999, 71, fn. 44):

> *L'alsacien est en déclin dans la région de Wissembourg, parce que c'est une langue qui est vieille et que les jeunes ne croient pas belle pour parler.*
> [Alsatian [= the dialectal variety] is declining in the region of Wissembourg, because it is old and young people don't think it is beautiful to speak.]

This example also demonstrates that Alsatian identity is not equally strongly attached to the language as it is in Bolzano or St. Vith. In addition, another aspect strongly contributes to the decline of the dialect: as a consequence of the centralist language policy in France, dialects generally have very low prestige and are considered outdated (Helfrich 1999).

Language conflict[8]

As the preceding sections demonstrate, there are different settings of language use and different language constellations within the three communities. The most untroubled situation appears in East Belgium. Here, the German dialect and the regional German language are used as markers of identity, but there is no (or little) animosity towards French. Historically, there is more language contact in East Belgium than in South Tyrol, leading to a more balanced bilingualism among the population. Also economically, due to the small size of the East Belgian territory, there is a need to adopt French. As the community does not have its own higher education institutions (e.g. universities), most of the students are instructed at French-speaking universities.

In South Tyrol, however, the Tyrolean dialect plays a predominant role, over both Standard German and the Italian language. The dialect becomes the only marker of regional identity and is used in many domains almost exclusively. Besides the better economic and educational situation, another factor comes into play that explains the high status of German in this region: a historically motivated, negative attitude towards Italian (and its speakers) and, as a consequence, strong purist tendencies to eliminate Italian-speaking loans. However, a reverse development can also be observed, especially among young urban people: they are prone to adopt Italian because they consider it a modern language of progress (Riehl 2001, 21ff).

A completely different situation is found in Alsace. As speakers consider the dialect outdated, it is forced back into the family domain and used mainly in communication with the oldest generation. French therefore increasingly takes the place of the minority language as a means of communication and identification.[9] In contrast to the other groups which use German as a roofing standard, the decline of the dialect in Alsace automatically leads to a decrease in the use of the German language in general.

Consequences of language contact

The remainder of the chapter examines the consequences of language contact that result from the different constellations described above.

Lexical transfer

As lexical transfer is the most common phenomenon in language contact settings, lexemes are the most frequent items to be transferred from the contact languages (French or Italian) into the regional German language. Essentially, words of everyday use are inserted into "other-language" utterances without morphological integration (in the examples that follow, A = Alsace, B = East Belgium, and S = South Tyrol; It. = Italian, Belg.-Fr. = Belgian French, Fr. = French, Germ. = German):[10]

1.   a) *Geh mal einen scontrino holen.* (S) [Go and get a voucher; It. *scontrino* "voucher"]
b) *Kauf fünf pistolets.* (B) [Buy five bread rolls; Belg.-Fr. *pistolet,* "bread roll"]
c) *Un noh kriejisch chaussures* (A) [And you'll get shoes, Fr. *chaussure* "shoe"] (Gardner-Chloros 1991, 129)

Whereas nouns can be integrated without any change of the word stem, morphological integration of verbs has to be effected by the suffix *–ieren:*

2.   a) *Sie panikiert.*(B) [She panics, fr. *paniquer* "to panic" Germ. *in Panik geraten*]
b) *Wenn es Sie nicht stuffiert* [...] (S) [If you are fed up with it; It. *stufarsi* "to be fed up"]

Another important instance of transfer from the contact language is the borrowing of discourse markers. There are examples in all corpora:

3.   a) *Ma, die Ansagerinnen die sind nicht so geschminkt, die italienischen.* (S) [But, the announcers haven't put on so much make-up, the Italian ones, It. *ma* "but"]
b) *Mais, das ist nicht der Weg nach Malmedy.* (B) [But this is not the way to Malmedy, Fr. *mais* "but"]
c) *Enfin, ich müess züegenn, in die leschte Zit han sich mini Beziehungen mit ihm vil gebessert.* (A) [Well, I must admit my relations with him have improved a lot lately, Fr. *enfin* "well"] (Gardner-Chloros 1991, 145)

In contrast to South Tyrol and East Belgium, there are many more occurrences of transfer in the Alsatian corpus provided by Gardner-Chloros (1991). Since the transfer of discourse markers is a very common phenomenon in language contact settings (see e.g. Fuller 2001; Matras 1998) this is not an unexpected finding.[11]

Semantic transfer

Semantic transfer is another frequent phenomenon in language contact settings. In this case, the meaning of a lexeme is transferred to the translation equivalent in the contact language. This regularly occurs with cognates and with well-established loans of Latin or French origin (most of them going back to the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries):

4. a) *Nichts ist präpariert worden.* (B) [Nothing had been prepared, Fr. *préparer* "prepare", Germ. *vorbereiten*]
    b) *Englisch ist da ja schon familiärer.* (S) [English is more familiar, It. *familiare* "familiar", Germ. *vertraut, bekannt*]

5. a) *Morgen bin ich nicht vor halb zehn zurück, ich hab ein Rendezvous beim Arzt in Verviers.* (B) [Tomorrow I won't be back before half past nine, I have an appointment at the doctor's in Vervier, Fr. *rendez-vous* "date, appointment" Germ. *Verabredung, Termin*]
    b) *Ich schreibe lieber mit einem französischen Klavier.* (B) [I prefer to write on a French keyboard, fr. *clavier* "keyboard" Germ. *Tastatur*]

Syntactic transfer

Other processes of convergence occur at the syntactic level. One phenomenon is the deconstruction of the so-called "brace construction". Typical of German, this construction is marked by the finite and the infinite parts of the verb framing or encapsulating other components of the clause (e.g. *Hans* hat *heute das Haus* geputzt, lit. "*Hans* has *today the house* cleaned"). In the minority settings, components are often placed after the infinite verb part (so-called "extraposition"):

6. a) *Die Traube ist herangereift an dem Weinstock.* (S) [Instead of: *Die Traube ist an dem Weinstock herangereift.* The grape has ripened on the grape vine.]

b) *Die 7 Zwerge werden numeriert **durch Zahlen**.* (B) [Instead of:
Die 7 Zwerge werden durch Zahlen nummeriert. The 7 dwarfs are
counted by numbers.]
c) *Dann bedrohte er das Paar mit der Waffe, liess sich die
Kreditkarte des leitenden Erziehers aushändigen **mit der
Geheimnummer** und ergriff die Flucht.* (A) [Instead of: [...] *liess
sich die Kreditkarte des leitenden Erziehers mit der Geheimnummer
aushändigen* [...]. Then he threatened the couple with his weapon,
let them hand over the credit card with the pin number and made a
dash for it.] (example taken from the bilingual edition of the
newspaper *Dernière Alsace,* 12, 1997)

As extraposition mainly has communicative functions, examples like the
ones listed in (6) do not infringe a grammatical norm, although they are
stylistically marked.

The comparison of the three minority settings demonstrates that more
or less the same types of contact phenomena occur in all speech
communities. There is, however, a substantial difference in number of
tokens. In South Tyrol, the amount of contact phenomena is very low,
particularly in the domain of written texts and in formal communication.
In East Belgium, the impact of the contact language is not very great
either, but instances of transfer occur with a higher frequency and in a
broader range of text types than in South Tyrol. In Alsace, however, we
find conventionalized loans and other contact phenomena with high
frequency. The main difference between South Tyrol and East Belgium on
the one hand and Alsace on the other is the significantly higher amount of
code-switching in the latter. As demonstrated by the study of Gardner-
Chloros (1991), German-speaking Alsatians generally have a greater
command of French and thus incorporate it in German utterances. In
contrast, in the other regions, German—due to its official status—plays a
predominant role and is often used in a monolingual mode.

Conclusions

We can conclude from these three minority groups that the most
important factor for language maintenance in the German-speaking
minorities is the presence of a standard variety of German. Since the
standard variety is mainly transmitted at school, schooling in standard
German is a crucial factor for dialect maintenance policy, followed by
presence in the media and in the public sphere. This holds true both for
South Tyrol and East Belgium, where German is well established as
official language. If, however, as is the case in Alsace, the German

language is reduced to a dialectal variant and is used only in private domains, the dialect itself declines, as too do language contact phenomena such as typological restructuring and code-switching.

There are also differences between the well established minorities of South Tyrol and East Belgium, mainly produced by speakers' attitudes towards the majority language. Whereas in South Tyrol the German language—mainly the Tyrolean dialect—is an essential part of ethnic identity and a means for differentiation from Italian compatriots, East Belgian speakers identify themselves by language mixing and by creating their own variety that deliberately includes loans from the contact language.

Notes

[1] At that time, Bavarian settlers relocated to the area of Alto Adige (South Tyrol). In 1362, the region became part of the Habsburg Empire and remained so until 1914.

[2] Still today, Bolzano has the highest percentage of Italian-language population, i.e. 75% (Riehl 2001, 15).

[3] In this chapter, I concentrate on the territory of New Belgium, especially on the cantons of St. Vith and Eupen, which form the official German-speaking community.

[4] There are, however, possibilities of further training offered by the Ministry of Education (Riehl 2001, 38).

[5] The data are based on a survey of 270 14 to 18 year-old high school students in Bolzano (Riehl 2001, 310ff). Although the study was conducted in the mid 1990s, the data are still valid today. As participants were asked their place of residence in the questionnaire, differences between urban and country areas can also be observed. For a discussion of the varieties of German in South Tyrol see Lanthaler (1997).

[6] This refers to a slogan of the regional language policy in Europe fostering programs to "learn the language of the neighbor".

[7] In this case, the paradigm of polycentricity of the German language comes into play, that is, German is not the language of one nation but used by different nations functioning as full centers. German-speaking minorities where German has official status can be considered as "semi-centers" (see Ammon 1995; Clyne 1995)

[8] On the notion of language conflict see, for instance, the discussion by Nelde (e.g. Nelde 1994) and Oksaar (1980).

[9] On the interplay between language policy and language identity in Alsace see Schilling (1994).

[10] All examples from East Belgium and South Tyrol are taken from my unpublished corpora (interviews and fieldwork from 1992 to 1996). The basic language is a regional German standard. For more details see Riehl (2001). Since

my corpora comprise only South Tyrol and East Belgium, data from Alsace are gathered from Gardner-Chloros (1991). The basic language is the Alsatian dialect. [11] Interestingly enough, in many instances in the Gardner-Chloros corpus French-speaking discourse markers function as a trigger for code-switching (see Clyne 1991, 194ff). For a discussion of the transference of discourse markers see also Clyne (2003, 225ff).

References

Ammon, Ulrich. 1995. *Die deutsche Sprache in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz. Das Problem der nationalen Varietäten*. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

Bister-Broosen, Helga. 1998. *Sprachkontakte und Sprachattitüden Jugendlicher im Elsaß und in Baden. Vergleichende soziolinguistische Untersuchungen in Colmar (Frankreich) und in Freiburg und Müllheim (Deutschland)*. Frankfurt: Lang.

Clyne, Michael. 1991. *Community languages: the Australian experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—. 1995. *The German language in a changing Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—. 2003. *Dynamics of language contact. English and immigrant languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Egger, Kurt and Karin Heller. 1997. Deutsch–Italienisch. In *Kontaktlinguistik. Ein internationales Handbuch zeitgenössischer Forschung*, ed. Hans Goebl et al. 2. Halbbd., 1350–1357. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter.

Eichinger, Ludwig M. 1996. Südtirol. In *Handbuch der mitteleuropäischen Sprachminderheiten*, ed. Robert Hinderling and Ludwig M. Eichinger, 199–262. Tübingen: Narr.

Finck, Adrien and Maryse Staiber. 1996. Regionalsprache im Elsaß. In *Sprachenpolitik in Grenzregionen*, ed. Roland Marti, 205–212. Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag.

Finger, Bernd. 2000. *Sprachenwahl in der grenzüberschreitenden Kommunikation zwischen Südbaden und dem Elsass*. Unpublished M.A Thesis: Universität Freiburg.

Fuller, Janet M. 2001. The principle of pragmatic detachability in borrowing: English-origin discourse markers in Pennsylvania German. *Linguistics* 39: 351–369.

Gardner-Chloros, Penelope. 1991. *Language selection and switching in Strasbourg*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Gubert, Renzo and Kurt Egger. 1990. Die deutsche Volksgruppe in Südtirol. In *Die Minderheiten im Alpen-Adria-Raum*, ed.

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Alpen-Adria, 249–264. Klagenfurt: Eigenverlag Land Kärnten.

Harnisch, Rüdiger. 1996. Das Elsass. In *Handbuch der mitteleuropäischen Sprachminderheiten*, ed. Robert Hinderling and Ludwig M. Eichinger, 413–457. Tübingen: Narr.

Hartweg, Frédéric. 2000. Elsässisch. In *Minderheiten- und Regionalsprachen in Europa*, ed. Jan Wirrer, 247–255. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.

Helfrich, Uta. 1999. Sprachwechselprozesse in der Diglossiesituation: Franzosen im Grenzgebiet Nordelsaß/Südpfalz. In *Dialekt, Dialektgenerationen, Sprachwandel*, ed. Thomas Stehl, 55-79. Tübingen: Narr.

Hinderdael, Michael and Peter H. Nelde. 1996. Deutschbelgien. In *Handbuch der mitteleuropäischen Sprachminderheiten*, ed. Robert Hinderling and Ludwig M. Eichinger, 479–495. Tübingen: Narr.

Kloss, Heinz. 1977. Über einige Terminologie-Probleme der interlingualen Soziolinguistik. *Deutsche Sprache* 5: 224–37.

Lanthaler, Franz . 1997. Varietäten des Deutschen in Südtirol. In *Varietäten des Deutschen: Regional- und Umgangssprachen*, ed. Gerhard Stickel, 364–383. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

Lösch, Hellmut. 1997. *Zweisprachigkeit in Elsass und Lothringen - gestern, heute und auch morgen? Versuch einer Bilanz*. Wien: Edition Praesens.

Matras, Yaron. 1998. Utterance modifiers and universals of grammatical borrowing. *Linguistics* 36: 281–331.

Nelde, Peter H. 1979. *Volkssprache und Kultursprache. Die gegenwärtige Lage des sprachlichen Übergangsgebietes im deutsch-belgisch-luxemburgischen Grenzraum*. Wiesbaden: Steiner.

—. 1986. Deutsch als Minderheitssprache—Vergleichbarkeit von Sprachkontakten. In *Europäische Sprachminderheiten im Vergleich. Deutsch und andere Sprachen. Vorträge gehalten auf der Tagung "Mehrsprachige Gemeinschaften im Vergleich" Bayreuth 14-16. Juli 1983*, ed. Robert Hinderling, 251–273. Stuttgart/Wiesbaden: Steiner.

—. 1994. Sind Sprachkonflikte vermeidbar? In *Mehrsprachigkeit in Europa—Hindernis oder Chance*, ed. Uta Helfrich and Claudia M. Riehl, 115–125. Wilhelmsfeld: Egert.

Oksaar, Els. 1980. Mehrsprachigkeit, Sprachkontakt, Sprachkonflikt. In *Sprachkontakt und Sprachkonflikt*, ed. Peter H. Nelde, 43–52. Wiesbaden: Steiner.

Riehl, Claudia M. 1997. Identité et conscience linguistique chez les minorités germanophones du Tyrol du Sud et de l'Est de la Belgique.

In *Annales de l'Université de Savoie 22*: Langue et identité. Textes réunis et présentés par Odile Schneider-Mizony et Beate Gamer, 79–97.

—. 1999a. Grenzen und Sprachgrenzen. In *Grenzgänger zwischen Kulturen*, ed. Monika Fludernik and Hans-Joachim Gehrke, 41–56. Würzburg: Ergon.

—. 1999b. Zwischen Dialekt und Zweitsprache. Deutschsprachige Minderheiten und ihr Weg zum Standard. In *Dialekt, Dialektgenerationen, Sprachwandel*, ed. Thomas Stehl, 133–149. Tübingen: Narr.

—. 2001. *Schreiben, Text und Mehrsprachigkeit. Zur Textproduktion in mehrsprachigen Gesellschaften am Beispiel der deutschsprachigen Minderheiten in Südtirol und Ostbelgien.* Tübingen: Stauffenburg [inklusive Text-CD-ROM].

Schilling, Annette. 1994. *Die französische Sprach- und Schulpolitik und deren Auswirkung auf das Sprachbewußtsein der 'minorités linguistiques' unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Entwicklung im Elsaß.* Unpublished M.A. Thesis: Universität Freiburg.