

Language Contact  
at the  
Romance–Germanic  
Language Border

Edited by  
Jeanine Treffers-Daller  
and  
Roland Willemyns



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Romance–Germanic Language Border*

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# Aspects of the Romance-Germanic Language Border: An Introduction

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In one of Belgium's leading newspapers *De Standaard* of 16 October 2000 a Flemish government official is quoted to be saying 'since we are understaffed we have no means of preventing illegal crossing of our borders at night'. Yet, this newspaper article is not about people trying to enter Belgium illegally; the border the official is referring to is ... the language border. Flanders and Wallonia appear to have a different legislation on the treatment of manure and apparently some Flemish farmers are transporting their excess manure to Wallonia. Although language is not involved at all, it is very significant that the term 'language border' is used in the title of the article: 'Mest steekt 's nachts illegaal de taalgrens over' [Manure is illegally crossing the language border at night]. This is one striking example of how very real the notion of 'language border' can become.

In connection with the *Sociolinguistics Symposium*, which took place at the University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol (27–29 April 2000) the two conveners of its workshop on Language Contact, Jeanine Treffers-Daller and Roland Willemyns, decided to edit a volume on *Language Contact at the Romance-Germanic Language Border*. From the onset we decided to try to cover the whole geographical length of the border, from French Flanders in the North-West through South Tyrol in the South-East. For each and every part of it we were lucky enough to find outstanding experts in the field willing to contribute to our volume, which includes the following case studies:

- Genesis and evolution of the Romance-Germanic language border in Europe (Luc van Durme).
- Dutch/Flemish in the North of France (Hugo Ryckeboer).
- Dutch-French language border in Belgium (Roland Willemyns).
- Language use and language contact in Brussels (Jeanine Treffers-Daller).
- German in Belgium: Linguistic variation from a contact linguistic point of view (Peter Nelde and Jeroen Darquennes).
- Luxembourg, a multilingual society at the Romance/Germanic language border (Fernand Fehlen).
- Alsace (Helga Bister-Broosen).
- The German-Romance language borders in Switzerland (Felicity Rash).
- South Tyrol: German and Italian in a changing world. (Ludwig Eichinger).

Although we provided the authors with a general framework for their article we took good care of not forcing them into a prearranged corset. Within that framework they were free to stress those aspects they consider to be the most



relevant for the type of language contact occurring in ‘their’ portion of the border. It was formulated the following way:

Describe the current state of the art on Romance–Germanic language border research in your region (what has been done, what hasn’t and what should be done without delay).

Apart from including information on language and dialect borrowing phenomena, we would like to encourage you to also include at least some of the following topics:

- the legal and/or practical status of the language border (geographic vs. sociolinguistic factors), including the historical perspective; official status of the languages concerned: official language, regionally official language, minority language etc.;
- status and function of the ‘other’ language(s) on both sides of the border;
- attitudinal and language planning initiatives as well as institutional support to promote or discourage the use of the other language(s);
- standardisation status of the regionally official and minority languages as well as language planning initiatives taken locally, nationally or internationally (e.g. support from the ‘mother’ country);
- a short overview of work done on borrowing/code switching or other language contact phenomena.

Our point of departure, which has afterwards been confirmed by the various contributors, was that the status and function of the Romance–Germanic language border are very different indeed. It has the least prominence in France, a country harbouring many other languages than French which are all reduced to the status of minority languages, enjoying practically no rights whatsoever. Since those minority languages do not ‘officially’ exist, the same *a fortiori* applies to the ‘language borders’ delimiting or surrounding the areas in which they are in use. At the other end of the spectrum we find Belgium and Switzerland, countries divided into language territories on the basis of the territoriality principle. As a consequence of this principle the language border is a very real device in those countries, since it is the legal means *par excellence* of delimiting the areas in which a particular language is the official one. In Belgium, moreover, the legislator has tried to and succeeded in rearranging all domestic administrative divisions (from regions over provinces to communes) into monolingual entities. With the sole exception of Brussels, where the principle was not workable, the result has been that each and every administrative entity functions in a strictly monolingual way. Both the language border and the territoriality principle are defined in the constitution. Although in Switzerland the territoriality principle is unofficial it is very real as well, since it secures the right of each canton to regulate language use in its own territory. This also means that each canton can expect migrants from other language communities to adopt the language of the territory, thus reinforcing the monolingual status of most regions. As far as the administrative division is concerned, though, we see that nevertheless four of Switzerland’s cantons are multilingual. Yet, here too, it is the language border which serves as a demarcation line for the language status of the various administrative entities.

Up to a certain point, this is also the case in countries where a language has the status of a regionally official one. Although such a language enjoys considerably fewer rights than the official languages in the Belgian and Swiss case, and although the territories they are used in are not (officially) monolingual, it is the language border which delimits the territory where the language at stake enjoys its (partially) official status. Along the Romance-Germanic border this applies to South Tyrol in Italy.

In one case the language border is hardly a geographical frontier at all but rather a social one. Strictly speaking, therefore, there is no language border in Luxembourg and this country features more than one unusual and atypical characteristic. For one, it is not very common for two related language varieties – Lëtzeburgesch and German – to be official, administrative languages in the same country. In addition, the use and the official status of French, mother tongue to no one, is the consequence of language planning measures. At any rate, the language border in Luxembourg is a device completely different from what it is in the other portions discussed in the present volume.

It was the editors' wish to open this volume with an article on the origins of the Romance-Germanic language border, which would also give an overview of the main results and objectives of language border research so far. Luc van Durme obliged us by writing his paper entitled 'Genesis and Evolution of the Romance-Germanic Language Border in Europe'. Since the end of the 19th century, he observes, the Romance-Germanic language border, 'which extends from the North Sea to the place southwest of Villach where three countries meet and where the Slavonic-Germanic language border takes over', has been the object of very intense investigation and discussion. In the first part of his contribution he discusses the various language border theories devised for the Belgian-Northern French part of the border and demonstrates in which ways they are interconnected. This is the more important since many scientists have taken this particular portion as a *pars pro toto* for the whole border and have used it to try out their theories and hypotheses. In the second part Van Durme summarises the results of historical research into the development of the Romance-Germanic language border at large. In a concluding section, some remaining problems and desiderata for future research are discussed. In the author's view this further investigation will concentrate increasingly on microtoponymy, since this approach has been responsible for the breakthrough in language border research over the last decades and is generally considered to be the most promising one for future research as well. Yet, to profit fully from the advantages of that approach, Van Durme warns, new systematic corpora of reliable data from language border areas will have to be created.

Since the succession of articles in this volume follows the geographical order, the first contributions deal with the French-Dutch portion of the Romance-Germanic language border. Political change is a well documented initiator of language shift and is responsible for shift occurring along the western section of the French-Dutch language border in what is now known as French-Flanders ['Frans-Vlaanderen'; 'la Flandre française']. Part of what is now the north of France used to be an integrate part of the County of Flanders, including such major cities as Lille, Douai, Cambrai, Arras, Calais, and Dunkirk. A centuries-long tug-of-war resulted in a frequent shifting back and forth of

parts of this territory between France and the Low Countries. From the 13th century onwards major parts of it were gradually integrated within France and eventually within the French language territory.

It is Hugo Ryckeboer who analyses the situation in this westernmost part of the Romance–Germanic language border. After a short discussion of the historical evolution in Pas-de-Calais, he gives his main attention to the ‘département du Nord’, i.e. the part of the former county of Flanders which was annexed by France in the course of the 18th century and where Flemish dialects have led an ever dwindling existence ever since.

Until the French Revolution in 1789, he points out, the linguistic situation did not change fundamentally, and Dutch continued to fulfil the main functions of a cultural language. After the Revolution the new political ideology in France condemned all minority languages and in the course of the 19th century educational legislation banned Dutch from all levels of education. As a result Dutch gradually lost most of its functions.

In an attempt to analyse the reactions to the official language policy and language loss, Ryckeboer points out that the Flemish minority is one of the smallest linguistic minorities in France and also the minority that enjoyed the least attention both politically and scientifically.

Yet, during recent decades, there has been extensive research on the linguistic situation as well as on the characteristics of the Flemish dialects still in use. The Flemish dialect spoken in French Flanders, Ryckeboer tells us, does structurally belong to the West Flemish dialect group. Most dialect maps do not show a break along the state border between Belgium and France. Most isoglosses, on the contrary, cross the state border and it is clear that this state border does not correspond to any old dividing line in human communication. Only the political separation of the last 300 years has caused this border to become a ‘secondary dialect boundary’ and Ryckeboer then lists some examples of linguistic features caused by communicative isolation from the rest of the Dutch language territory as well as of linguistic innovations brought about by language contact with French.

Summarising, Ryckeboer says, the combination of all the factors discussed, was responsible for the Dutch minority language to become structurally and functionally impoverished. Since it is no longer supported by innovating ‘injections’ from a genetically related standard language, it stands no chance against the domestic majority language and, thus, gradually vanishes. The story of Flemish in France, therefore, he says, is a case of language death.

The largest part of the Dutch–French language border lies in Belgium. Aspects of this type of language contact are treated in the following two articles. After a brief description of the so-called ‘language question in Belgium’ Roland Willemyns discusses the notion of language border in general and then gives an overview of the changes in status and function of the language border in Belgium and of the actual language border fluctuations as they have occurred up to the present day. Two essentially different types are discussed in this paper, namely language shift resulting in a change of the location of the border on the one hand, and language shift resulting in ‘erosion’ on the other. The latter means that the contact situation has decisively been changed in the course of history although the ‘language border’ (in the traditional sense) has not changed its course. Two problem areas: the ‘Voerstreek’ and the Brussels suburban region are discussed

in more detail. In all cases the part played by linguistic legislation, language planning and sociolinguistic developments is considered and analysed. Finally, Willemyns draws up a typology of language border change and he identifies various patterns of change in order to explain and account for the almost unique nature of the Belgian portion of the Romance–Germanic language border.

The portrait of Belgium's capital – Brussels – is one of immense complexity involving not only linguistic background and competence but also attitudes, social status, job conditions, circumstances of discourse, feelings towards the interlocutor etc.; in a word all of the sociolinguistic variables which are known to determine linguistic interaction in multilingual settings. Jeanine Treffers-Daller has written an article exclusively devoted to language use and language contact in Brussels. Brussels, she explains, occupies a very special, if not unique, position on the linguistic border; also because the 19 municipalities which form the Brussels metropolis are an autonomous region in what is now the federal state of Belgium. Language shift in Brussels is to be seen as erosion within the Dutch linguistic territory eventually rendering a city that used to be part of Flanders 'à part entière' into a multilingual city with Francophone dominance. From a judicial point of view a shift did occur, since Brussels changed its status from (*de facto*) monolingual Dutch into (*de jure*) bilingual. Treffers-Daller gives a description of the historical background, the educational system, the language varieties used, the attitudes of the speakers towards these language varieties and internal linguistic aspects of language contact in Brussels.

Belgium is not a bilingual but a trilingual country, comprising both an officially German speaking part as well as a small territory where German is used as a dwindling minority language. In their article on 'German in Belgium: Linguistic Variation from a Contact Linguistic Point of View' Peter Nelde and Jeroen Darquennes use the terms New Belgium for the former and Old Belgium for the latter. Both are part of the old territory of Overmaas, a linguistically very scattered region with a centuries old tradition of language contact between Dutch, German and French. The present article particularly concentrates on the situation of the German speakers in Old and New Belgium. After a geographical and historical outline the process of Belgium's federalisation and its repercussions for East Belgium are briefly discussed. The central part of the article deals with external and internal linguistic factors having affected the linguistic habits of these Belgian German speakers. Finally, the article analyses some issues that are prominent in recent research on New and Old Belgium.

Trilingual contact is what characterises also the following region under investigation, namely Luxembourg. In 1839 the current borders of Luxembourg were drawn approximately along the Romance–Germanic language border. From that moment on, Fernand Fehlen says in his article 'Luxembourg, a Multilingual Society at the Romance/Germanic Language Border', the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was inhabited by a population speaking a German dialect, while by historic tradition and political opportunity, the administrative and juridical language continued to be French. His paper focuses mainly on two aspects, namely the study of the interference between Lëtzeburgesch on the one hand and French, German and English on the other, and the description of the present linguistic situation based on a sociolinguistic survey done in 1997. Bourdieu's concept of the legitimate language competence has been modified here in order

to better describe the Luxembourg situation of ‘triglossia with trilingualism’ and the ensuing multilingual language competence. Such an analysis requires – as Fehlen reminds us – a subtle understanding of the combination of different varieties of the three languages officially in use in Luxembourg.

The discussion on Luxembourg has brought us definitively to the German portion of the Romance-Germanic language border, which now continues with a discussion of a not less scattered region in Helga Bister-Broosen’s article on ‘Alsace’; this is the border region between Germany and France which changed its political affiliation four times during the past century. The former linguistic unity of the Upper Rhine region, she says, no longer exists in that form. Alsace, to the west of the state border, is characterised by the use of German dialects combined with the use of the French standard language. It is on the western side of this bilingual territory that we find the ‘language border’, i.e. the border that sets Alsace apart from the territories to its west, characterised by the sole use of French. After a historical overview the author discusses various geopolitical aspects of the language border as well as ‘Contacts across the state border’ and also the new education policy, namely the *enseignement bilingue paritaire* in which German and French each are the medium of instruction for half of the week. The current experiments with early bilingual instruction are in line with the wishes of the Alsatian population and of the regional political leadership. Yet, although the revival of Standard German in and through the educational system will certainly increase bilingual competence in general, it is not to be expected, Bister-Broosen says, that this will fundamentally change the linguistic habits of the Alsatians. Alsatian dialects do not enjoy any official support, have no official functions, and are hardly used by the younger generations any more. As far as daily language practice is concerned, the author concludes, the language border and the state border are doomed to coincide within the lapse of only a few generations.

One of the specifics of the Swiss situation is that, as a consequence of the country harbouring four language communities (German, French, Italian and Romansh), we are confronted here with one Germanic language being in contact and interfering with three different Romance languages. In her article ‘The German-Romance Language Borders in Switzerland’ Felicity Rash is concerned with language-contact phenomena at the borders of Switzerland’s four language communities, the legal status of the four Swiss national languages, and the language policies of individual bilingual and trilingual cantons. After an introductory discussion of the historical movements of the language boundaries, linguistic interference resulting from direct language contact at each of the language boundaries is analysed in detail. Subsequently recent research into linguistic cleavage and language attitudes are summarised and the author discusses the revised language law of 1996, which legislates for special assistance for the two minority languages, Italian and Romansh, and which was designed to promote improvements in relations between these and the two majority language communities.

The final stop of our journey along the Romance-Germanic language border is South Tyrol, the German speaking autonomous region in Italy, where language contact, consequently, involves German and Italian. Ludwig Eichinger starts his exposé on the situation in ‘South Tyrol. German and Italian in a Changing World’ by stressing that in this southernmost part of the language border area Romance

and Germanic languages have coexisted for centuries. Yet, for a very long time the language groups used to live side by side with only a limited amount of out-group communication and individual bilingualism. The first changes in this situation started at the beginning of the 19th century, when the vernaculars were used in all official contexts and group identities developed, based on shared languages. Consequently language planning measures were taken immediately when South Tyrol became a part of Italy after World War I. They intensified further after the fascists came to power in the early 1920s: they banned the use of German in all public domains. Simultaneously, they started a campaign bringing a large number of Italian speaking people into the area. In 1939, the so-called 'Option' agreement between Mussolini and Hitler forced that part of the population who decided to keep up with the German language to leave Italy.

After World War II the situation had become so tense that it ultimately led to a political clash, culminating in bomb attacks and other acts of violence in the early 1960s. This may be the only part of our border region area where violence has ever been used to come to terms with linguistic diversity. From then onwards attempts were made to solve the problems by means of linguistic legislation, resulting in the so-called 'Paket'-solution in 1969, meant to protect the German-speaking minority. By the same token the agreement initiated a considerable degree of individual bilingualism, especially with the speakers of German.

As far as language development itself is concerned, Eichinger reminds us that German in South Tyrol took part in the developments and standardisation processes of German overall until 1871, since up to then it was part of the German-speaking Habsburg empire. From a dialectological viewpoint there is a continuity between the regional dialects spoken in the neighbouring parts of Austria and in South Tyrol and the main isoglosses intersecting South Tyrol from north to south.

The minority status of German in the overall Italian context is weighing increasingly on the standardisation debate. For a long time the mainstream argumentation held that only the standard of Germany was an acceptable norm. As was the case in Flanders during the same period, language identity with the 'other' country was used as an important argument in the domestic debate in that it tried to profit from the prestige of the language on the other side of the border. Yet, the growing integration into the Italian legal and administrative system led to an increasing amount of Italian terminology being translated into German and, consequently, differing from the appropriate terminology in Germany and Austria. As a consequence of these and similar developments we witness an increasing degree of linguistic variation in South Tyrol society. Finally, Eichinger remarks, the developments of the recent decades have led to an intensified contact between the languages, and there is a growing awareness of the advantages of speaking more than one language.

In our view, the importance of the current volume resides in the fact that it brings together sociolinguistic analyses of language contact in a range of situations along the Romance-Germanic Language Border. While all areas have been subject to in-depth separate studies, to our knowledge they have never been brought together in one volume. This seems important, as together with the volume edited by Kremer and Niebaum (1990), entitled *Grenzdialekte*, which

focuses on dialectological issues, it will ultimately create a basis for collaborative and comparative work among European researchers with an interest in language contact. And this in turn will make it possible to shed more light on the variable and the universal elements in language contact along the Romance-Germanic Language Border.

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### **Reference**

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# Genesis and Evolution of the Romance-Germanic Language Border in Europe

**Luc van Durme**

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After a discussion of the various language border theories for the Belgian-Northern French area, a *status quaestionis* summarises the results of 40 years' research into the development of the Romance-Germanic language border at large. Not a prehistoric Celtic-Germanic, but a late Roman Latin-Germanic opposition has functioned as a direct predisposition for the early medieval Romance-Germanic language border. In the last section microtoponymy is considered a promising approach for future investigation.

## Introduction

Since the end of the 19th century, the Romance-Germanic language border, which (from the early Middle Ages onwards) extends from the North Sea to the place southwest of Villach where three countries meet and where the Slavonic-Germanic language border takes over, has been the object of intense investigation and discussion.

The first part of this contribution discusses the various language border theories for the Belgian-Northern French area and demonstrates in which ways they are interconnected. This has been tried before by Draye (1942, 1956, 1980) and by Lamarcq (1996).<sup>1</sup> The *status quaestionis* in the second part summarises the results of 40 years of research into the development of the Romance-Germanic language border at large. In a concluding section some remaining problems and desiderata for future research are discussed.

## A Century of Language Border Research in Belgium and Northern France: A Whole Range of Different Views

The Liège historian Kurth, the first great Belgian toponymist, collected a large amount of place-names (Kurth, 1896–1898), and allocated them to a particular language on the basis of suffixes and other linguistic elements. In so doing, he attempted to reconstruct the Romance-Germanic settlement history as well as the part played by a number of Germanic tribes in this history. This ethnographical approach, inspired by a study of the Marburg historian Arnold (Arnold, 1875), led Kurth to conclude that no major Frankish settlements had ever existed south of the present-day language border. According to him, the early medieval Germanic advance had been stopped by the then still huge *Silva Carbonaria* and by the Roman road Bavay-Tongeren-Maastricht with a northern buffer zone toponymically marked by *castra* and *castellum*. In this way, the so-called 'static' language border theory was born. The Brussels historian Des Marez (Des Marez, 1926) would go further still by invoking varying soil conditions and an opposition between settlement and field patterns, which afterwards proved to be wrong.



In 1926 the Bonn historian Steinbach contested the static theory and replaced it with a ‘culturally dynamic’ one (Steinbach, 1926). He considered the language border line in Belgium to be the northern edge of the inhabited territories of old. This northern edge was not only a ‘Rückzugslinie’ of the Germanic occupation in northern Galloromania, but also an ‘Ausgleichslinie’ between Romance and Germanic culture. After Gamillscheg (1934) and his first *Romania Germanica*, Petri (1937) attempted to critically investigate the onomastic foundations of the dynamic theory and to structuralise it by (among other things) designing toponymical typologies. Petri, however, was first and foremost a historian, not a linguist, and this induced Gamillscheg (1938) to correct many of Petri’s etymologies. Also, Petri had restricted place-name levelling to translation pairs and suffix substitutions, disregarding loan pairs. He also made the grave mistake of interpreting all Romance place-names with a Germanic person name as marks of early medieval Germanic settlements.<sup>2</sup> Yet, Petri (1973, 1977) afterwards gave due consideration to all criticism, and even set himself up as the father of the multi-disciplinary approach. Gamillscheg, on the other hand, has always refused to recognise and correct his mistakes (Gamillscheg, 1970).

After the Second World War (and it is no coincidence that it happened then) several Belgian historians such as Dhondt (1952) and Verlinden (1955) tackled the language border problem. They mostly fell back on the theories of physical determinism and the correlating demographical conditions (‘the arid soils of Flanders and the very slow population growth of this region’). In reality, though, these arguments only apply to the part of Flanders north of the Scheldt and to the Kempen. Dhondt did not even hesitate to come forward with population figures, and for this Stengers (1959) blew the whistle on him. Yet, the views of Dhondt and Verlinden were taken over by Doehaerd (1983), who thinks that a linear language border could only have come into existence after the population growth in the 10th century.

After Petri at least one thing had become clear: future language border research would have to follow the hierarchy ‘toponymy > archaeology > history’. Consequently, linguists would now have the last word, and this was immediately put into practice by the Ghent scholar in Germanic linguistics Gysseling, whose brilliant works were to guide and stimulate language border study in the Low Countries, Northern France and Germany. Overviews can be found in Gysseling (1960, 1964, 1981) and a complete list of his work can be found in Van Durme (1988a). Gysseling’s work is based on extremely reliable forms, namely excerpts he collected himself from texts which, in most cases, are available in the original. In this way, he achieves a typological classification of place-names, allowing for a relative chronology. Through careful consideration of the phonetic evolution typical for the Romance and Germanic dialects, he even manages (in collaboration with the Ghent historian Verhulst) to turn this relative chronology into an absolute one and is able to give precise dates (Gysseling & Verhulst, 1969).

The language border research discussed so far displays four successive theories: a static, a dynamic, a historical and a linguistic one. A number of these theories are to be considered a product of the political context of the time in which they emerged: Arnold reflects 19th century German nationalism, Kurth late 19th century ‘Belgicism’; the ‘Linie-theories’ as worked out by Vannérus (1943) are

typical for the interbellum mentality, whereas Petri is inspired by Pan-Germanic ideas popular in Germany at the eve of the Second World War.

In spite of this and although each theory was intended to replace its predecessor, they all contain valuable elements which contribute to our understanding of the language border genesis. Yet it is obvious that some authors went too far in only admitting one simple approach. Gamillscheg, for example, returned to Arnold's tribal theory whereas Devleeschouwer (1989), an alleged 'language border specialist' all of his life, almost compromised the credibility of the linguistic approach by his visionary 'Linie-theories' based writings.

In Belgium, language border research has always been a rather delicate matter, since the temptation to use its results, or its apparent results or even its manipulated results, in the domestic language struggles between Walloons and Flemings was almost irresistible to many. Languages have always been dangerous weapons in the hands of politicians: by regarding the Romanche dialect of Graubünden as a variant of Italian, Mussolini tried to justify his claims to that Swiss area.

The final word about the precise circumstances of the genesis of the Romance-Germanic language border has definitely not been spoken yet. Some authors have tried to approach the problem of settlement continuity from the fourth to the sixth century by making a distinction between 'geographical' (i.e. toponymically traceable), 'functional' and 'fiscal' continuity (~ Middle Latin *fiscus* 'crown land') (e.g. Blok, 1981). For the Belgian and Northern French area I have made the assumption that massive Germanic penetration in Northern Gaul faced a 'Romance block' in the *Nervicanus limes* (*Notitia Dignitatum*), a zone full of strategic axes such as the Roman road Boulogne-Kortrijk-Tongeren. In the late Roman era, a reorganisation of population groups had taken place in that area. Many of those groups had Germanic roots, but very soon they were subject to an accumulative Latinisation process in which newly created military-administrative structures will have played the leading role. Part of this group were the so-called *laeti* or military farmers, whose wives are described in the *Lex Salica* as *militunias vel letas romanas*. This casts a light on the Latinisation process to which they had been subjected. The earliest picture of the Romance-Germanic contrast which was thus established is provided by the map '-ingum,... versus -(in)iācas,...', which reflects mainly the sixth century situation.<sup>3</sup> These views of mine received the support of archaeologists<sup>4</sup> and will now have to be subjected to further scientific criticism. It would certainly be worth investigating to what extent the language border has known similar preliminary stages in its further geographical course.

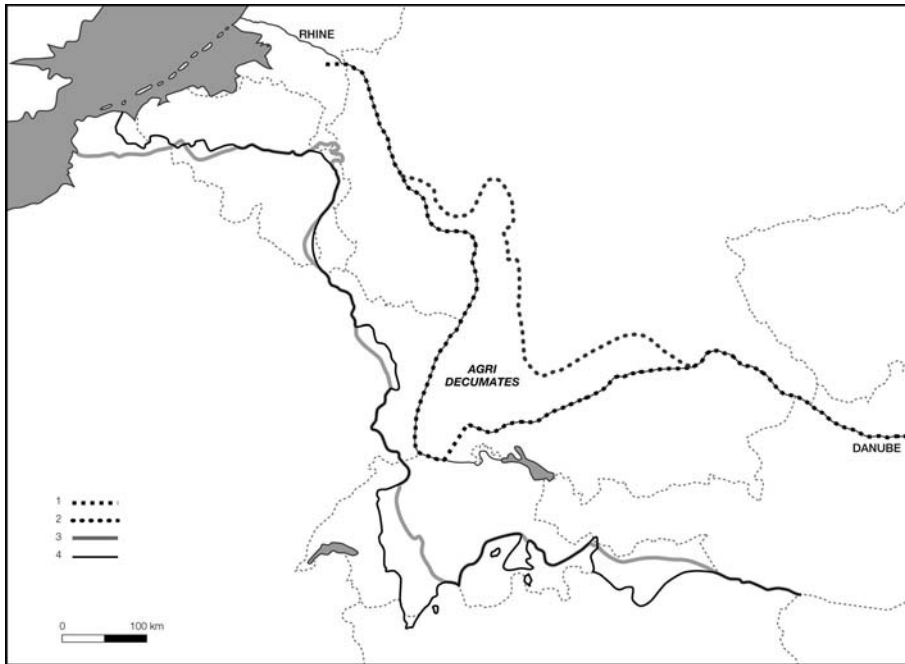
For a considerable lapse of time, the mechanisms of language contact and of the influence of linguistic situations and language border lines have also been at the centre of attention. Cohabitation of Germanic and Romance people in bilingual areas finally led – by way of the successive stages of passive knowledge of a foreign language, active mastering of both languages and passive knowledge of the ancestral language – to a new stage of monolingualism (Gysseling, 1981: 110–111). In this respect original views have been put forward by the Ghent historian L. Milis (1975, 1984). Bearing in mind the Belgian 'social language border' (the former Frenchification of the upper classes in Flanders, the former use of French in administration, education and justice) and the case of Brussels,

Milis concluded that language border shift does not so much occur in a linear or wavy movement, but rather in a nuclear way, i.e. via enclaves which after some time start to function like oil stains. Since similar enclaves are often considered to be socially superior, they subsequently turn into a reference model. Recently Banniard (1996) explained the phenomenon of language osmosis within the bilingual Merovingian empire in a similar way. The assimilation process, he says, proceeds from ‘vertical communication’ (between ‘cultivated’ and ‘less cultivated’ speakers: Latinisation of the top layer, fifth century) to ‘horizontal communication’ (mostly between mutual *illiterati*: general romanisation, eighth century).

### Genesis of the Romance–Germanic Language Border

The following reconstruction of the evolution of the language border in Belgium and northern France is mainly based on Van Durme (1983, 1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998b), all of them owing a great deal to Gysseling (1960, 1972, 1981) and further to Boileau (1971), Roelandts (1980), Tummers (1962) and Wintgens (1982). As far as the Romance–German language border at large is concerned I mostly relied on Haubrichs (1996) and Pfister (1978). More detailed information is provided by Buchmüller-Pfaff (1990), Hiegel (1983) and Simmer (1995) for Lorraine and Saarland, by Langenbeck (1967) for Alsace and by Büttner (1961), Zinsli (1974), Sonderegger (1976), Glatthard (1977) and, more recently, by Besse (1997) for Switzerland.

It may be assumed that, during the first centuries of our era, Latin was the medium of communication (administration, army, education, *villa* management) west of the Rhine and south of the Danube. The evolution of Lat. *k* before *e*, *i*, *j* shows that this was still the case for the main part of Flanders in the fourth century, in spite of a large-scale depopulation due to the Germanic invasions of the third quarter of the third century. The intensity of the Latinisation of the northern Rhine province and of the *Agri Decumates*, only incorporated in AD 73/85 and already given up around 260 when the Antonine *Limes* were broken,<sup>5</sup> is supposedly less distinct. However, this speculative hypothesis is not really reflected on the map published here (Map 1). What this map does show clearly, is that the roots of the early medieval language border are to be found in the boundary line of the late Roman Empire: both their courses are highly parallel. Since the (linear) language border is an ‘Ausgleichslinie’, the oldest ‘language border line’ is the dividing line between a (northern and eastern) strongly germanised penetration zone and a (southern and western) penetration zone with a much weaker Germanic character, which is actually much more to be considered an infiltration zone. I am putting ‘language border line’ between quotation marks, because in reality in the early Middle Ages in many places the ‘border’ is a transition zone rather than a line.<sup>6</sup> At the Sambre and the Meuse a Romance–Germanic transition area certainly existed, as can be seen from such names as Lobbes, Merbes and Flawinne. Traces of bilingualism can also be found north of the language border (zone). In present Flanders the region of Sint-Truiden is an example of a genuine early medieval Romance language island.



**Map 1** Latinitas/Romania vs. Germania

Roman Rhine-Danube Limes (1) (and Limes at the time of the *Agri Decumates*, 73/85 till ca AD 260 (2)) and Romance-Germanic language border during the early Middle Ages (3) and around 1900 (4). In some areas the oldest language border line will still have been a language border zone.

From the east to the west the earliest language border must have had approximately the following configuration: from Aachen-Vaals to Overmaas (Outre-Meuse), there is a mixed area which was Germanised later on; then there is a linear border up to Brabant (after a very early period of apparently not intensive Germanisation of the Roman Pays); comes then the Zoniënwood (Forêt de Soigne(s)) as a natural barrier; further on there is the more or less bilingual fringe of southern East Flanders plus northern Hainaut, where Romanisation did not start before 1000 and certainly not (as it is still generally assumed) under the influence of Tournai;<sup>7</sup> next there is a heavily Romance coloured zone near Outrijve-Kwaremont, lost for the Galloromania after 1100; and finally, the French Nord department, with a mixed zone between the Lys and the Deûle, and Pas-de-Calais, where the early Medieval language border reached as far as the Canche/Kwinte. Soon after the devastation of (the Dutch speaking) Quentovic (situated on this river) by the Vikings, the Romanisation of the area north of it began, particularly as a result of the annexation by the Flemish Count Arnulf I of Romance speaking territories such as Artois (932), Ponthieu with Montreuil (948) and the county of Amiens (shortly after 948). Afterwards these territories were ruled successively by the Flemish and the French.<sup>8</sup> From the ninth century onwards, northern Romance enclaves were already present and – just as in Hainaut – the economical-cultural pressure from Picardy increased to such an extent, especially after 1000 (Pfister, 1973), that this led to an unstoppable wave of

Romanisation. As I mentioned before, this wave seems to have proceeded in ‘a nuclear way’, via centres like Boulogne (already bilingual in the 12th century).

The ultimate proof of the profound Latinisation of the entire zone between the Roman *Limes* and the early language border in the first centuries of our era is provided by an almost complete cross-section of it in one particular area: the Moselle region. Due to special circumstances, the Romance vernacular persisted until the ninth century, particularly at the Middle Moselle near Bernkastel and Zell (still with Lat. *a > e*). Recent research has shown that Moselle certainly was not an area hermetically isolated from Galloromania: in the zone between the *Limes* and the early language border lots of other Romance relics and even relic landscapes can still be found, for example the Rheingental and Hochwaldromania. Also in Belgian Luxembourg and in the Grand Duchy Romance *insulae* still existed in the seventh century. Unfortunately, until now, the extent, intensity and chronology of language shift in these areas have not been sufficiently investigated. In all other areas, i.e. to the west, the process of Germanisation was generally completed at around 600. But more to the south, between Trier and Thionville/Diedenhofen, a state of bilingualism was still present in the 10th century. After 700 the ridge of the Vosges developed into a language border zone. In Switzerland the development was very complicated, mostly because of the geographical situation. The great amount of double names on both sides of the present language border suggests that the way to monolingualism has been a long one. The language border in Wallis, after the arrival of the Alemanni around 600, probably emerged in the eighth–ninth centuries. The current language border is not older than the 16th century. As in so many border areas, there too the course of the language border was influenced – at the expense of Germania – by wood clearing organised by monasteries. In its turn Retoromanche, once cut off from Galloromania by the advance of the Alemanni, had to give up a lot of territory in the course of time, especially as a result of the ‘Walserkolonisation’ (13th–14th centuries).

### Assignments for Future Research

A quarter of a century ago Milis (1975: 309–310) argued that language border research can be obstructed at two different levels, namely by the sources as well as by the subjectivity of the researcher. This statement still holds true, even today.

### The Romance–Germanic language border: A late Roman or a late prehistoric opposition?

As far as the language situation in the Low Countries and Northern Germany before the Roman Conquest is concerned, Gysseling (1960, 1964) and Kuhn (1962) replaced the Celtic of Carnoy (1948–1949) and so many others with ‘conservative Belgian’ and ‘language of the Northwest Block’, followed by a Germanisation wave during the second century BC. As I pointed out in Van Durme (1994), these views, though not perfectly watertight (see Cowan, 1976), seem to be very promising for further research, although not every researcher would agree with them. The ‘belgicist’ archaeologist De Laet (1974), the Walloon linguist Loicq and the law historian Michel (Loicq, 1993: 252; Loicq & Michel, 1996) for example, do not agree. The latter two doubt the very existence of ‘con-

servative Belgian' and may be right in doing so: they succeeded in pushing the border of Celtic place-names in southern Belgium slightly (be it not spectacularly) in a northern direction. Yet, they cannot possibly deny the existence of the second century BC Germanisation reconstructed on the basis of *p, t, k, > f, b, h* and *o > a*.<sup>9</sup> Van Loon and Wouters (1991) made this Germanisation even more plausible for the Zenne basin.

Combining the results of Loicq and Van Loon, one has to accept the rather remarkable conclusion that Caesar must have witnessed a situation opposing Celtic and Germanic in Belgium, in a territory slightly more to the south than the early medieval Romance-Germanic language border. This is the more acceptable, if one agrees that the second century BC Germanisation did not block the celtisation coming from the south (as I used to presume after comparing maps) but that both phenomena were simultaneous and interfering instead. At Caesar's arrival and also during the following decades when northern Gaul was organised as a Roman province, Celtic may well have served as a prestige language and reference model all over Belgium (to the detriment of Germanisation), in somewhat the same way Romance used to function in Belgium from the early Middle Ages onwards. This, at least, would explain the Celtic onomastic fashion among the Belgian tribal chiefs: *Ambiorix* (with *ambio*, which is not typically Celtic) and *Boduognat*. It would also account for the late prehistoric introduction of the Celtic suffix *-ācum* (> *-iācum*)<sup>10</sup> and for the trend towards adapting and spelling names in a Celto-Latin way: Heel (c. 365 copy *catualivm*), Heerlen (c. 300 copy *coriouallum*), Herwen (first century *carvio*) cf. Herve, Waal (first–fifth centuries interpol. in Caesar *vacalus*), etc.. The same occurred in names like Tenre/Dender (966 copy *tenera*) and Tournai/Doornik (c. 300 copy *turnacum*).<sup>11</sup>

The aforementioned view is based on a 'germanistic' rather than a 'celtological' approach. Both terms are preferable to 'germanophile', 'celtophile' or – even worse – 'germanomaniac' and 'celtomaniac'. 'Celtophiles' consider the Low Countries at large to be old Celtic territory, although recently the celtologist P. Schrijver (Schrijver, 1999) has restricted its geographical dimension.<sup>12</sup> The celtologic point of view on the Celtic-Germanic opposition has been expressed aptly in Loicq and Michel (1996: 238–319) and Toorians (2000).

The fact that the Celtic-Germanic opposition seems to have really existed in Caesar's time does not imply that it was a direct predisposition for the subsequent Romance-Germanic language border, even if part of the population held on to an indigenous language.<sup>13</sup> Yet, it was undoubtedly Latin the Germanic tribes were confronted with when they first entered the former Roman provinces Belgica I and II and Germania I and II in the early Middle Ages.<sup>14</sup> In this respect, I have already mentioned the Romance dialect of the Moselle region (with its strongly Celtic coloured toponyms) as proof. Even more meaningful and of greater evidential value is the configuration of both the Romance-Germanic language border and the late Roman *Limes*, the parallelism of which seems to neglect all pre-Roman predispositions.

The fact that the language border in Belgium and Northern France is not currently situated more to the south probably has to be explained by the Frankish willingness to assimilate, an attitude unlike that of the Alemanni in Switzerland (Gysseling, 1981, 110–111). On the other hand, this willingness elevated the Franks to the rank of 'pioneers of modern Europe'. Anyhow, the sudden stand-

still of the Romance-Germanic language border off current Slovenia demonstrates how ethnicity has played a real part in language border genesis: the Slavonian invaders totally erased the opulent Latin civilisation in the Danube provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia (Gamillscheg, 1951: 48–49).

### A matter of documentation

After the pioneering (mapping) work of Zimmerli (1891–1899) in Switzerland, Belgium and Northern France were the centre of language border research for quite a long time. In the second half of the 20th century *Mosella romana* (see among others Jungandreas, 1979 and Kleiber, 1980) and central language border regions like Switzerland were also subjected to in-depth investigation. From the 1980s onwards, a lot of language border research conferences have been organised as well (see among others Haubrichs & Range, 1983; Schützeichel, 1985, 1986, 1990, 1992). Currently, Saarbrücken is the most productive research centre, with prominent scholars such as the Germanist Haubrichs and the Romanist Pfister (Kleiber & Pfister, 1992). Coming from their school are Buchmüller-Pfaff (Buchmüller-Pfaff, 1990) and Besse (Besse, 1997, 2000), who studied the language border from the approach of respectively the names in *-iācum* and the so-called double names. These studies add considerably to the innovation of the discipline.

For myself, I have proceeded according to the microtoponymical method, which (as has been shown above) enabled me to reconstruct the language border genesis for a number of Belgian regions more accurately and correctly still than Gysseling and several other previous researchers. In particular, my research has revealed that so-called language islands need not necessarily be ascribed to a *substratum*. Very often it appears that, on the contrary, Carolingian or post-Carolingian colonisation is involved. This is the case in a number of Romance enclaves in South East Flanders and particularly in the large Romance enclave in the region between Aalst and Brussels, where a Romance *superstratum* of around 1050 can be presupposed. Consequently, the very existence of a ‘large medieval central Belgian bilingual zone’ has become very questionable now. Aachen-Vaals and Overmaas/Outre-Meuse, on the other hand, did constitute an old bilingual area indeed, but only until the ninth century. Together they formed a kind of peninsula, as opposed to the Sint Truiden region, which had become a real early medieval language island. In northern Hainaut, on the other hand, which in the early Middle Ages was slightly Romance, but predominantly Germanic, the final Romanisation was definitely not Carolingian, but occurred later, i.e. after 1050. Summarising, we see a large variety of scenarios where irregularity was the rule. As far as both Flemish provinces from the 9th to the 12th century are concerned, one can witness, as is the case with the Nord and Pas-de-Calais, an enormous language pressure emerging from the neighbouring Flandrian-Picardian area.

In my view future investigation will concentrate increasingly on microtoponymy.<sup>15</sup> Yet, to profit fully from the advantages of that approach new systematic corpora of reliable data from language border areas will have to be created. As far as the Low Countries are concerned, we are currently in the fortunate position that the Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde (Royal Academy for Dutch Language and Literature) in Ghent is

soon going to invest in a promising project, namely the completion and edition of the *Toponymisch Woordenboek van Oost-en Zeeuws-Vlaanderen (voor 1500)*, one of the treasures of Gysseling's gigantic scientific legacy.

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## Notes

1. Based on L. Van Durme, *Visies op het ontstaan van de Germaans-Romaanse taalgrens*. Intern werkdokument Seminarie voor Nederlandse Taalkunde – Universiteit Gent, academisch jaar 1994–1995, 11p.
2. It is now a well-known fact that one has to be really careful with a name type like *Avricourt*. Herbillon (1951) proved that it was productive until the 17th century. Equating the origin of a settlement with the origin of its name is in itself a risky venture already.
3. Not fifth century, as I first assumed following Gysseling in Van Durme (1993), also taken over in Haubrichs (1996: 569), with an inaccurate statement of the source; rectified in Van Durme (1994).
4. See the clarifying map on p. 109 of Lamarcq and Rogge (1996).
5. Cornell and Matthews (1983: 107–108, 171, 173).
6. In Gysseling's view the Belgian bilingual zone must have been rather large, see the map on p. 113 in Gysseling (1981): it comprises all of central Middle Belgium up to the Sambre-and-Meuse. In the North Gysseling extends that zone as far as Asse near Brussels, but for this region, I have suggested post-Carolingian Romance colonisation instead of Latin tradition. Gysseling moreover takes into consideration a meaningful Germanic element in the east of present Wallonia, which he regards as a transmission area for  $\bar{a}$  from German long  $\bar{a}$  (on its way from southern Germany to the Low Countries) and where he explains *-effe*, *-eppe* (vs. more western *-affe*, *-appe*) by (exclusively Germanic) umlaut.
7. Cf. (1) the isolating NS stretching forested ridge of Frasnes, and (2) the absence of typical Tournai dialecticisms in the Ath-Lessines region, as documented by the Atlas linguistique de la Wallonie.
8. Historical details in Dhondt (1950).
9. Very meaningful with respect to language relations in late prehistoric Northern Gaul are the many Germanisation scenarios as far South as an East-West line near the Somme and The Canche: the name Somme, on the basis of IE *\*som-* > Germanic *\*sam-*, preserved in the 'Celtic structure' *samarobriuae* (gen.) from Caesar, and the name Canche/Kwinte with the contiguous region name Ponthieu, from IE *\*kwontiā-* > Celtic *\*pontiā-* and Germanic *\*kwantiō-* (Kuhn, 1973: 281–282).
10. This suffix is, either because of its late appearance, or because of its continuous and traditional character, never subject to a phonetic shift (but just to completion: *-ākja-*), contrary to e.g. *-ica-* > *-e(i)hia-* in god names like *Andrusteihiae*, *Vacallinehae*.
11. Both must have a late prehistoric *þ* (Celto-Latin, Romance *t*), because otherwise the Dutch form with later *d-* could not be explained. The contrast between shifted *t-* and unshifted *-k-* in the latter form, probably going back to non-IE *\*taur(n)-*, *tur(n)-* 'height, summit' (Cowan, 1974: 233), may seem curious but actually is not for the above-mentioned reason. The form *\*þurnāco* suggests uninterrupted Germanic *traditio*.
12. According to Schrijver, continental dialects like Dutch and German were subject to strong 'Celtic influence from the Flemish-Dutch-Frisian coastal area'. He presumes that this area, just like southeast England, was Celtic speaking in the early Middle Ages (Schrijver, 1999).
13. Regarding that unsolved problem, see Schmidt (1980: 35–39).



14. These provinces had been Latinised earlier than Central Gaul, see Van Durme (1994: 29, after Schmitt, 1974).
15. The micro-toponymical method seems to be the most exhaustive and systematic means of finding a way out for many of the remaining problems. It is also the only way to get a clear understanding of how to sort out which name pairs really matter for the reconstruction of the language border genesis. I would like to illustrate this with the striking example of three double names from the Southeast Flemish village of Velzeke: (1) Velzeke (1110/32 copy ca 1177 *velseka* vs. 1212 copy ca 1280 *fauseke*, a phonetically adapted form originated in the abbey of Hasnon, dep. Nord); (2) Ruddershove (1166 *rodgershoven* vs. 1141/79 copy ca 1280 *rogiercort*, perfectly converted as a ‘translation pair’ at the same abbey); (3) Wormen (830 copy 10th cent. *de villa werminio* vs. 1212 *wormines*, a romanising form shaped after its etymological basis at the (Dutch speaking) abbey of Ninove, prov. East Flanders) (Van Durme, 1986: 213–253). Although Latin was used in Velzeke during the Roman era, Romance was never spoken or heard there in the early Middle Ages: the village lay some 20 km north of the then language border zone. In other words, in spite of the Romance doublets, none of these names is directly connected to the language border.

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# Dutch/Flemish in the North of France

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Some of the oldest sources of the Dutch language originate from the north of France, where also a lot of place names and family names give evidence of the historical presence of Dutch in that region, although it was mostly called there Flemish. It was replaced there by old French in its Picard form from the 11th century onwards. The gradual transition of language and the corresponding moving up of the language border lasted for about a thousand years. That border did not coincide with political borders, e.g. between the counties of Artesia and Flanders. After the annexation of great parts of Flanders by Louis XIV in the 16th century a slow Frenchification of what is now the *arrondissement* of Dunkirk began. But Dutch continued to play its role as a cultural language until the French Revolution. The legislation about language use in education and administration hastened the Frenchification of the upper class in the 19th century, especially in the towns. But it was not earlier than the period between the two world wars and mainly after the Second World War that the oral Flemish dialect was increasingly given up. As a result, its disappearance is imminent.

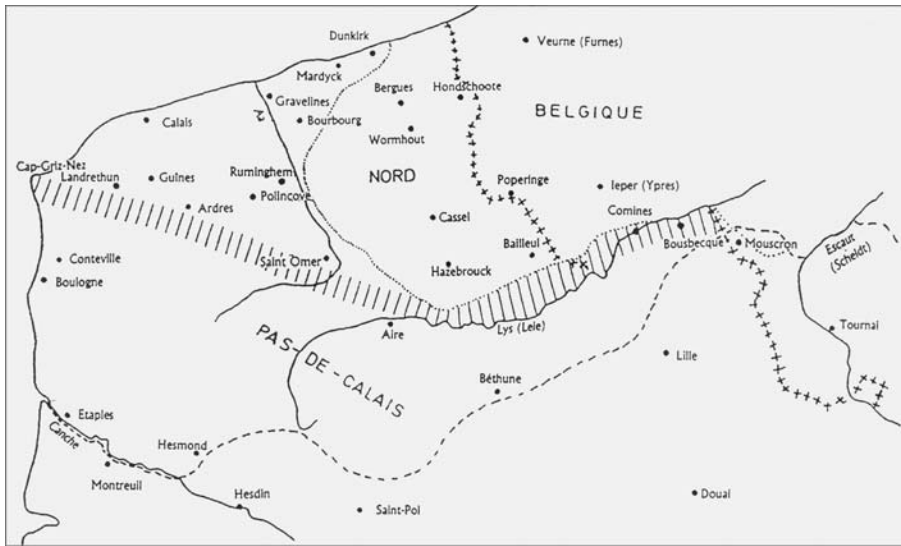
## Introduction

One of the oldest preserved sentences in Western Old Dutch, a love poem written down in Rochester in Kent in the late 11th century (the text says *Hebban olla vogala nestas hagnunman, hinasi hic anda thu* (Have all birds begun their nests except you and me)) is attributed to an author originating from what is now northern France (Gysseling, 1980: 126–130). And indeed, the northern part of the present-day French region Nord – Pas-de-Calais used to be part of the Dutch language territory or – as far as the ‘*arrondissement*’ Dunkirk in the ‘*département du Nord*’ is concerned – is still part of it today. One of the most visible and explicit signs of this belonging are the many Dutch place and family names in this northern French region.

## The Historical Retreat of Dutch from Pas-de-Calais

Those Dutch names in the Nord – Pas-de-Calais region are the last remnants of a larger Old Dutch and Middle Dutch speaking area in the Middle Ages, situated to the north of the linguistic border between Romance and Germanic languages, that had its course much further to the west and the south than today along a line that in the ninth century was going from the mouth of the Canche to just north of the city of Lille, where it coincided with the present language frontier in Belgium (Map 1). The reconstruction of the course of the original language border by M. Gysseling is founded on the respective Romance or Germanic phonetic evolution of the place-names, dating back to the seventh and eighth centuries in that bilingual region (Gysseling, 1976).

The origin of that primary language boundary seems to have been a consequence of a Late-Roman defence system along the route from Boulogne to Cologne, that had been held predominantly by hired German forces (see Lamarcq & Rogge, 1996). In addition, we must also take into account an intense Saxon colonisation in Pas-de-Calais from the fifth to the eighth century. A map of



**Map 1** The historical evolution of the language boundary in the north of France according to Gysseling (1980); Ryckeboer, 1990).

- - - Language border in the eighth century;  
 ||| language border zone in the 14th century  
 +++ state border.

the area of their colonisation (Vanneufville, 1979: 30) corresponds strikingly with the expansion in the Picard dialect of the Anglo-Saxon loanword *hoc*, *hoquet* 'dung hook' (Carton & Lebeque, 1989: map 100).

Perhaps the most striking feature of the historical and present language situation in the north of France is the steady movement of the linguistic border in favour of the Romance to the detriment of the Germanic language. That proves that the Romance varieties (namely Picard and later standard French) used to have more prestige than the Germanic ones and caused a millennial language shift. The final consequence is that the Flemish dialect, still spoken nowadays in the rural communities of the arrondissement of Dunkirk, is in danger of disappearing.

From the ninth century onwards one can observe a steady growth of Romance influence to the north of this original language boundary. The Romanisation seems to have reached the river Leie (Lys) as early as the 10th century. The city of Boulogne was bilingual up to the 12th century. One can presume that around 1300 the location of the linguistic border was situated approximately along a line that starts at the Cap-Griz-Nez, keeps to the south of Guînes, Ardres and Saint-Omer, and reaches the Leie (Lys) east of Aire. Within this region it was the towns which seem to have introduced and adopted the French language (in its regional Picard form) first. From these centres of commerce and education it radiated towards the surrounding countryside. This process went on for several centuries: Calais was bilingual until the 16th century, Saint-Omer, until the 18th

century and from that century on the Frenchification begins also in the arrondissement of Dunkirk.

The historical presence of Dutch in the northern part of Pas-de-Calais is still recognisable not only in the place names but also in the surviving of a considerable amount of Dutch substrate words in the local Picard dialect. Several maps based on the ALPic I (see Carton & Lebegue, 1989), ALF (see Gilliéron & Edmont, 1902–1910) and Poulet (1987) can demonstrate this, e.g. *clav* for ‘clover’ (ALF 1326), *bèr*, *bèrk* for ‘shed’ (ALPic I 46) (see Ryckeboer, 1997).

### Historical Evolution of the Language Situation in the Département du Nord

The official written language that succeeded Latin during the 13th century in the part of the county of Flanders lying to the east of the Aa was mainly Dutch (Beyers, 1999). Although French was the language of the nobility in Flanders, and although this language had great prestige in the social upper class, it never endangered the vernacular tongue. Dutch (or Flemish as it was called) was not only the spoken language, it was also the language of local administration and literature in the largest part of the county to the north of the language border, the so-called ‘flamingant’ Flanders. This was also the case in that western part of the county that belongs to France since the second half of the 17th century. The Flemish-speaking ‘chastellanies’ of Bergues, Bourbourg, Cassel and Bailleul were then conquered by Louis XIV and have belonged to France since the treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

The use of Dutch in official domains was restricted almost immediately after the change of power. Education continued to be mainly in Dutch during the 18th century. On the one hand, the intellectuals and men of letters in the 17th and 18th century, e.g. Michiel de Swaen of Dunkirk, clearly insist on the unity of their language with the rest of the Netherlands, especially with Holland. On the other hand, they are bilinguals and they are very well informed about the cultural and literary events in France, so that their works have often had a linking function between the French and the Dutch cultural world. Moreover, in most cities French schools were established for the French-speaking members of the army and the administration. Their presence must have played an important role in the rise of a language shift, that later proved to be irreversible. Consequently we see that by the end of the 19th century Dunkirk, Gravelines and Bourbourg and their surrounding countryside had become predominantly French (or Picard) speaking.

Yet, the linguistic situation did not change fundamentally until the French Revolution in 1789, and Dutch continued to fulfil the main functions of a cultural language during the first century of French rule in this formerly monolingual Dutch region. There was an intense literary activity in the circles of the ‘Rederijkerskamers’ (theatre companies) and the French–Flemish chambers continued to participate in contests in the Austrian Netherlands and vice versa. A teacher from Cassel, Andries Steven, wrote a manual for language instruction in 1713, the *Nieuwen Nederlandtschen Voorschriftboek*, that stayed in use for more than a century in many schools on both sides of the state border.

After the Revolution the new political ideology in France condemned all minority languages, as remnants of an old feudal society, that had to be eradicated as soon as possible. Nevertheless the teacher Pieter Andries from Bergues stated in his answer to the inquiry of Grégoire about the 'patois de France' that his language was not a dialect but 'une langue raisonnée' by which he indicated that Dutch still had the function of a cultural language (De Certeau *et al.*, 1975: 231–243).

During the 19th century, especially in the second half of it, educational legislation banned Dutch/Flemish from all levels of education (Nuyttens, 1976). As a result, Dutch gradually lost most of its functions as a cultural language. Its literary use became mostly confined to regional items for the still popular local theatre, to folklore (Edmond De Coussemaker, *Chants populaires des Flamands de France*, 1856) or just to comical tales (*Tisje Tasje's Almanak*; Moeyaert, 1978). The written language gained an increasingly regional character as it was cut off from the linguistic evolutions in Belgium and Holland, and also from the consecutive spelling reforms. In practice however the teaching of Dutch continued in many elementary schools (namely those that stayed under the influence of the clergy), and the Roman Catholic Church continued to preach and teach the catechism in Flemish in many parishes until the First World War. In this way the tradition of literacy-learning in Dutch was not completely abandoned, persisting mainly among the local clergy.

Yet, the increasing use of French implied the functional loss of the old mother tongue. The Frenchification did not immediately change the course of the language border; rather it worked from within, from the little towns, where the bourgeoisie was the first social class to give up their Flemish. As early as 1886, the parish-priest of Bierne (near Bergues), answering a dialect inquiry made by the Louvain professor P. Willems, stated that the indigenous Flemish dialect of the city of Dunkirk had almost disappeared (Ryckeboer, 1989).

This means that throughout the 19th century, a social language border existed in the département of Dunkirk, with an uneven distribution among the small towns and the villages. Although there has been almost no change in the geographical linguistic border between the French speaking and the Flemish dominated areas in the last 100 years, the ratio between the two languages within the bilingual area has changed steadily, generation after generation, to be almost completely reversed in the course of 120 years (see Vanneste, 1982). From about the interbellum in the 20th century onwards, everybody became bilingual and code-switching was practised frequently. The younger generation after the Second World War was almost exclusively educated in French and became ignorant of Flemish. The Flemish dialect became restricted almost to the middle-aged and elderly people and the passing on of the Flemish language to the next generation stopped in most families, even in the countryside, during the 1930s or 1940s (Pée, 1946, XVI–XVII). As a consequence those who still have an active knowledge of the Flemish dialect belong – with only a few exceptions – to the group of people who are 60 or older.

Neither the motivation of this social behaviour of giving up the ancestral language nor its chronological quantification have ever been the object of a sociological inquiry, but it is striking that the French-Flemish language community has hardly ever shown any social or political opposition to this Frenchification



process. Social reasons (higher education, commerce and industrialisation that all had their main attraction pools outside the Flemish-speaking area) urged the Flemish-speaking population to have a good knowledge of French. Moreover the Flemish always showed a great readiness to convergence in language use: from the moment that one member of a conversation group was unable to understand or speak Flemish, they all switched to French. And they still do so, for instance in the 'club' of elderly people, where the majority is often Flemish speaking. Since this group of Flemish-speaking people is ever diminishing and the possibilities of speaking Flemish in public have become rare, special meetings are held in some places at regular times where only Flemish is spoken (e.g. monthly in the village of Rubrouck and in the Musée Jeanne Devos in Wormhout).

### Reactions to the Official Language Policy and Language Loss

Now that the Charta of minority and regional languages in Europe has led to some discussion about the minority languages also in France, it has become clear that the Flemish minority is the minority that has had the least attention from the political or scientific side. It certainly is one of the smallest linguistic minorities in France, but the fact that the language group as a whole has behaved so calmly and never has claimed any linguistic rights in a noisy or violent way, accounts for the fact that their very existence is hardly known in France – not even in Lille, the capital of the département – by ordinary people, let alone by politicians. Even when Flemish-speaking persons get a high ranking position in the region, they usually don't even mention their linguistic background and identity.<sup>1</sup>

There was some protest from local authorities and village councils against the educational restrictions in the 19th century and even in the first decades of the 20th century, when it was still the custom to hold council meetings in Flemish. Some priests and clergymen openly neglected the prohibition to teach the catechism in Flemish and bravely supported a sanction, but a public protest was not formulated during the 20th century except for a repeated demand in 1910 and 1921 by the priest-deputy, mayor of Hazebrouck, Jules Lemire to teach the mother tongue. Yet, that was declined on the basis of 'antipatriotism'. It is characteristic that German in Alsace and Flemish or Dutch in French Flanders were excluded from the Deixonne law that regulated the teaching of minority languages in 1951.

Possible 'help' from abroad (Wood, 1980) has hardly ever been successful. In both world wars the German occupants tried to exploit the frustrations concerning the French language policy in favour of their own policy. The fact that the leader of the Flemish Movement in France, the priest Jean Marie Gantois, openly defended the collaboration with the Nazis, compromised all Flemish linguistic or cultural claims after the second World War. The attempts of the Belgian *Komitee voor Frans-Vlaanderen* (Committee for French-Flanders) to preserve the language by organising free courses of Modern Dutch, was able to arouse some interest for this language, but not to stop the language shift from dialect to French. It was not until the 1970s that the climate changed under the impulse of a movement that was more socialist and ecologist of motivation, and that the vernacular language got new interest: the launching of a manual: *Vlaemsch leeren* [Learning Flemish] and the struggle for the legalising of a

regional broadcasting association *Radio Uylenspiegel* finally changed the climate. In 1977 the *Reuzekoor* was founded in Dunkirk, an association that revitalised the traditional folk songs in both Flemish and French. In order to get the singers accustomed to the Flemish language a Flemish course was launched that in 1992 led to a textbook by Jean Louis Marteel: *Cours de Flamand* (Flemish Course; Marteel, 1992). The culminating point was the 'Université Populaire' of 1981, a meeting of all groups and associations concerned in Hazebrouck. They edited a manifest which stated, among other things, the following:

we urge that measures be taken, especially on a regional basis, to preserve (better than before) the undamaged environment and the cultural heritage of French-Flanders, viz.: landscapes, picturesque or historical places, works of art, technical or everyday objects, archives, etc. We also want more money to be invested in order to perform these tasks and in order to correct some mistakes of the past.

The French-Flemings also insist that their right to use their own language be recognised and implemented. They demand that the Flemish dialect, spoken or understood by some 150,000 people in the 'Westhoek', no longer be considered an allogenous language, but be acknowledged as one of the mother tongues of French citizens. Consequently, they want that particular language to be used in preschool and primary school education. It has to be taught to children in order to give them the opportunity to fully develop in their ancestral language and to acquire a mastery (during secondary education) of the Dutch standard language to which their Flemish dialect belongs and which is the mother tongue of 22 million of Europeans across our border.

In 1982 under the first Mitterand government the Minister of Education Savary launched a 'circulaire' that created possibilities for the teaching of the regional languages in France. The association *Tegaere Toegaen* ('Advance together') was able to get the teaching of the Flemish dialect launched in several elementary schools and the teaching of *Langue et Culture flamande* in several secondary schools (the collèges of Grande-Synthe, Steenvoorde, Hondshoote, Wormhout, Bourbourg and Cassel). But this early success didn't last for long and five years later this kind of instruction had almost disappeared. On the other hand the teaching of Dutch as a foreign language and 'the language of the neighbours' was gradually introduced and is now officially sustained by an agreement between the national school authorities and the 'Nederlandse Taalunie' (the intergovernmental Dutch-Belgian organisation that promotes the common interests in the Dutch language). This is the case, for example in the 'bilingual instruction' in the schools of the border towns Wervicq-Sud and Bailleul (Belle) (see Halink, 1991; Van Hemel & Halink, 1992).

This kind of language teaching, however, is mainly inspired by economic motivation and is not intended to cope with possible regionalist claims. This situation has led to a smouldering conflict between the supporters of the local Flemish and those who support the teaching of Standard Dutch. The first ones have tried to prove that the Flemish dialect had already grown into a language apart from Dutch from the 16th century on (Sansen, 1988), which is false, whereas

the teaching of Dutch as a modern language has hardly succeeded in making the link with the local linguistic heritage.

### Characteristics of the Flemish dialect in France

The Flemish dialect spoken in French Flanders structurally belongs to the West Flemish dialect group. Most dialect maps do not show a break along the state border. On the contrary, most isoglosses cross the state border and only a few follow its course (see Ryckeboer, 1977, Maps 1 and 2). Apparently the actual state border, dating back to 1713, does not correspond to any old dividing line in human communication, otherwise it would have caused an important bundle of isoglosses. Only the political separation of the last 300 years has caused this border to become a secondary dialect boundary.

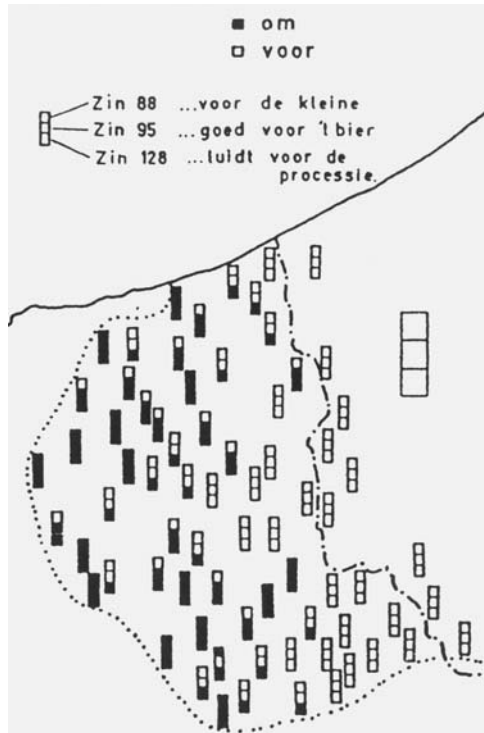
However, although the French Flemish dialect does not differ essentially from the other West Flemish dialects, it has at least two idiosyncratic features: (1) as a result of its peripheral position in the Dutch-speaking area and also because of its national and cultural separation it contains some typically western or coastal elements often called inguaeonisms and it has conserved many archaic elements which have disappeared elsewhere. This goldmine of archaism results from the fact that it has not participated in evolutions that have taken place in the Belgian Flemish dialects under the influence of Brabantic varieties or of the Dutch Standard language; (2) through this long separation from other Dutch dialects and the Dutch standard language, it has also developed local innovations. The most characteristic ones are due to its long contact with the neighbouring Picard dialect or Standard French.

Many of the so-called inguaeonisms or some particular Middle Dutch phonological, morphological or lexical features that survive in French Flanders are only to be found in the utmost western part of that area. Examples of inguaeonism are e.g. the delabialisation of short *u* to [ɛ] in *brigge* for Dutch *brug* (bridge) or the pronunciation [wei] for Dutch *weg* (compare English *away*). Some Middle Dutch phonological, morphological or lexical elements that survive in French Flanders are: the omission of final *-n* in verbs, nouns and adverbs ending in *-en*, the preterite ending *-ede* in weak verbs, and the persistence of mediaeval Dutch words such as *moude* for 'dusty earth' (see WVD part I, fascicule 1, p. 87). The survival of archaic elements can occur in any dialect, but nowadays they are often confined to French Flanders only, e.g. *zole* for 'plough' (see WVD part 1, fascicule, *Ploegen*, p. 1).

### Alienation from Other Dutch Dialects and Common Dutch by Communicative Isolation

Older linguistic innovations coming from the east were still able to cross the state border, but often only to a limited extent, so that the archaism only occurs in the utmost western part of French Flanders. A good example is the map of the substitution of the preposition 'om' (see Map 2).

Although the state border obviously did not prevent all local contact across the border, the linguistic influence from Belgium has become very weak and restricted all the same. Some word maps of the *Woordenboek van de Vlaamse Dialecten* (WVD, Dictionary of the Flemish Dialects) enable us to reconstruct the relative chronology of these diminishing contacts and influences. Barbed wire,



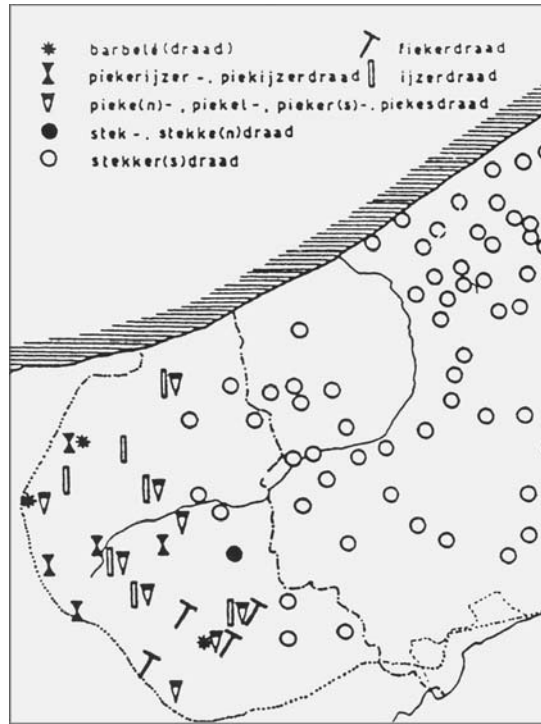
**Map 2** Substitution of the older preposition *om* by *voor* in the western Flemish dialects, except in a part of French Flanders (Ryckeboer, 1983: Map 3)

for instance, was introduced into the region about 1880. The typical West Flemish name for it is *stekkerdraad*. This new word was only able to penetrate into a narrow strip along the border. The inner part of French Flanders had already been cut off from West Flemish influence. However, at the time the local dialect in this inner part was still vital enough to create new words for the new thing, such as *pieker-* or *fiekerdraad*. The increasing influence of French is also clear from the loan translation *ijzerdraad* (from Fr. *fil de fer*) and the loan word *barbelé* (*draad*) (see Map 3).

Recent Belgian changes, even in traditional agricultural vocabulary have not often been able to cross the state boundary. A typical example is the name for the threshing floor in the barn. In Belgian Flanders a Brabant word *dorsvloer* has been laid over an older Flemish *schurevloer* during the last century, but this evolution decidedly stops at the state border (see WVD I, 2 Behuizing: 419).

The communicative isolation led to the expansion of some local characteristics to the whole area of French Flanders, so that the state border became a secondary dialect border in some respect. A phonological example of indigenous evolution is the change from older *sk* to [ʃ]. Even in 1880, L. De Bo, the author of the West Flemish Dialect Dictionary, noticed that the state border acted as the boundary for this phenomenon (see Taeldeman, 1996: 152).

An example of morphological evolution is the generalisation of the weak preterite ending *-ste* from the praeterito-praesentia to all weak verbs. This evolution



**Map 3** Denominations for 'barbed wire' in French Flanders (WVD I, fascicule 1, Akkerland en Weiland: 151)

stopped a few kilometres short of the state border, except in the neighbourhood of Steenvoorde, where it even crossed the border to Watou in Belgium.

### Linguistic Innovations in the Flemish Dialect from Language Contact with French

As a consequence of the retreat of the linguistic border during many centuries over the north of Pas-de-Calais and the arrondissement of Dunkirk generations and generations of bilinguals practised code-switching and consequently mixed up elements of the two languages. Vestiges of the influence of substrate Flemish on the Picard dialect in the north of Pas-de-Calais and by extension in the whole region are quoted in Callebaut and Ryckeboer (1997) and in Ryckeboer (1997).

As Picard and later French were the languages with the greater prestige,<sup>2</sup> borrowing from these languages into Flemish was more important than vice versa. As early as 1886 a schoolmaster from Armboutscappel, filling out the Willems dialect inquiry, calls his language 'a terrible jargon, a mixture of Flemish and French' (Ryckeboer, 1989).

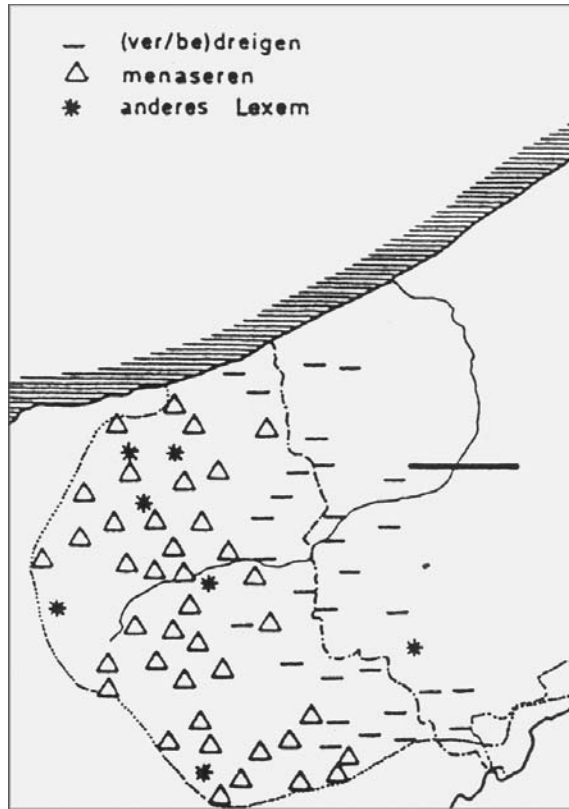
Vandenberghe (1998) investigated a corpus of French Flemish dialect conversations, that were registered during the 1960s. It comes as no surprise that she was able to demonstrate a much larger linguistic interference (both lexical and grammatical) of French in the Flemish dialect in France than in the neighbouring West Flemish on the Belgian side of the border. Only half of the lexical loans recorded in France were also known to be used in Belgium (303 out of 611, to be

exact). An example of the penetration of many French loanwords is the rendering of the concept 'to threaten'. The original Flemish (*be-/ ver-)dreigen* has been replaced by the loan-word *menasser*, except in a small strip along the Belgian border (see Map 4). But the most revealing outcome was that in French Flanders far fewer loanwords are phonetically or morphologically adapted to the Flemish dialect: out of a total of 228 adapted loan words, 184 (80%) are also known in West Flanders; but out of a total of 383 non-adapted loan words, only 119 (30%) are also known in Belgium. Moreover the domains are significant: they belong to e.g. modern agricultural techniques (*écèrèmeuse, veleuse, inséminateur*), modern medicine (*tumeur*), education (*composition*), modern jobs (*assistant social*), modern apparatuses and structures (*appareil de photo, coup de téléphone, feuille d'impôts, marché commun*), etc. Even the Flemish denominations for animals that have become rare (and that consequently are known only from books) have disappeared: the swan is called a *cygne* and no longer *zwaan* (see WVD III, 1, Vogels); the tortoise (Dutch/Flemish *schildpad*) is known only as *tortue* (see WVD III, 2 Land en Waterfauna). The adapted loan words, however, mostly refer to the world of a traditional, even old-fashioned way of life, and the concepts referred to date back to a period when French still had very much the same prestige on both sides of the state border (e.g. *bassing, baskule, dokter, sinteure*, etc.). For the concepts where on the French side, unadapted loanwords from the French standard are used, mostly standard Dutch words will be used on the Belgian side (*moissonneuse batteuse – pikdorser; conseil municipal – gemeenteraad*, whereas the archaic common dialect word for the latter was 'de wet').

The very profound influence of spoken French on the Flemish dialect in France is also reflected in the use of many loan adverbs that are unknown in Belgian West Flemish, especially those ending in *-ment*, such as *extrêmement, complètement*, and other adverbs and interjections, often used as phrase markers in French, such as (*et) puis, bien entendu, d'abord, quoi?*, etc. Many conjunctions are also borrowed from the French language, such as: *puisque (dat), parce que, soit*. They are totally unknown in Belgian dialects (with the exception of *tandis que*, which used to be very common in Belgian West Flemish as well). In addition a number of prepositions that consist of a partial translation of a French prepositional group are used in French Flemish, but never in Belgian West Flemish, such as *à force van, grâce van*.

The Flemish dialect in France also shows syntactic characteristics that reflect both the age-old influence of French and the absence of influence from more eastern Dutch, especially Brabantic, dialects. It appears from many inquiries, especially from the corpus of recorded conversations which Vandenberghe investigated, that extra-position of some adverbial complements and even inherent complements is very common in French Flemish. This is impossible in Standard Dutch and less common in the neighbouring Belgian Flemish dialects as well (see Vanacker, 1973).

Another syntactic feature of the French Flemish dialect is the almost complete absence of inversion (for 97%) after topicalisation of a non-subject constituent. (I have also observed this phenomenon in a chronicle of 1813 written by a French Flemish Napoleon soldier from Winnezele – Ryckeboer & Simon, 2001.) Data collected before the second World War for the West Flemish Dialect Atlas (Pée, 1946) showed 76% absence of inversion in Belgian West Flemish (Vanacker,



**Map 4** French loanword *menasseren* instead of Flemish *(ver-, be)dreigen* ‘threaten’ (Ryckeboer, 1990: Map 10)

1967). Nowadays it is even less heard there, under the influence of the central Belgian regiolects and the Dutch standard language. We may conclude, therefore, that the state border has become a clear linguistic border not only as far as the lexicon but also as far as syntax is concerned.

### Flemish in France: A Case of Language Death

Summarising, it is obvious that the status of Dutch/Flemish in northern France has become very critical: it does not enjoy even the slightest form of official recognition and its use has become so marginal, even in the rural parts of the country (in the towns it has almost completely vanished), that one can expect its extinction within a few decades. An urgent task is to support it culturally and to valorise the still existing knowledge for linguistic and historical research.

Also, a general sociolinguistic inquiry is still lacking. During the 1970s and 1980s some local or partial inquiries were carried out that provided some data on the linguistic situation (Ryckeboer, 1976; Röhrig 1987; Ryckeboer & Maeckelberghe, 1987). The latter investigation carried through in the small border town of Hondshoote showed clearly that an almost total language shift had taken place over the last three or four generations. The grandparents of the pupils investigated spoke French to 36%, Flemish to 38% as well as both

languages to each other. In the next generation of parents, born between 1932 and 1952, French was used as the exclusive family language in 75% of the cases. The remaining quarter used Flemish alongside with French, yet almost never with the children. With a few rare exceptions the pupils themselves spoke nothing but French, although their passive knowledge of Flemish still seemed to be considerable. Half of the parents claimed to understand Flemish as did a quarter of the pupils. These data indicate that women gave up Flemish earlier than men – which is a common feature of feminine behaviour when less prestigious language varieties are at stake – but above all that extremely few youngsters are still familiar with Flemish. The answers on attitudinal questions reveal that 82% of the parents did not consider it worthwhile to pass on Flemish to the next generation, but that an equal amount of youngsters thought the opposite. Such attitudes are typical for a society confronted with imminent language death (Willemyns, 1997). Yet, 16 years later bilingualism continues to exist in the region and contacts with the Dutch speaking Belgian neighbours can still incite some interest in both the own linguistic heritage and the language and culture of the Belgian and Dutch neighbours.

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### Notes

1. This was the case e.g. when Noël Josephé, born in the border-village of Boeschepe, became the first 'président du Conseil régional' in 1981. Although his mastery of the Flemish dialect was excellent, he never mentioned or used it in public, except perhaps in local pre-election meetings.
2. In wealthy families in the former Flemish speaking part of what is now French Flanders it was the custom that the children went to Lille or Saint-Omer for some time to learn French. The mystic author Maria Petyt from Hazebrouck (1623–1677) writes in her autobiography that she was sent to Saint-Omer at the age of 11 to learn French.

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# The Dutch-French Language Border in Belgium

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This article is restricted to a description of language border fluctuations in Belgium as far as its Dutch-French portion is concerned. After a brief description of the so-called 'language question' in Belgium the notion of language border is discussed in general. Then comes an overview of the status and function of the language border in Belgium and of the actual language border fluctuations as they have occurred up to the present day. Two problem areas: the 'Voerstreek' and the Brussels suburban region are discussed in more detail. Afterwards language shift and change through erosion in Brussels are analysed as well as the part played in that process by linguistic legislation, language planning and sociolinguistic developments. Finally a typology of language border change is drawn up and the patterns of change are identified in order to explain and account for the almost unique nature of the Belgian portion of the Romance-Germanic language border.

## 1. Introduction

Belgium (approximately 10 million inhabitants) is a trilingual and federal country, consisting of four different entities constituted on the basis of language: the Dutch-speaking community (called Flanders; 58% of the population), the French speaking one (called Wallonia; 32%), the small German speaking community (0.6%) and the Dutch-French bilingual community of Brussels (9.5%). Since regional governments have legislative power, the frontiers of their jurisdiction, being language borders, are defined in the constitution (Willemys, 1988).

The Belgian portion of the Romance-Germanic language border is quite remarkable for mainly two main reasons: (1) its status and function have changed considerably since the country came into existence; (2) its present status and function are almost unique as compared to all the other portions under consideration. Because of that it has frequently caught the attention (and imagination) of scientists of various disciplines (although, for a long time, mainly of historians; Lamarq & Rogge, 1996). It often served as a *pars pro toto* for the Romance-Germanic border as a whole and many researchers have tried to explain its genesis based on its Belgian portion (see Van Durme in this volume).

A real breakthrough has only been achieved from the moment linguists have entered the debate. Maurits Gysseling in particular is to be mentioned in this respect because of his idea to use the oldest linguistic sources available (including toponyms) and for the skill displayed in doing so. His work is now being continued – with no less skill – by his former student Luc van Durme (there are references on the work of both in Van Durme's article in this volume).

This article is restricted to a description of language border fluctuations in Belgium as far as its Dutch-French portion is concerned. Language contact in Brussels is treated in Treffers-Daller, and the trilingual contact between German, French and Dutch in Belgium's eastern part in Nelde and Darquennes, both in this volume.

## 2. The Language Border and the so-called 'Language Question' in Belgium

The 'language struggle' which was going to dominate Belgian political life started shortly after 1830, the year in which Belgium had become an independent constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system dominated by the bourgeois elite, and which secured its position by adopting a poll-tax system (out of 3.5 million people, only 46,000 had the right to vote; Witte & Van Velthoven, 1998). Although the new constitution provided for 'linguistic freedom', it was obvious that this 'freedom' was profitable only to the rich and the powerful, i.e. to the bourgeoisie from Wallonia and Flanders, all of whom were French speakers. For this bourgeoisie, French was a natural choice as the language of the state. The government appointed only French-speaking civil servants and the discrimination of Dutch throughout the 19th century was general and very deliberate, despite the fact that Dutch speakers constituted the majority of the population. There is no room here to elaborate on the genesis of this situation (for more information see Van de Craen & Willemyns, 1988).

A so-called Flemish Movement started up almost immediately and fought a long-lasting battle for cultural and linguistic rights for Dutch speakers. It took until 1889 for the '*gelijkheidswet*' to declare Dutch and French the two official languages of the country. Afterwards things developed faster: two sets of laws in 1932 and 1963 guaranteed what had been the ultimate goal of the Flemish Movement, i.e. the official and complete 'Dutchification' of Flanders. The Walloons having been opposed to widespread bilingualism throughout the country, Belgium gradually turned to the territoriality principle model to accommodate its various linguistic groups. It officialised the language frontier as a domestic administrative border, made it virtually unchangeable and accomplished the linguistic homogeneity of the language groups and regions.

The Belgian language struggle has never been an exclusively linguistic problem but has always been intertwined with social and political issues as well. Yet, a considerable change in nature is to be discerned from the early 1960s onward when the language problems were replaced by so-called 'community problems' and the border between Wallonia and Flanders ceased to be a mere linguistic one in order to become a social one as well. This can be accounted for by major domestic economic changes. From the late 1950s onwards a dramatic industrial development was witnessed in Flanders, turning this formally agricultural territory into a highly industrialised region, largely dominating the domestic political, social and economic scene. At the same time the outdated industrial equipment of Wallonia was slowly breaking down, giving way to a serious economic recession from which it has not yet recovered. In 1996 74.5% of the industrial gross added value was generated in the Flemish region (58% of Belgium's population). Consequently, the cultural and linguistic balance of power shifted towards Flanders (Willemyns, 1992). The present-day social and economic imbalance between Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia is to be considered potentially disruptive for the continuation of Belgium's existence, since it requires a considerable amount of so-called 'solidarity transfers' from Flanders to Wallonia (for 80%) and from Flanders to Brussels (for 20%). Most of these transfers occur in the field of social security financing (De Boeck, 1999).

Revisions of the constitution in 1970 and 1980 provided for cultural autonomy and a considerable amount of self-determination for the linguistically divided parts of the country. Subsequent constitutional changes in 1988 and 1993 finally turned Belgium into the federal country it is now (Alen & Suetens, 1993).

### 3. Language Borders

The notion of ‘language border’ which is essential in this paper and in this volume is not easy to define. As is often the case with, for example, the related notion of ‘dialect border’, it might even be argued that language borders do not actually exist, since it is obvious that language areas are but seldom separated by a clear-cut line. Usually, there is some kind of transitional zone between them, and a demarcation line, therefore, will always have a somewhat arbitrary character. Moreover, it is obvious that in transition zones a social variable, rather than a geographic one, may be decisive for linguistic ‘affiliation’. Dialect-geographers are very familiar with such problems and to cope with them they tend to make use not so much of a theoretical but of a practical solution, which may differ from one region to another. In this paper too, the various kinds of language contact under investigation will be decisive for the particular use which is made of the concept of ‘language border’.

Yet, both in a historical and a contemporary sense, it may be necessary to refer to what Goossens (1968) calls an ‘intuitive consensus’ on language borders. In the case of French-Flanders for example, there is a general consensus among scholars to consider the isogloss used in dialect-geographic studies as *the* language border between the Romance and the Germanic dialects in the region (it is reproduced in, among others, Pée, 1957). The same applied to Belgium up to 1963, the year in which the language border was laid down by law. From then onward the notion of ‘language border’ is used in a sociolinguistic sense, meaning that it separates two regions in which either Dutch or French is the official language, disregarding any possible bilingual communication which may actually occur in the transition zone: the language border coincides with the border separating two administrative entities.

As regards the changes which are discussed in this paper, two essentially different types have to be discerned (Willemys, 1996): (1) language shift resulting in a change of the location of the border, meaning that places which used to be part of the transition zone have, in the course of time, definitely moved into the monolingual zone on either side of the border; (2) language shift resulting in ‘erosion’, meaning that the contact situation has decisively been changed in the course of history although the ‘language border’ (in the traditional sense) has not changed its course. Since in Belgium the constitutional notion of language border not only refers to the demarcation lines between monolingual territories but also to the demarcation lines between monolingual and officially bilingual zones, ‘erosion’ is also used to characterise a decisive change of the situation within bilingual zones.

## 4. Status and Function of the Language Border in Belgium

### 4.1 General observations

Although the language border has existed for centuries, no solid information prior to the 19th century is available as far as the territory of present-day Belgium is concerned.

In 1846, the recently established Kingdom of Belgium started conducting censuses including a question on language usage which provided statistical information until 1947 (De Metsenaere, 1998). For various reasons the information gathered this way is often inaccurate: the exact wording of the questions was changed from one census to another and, more importantly, two basic requirements for reliable information gathering, namely honest intentions and scientific support, were hardly ever met, as has been convincingly demonstrated by Gubin (1978).

The most important insight yielded by the first census (1846) is that the administrative division of the country into provinces, 'arrondissementen' (counties) and even communes had been carried out without taking into account the language border and had never intended to provide for more or less linguistically homogeneous administrative entities. On the other hand, the information yielded perfectly allowed to draw a language map showing a border line neatly separating the French- (i.e. Walloon dialect) speaking and the Dutch- (i.e. Flemish dialect) speaking communities. For almost a century (and in spite of the deficient methodology) there were (with the exception of Brussels) no significant differences from one census to another (Martens, 1975), a fact demonstrating the remarkable stability of Belgium's linguistic communities.

### 4.2 The territoriality principle

A dramatic change occurred from 1932 onward, the year in which the language border became a political issue. A century of struggle by the Vlaamse Beweging ['Flemish Movement'] in favour of the promotion of Dutch in a country up to then dominated by French speakers had finally resulted in extensive linguistic legislation bringing about the *de facto* acceptance of the territoriality principle (McRae, 1975), which implied that Flanders was to be governed exclusively in Dutch and Wallonia exclusively in French. To implement this decision, though, a precise legal description of the delimitation of these territories, in other words of the language border, was needed. Although the 1932 laws did not provide such a description, it held a provision that communes with a linguistic minority of at least 30% were to be governed bilingually and that, should a minority become the majority, the linguistic status of the commune was to change accordingly. This seems to be fair enough, were it not that the only means of acquiring the information needed was the census which thus, unfortunately, acquired important political significance.

The first census with these political implications was scheduled for 1940 but was postponed because of World War II and when in 1947 it was finally carried out it resulted in an outburst of political commotion. Contrasting heavily with the stability the returns had shown for more than a century, it appeared that this time not only notorious shifts were registered but that they all went in the same direction: many Dutch-speaking villages appeared to harbour so many French

speakers, that they turned into either bilingual or even French-speaking communes (Martens, 1975). Since fraudulent manoeuvring by (local and/or national) authorities was very apparent, the Flemish reaction was extremely vigorous and the government was finally forced to skip language questions from future census questionnaires altogether and to look for a political solution which might, once and for all, determine the language border between the communities. A law to this effect came into being on 1 September 1963 and since its underlying philosophy was to produce linguistically homogeneous administrative entities, several adjustments had to be made, transferring 25 communes with 87,450 inhabitants from Flanders to Wallonia and 24 communes with 23,250 inhabitants from Wallonia to Flanders (detailed information in Martens, 1975 and Deweerdt, 1998).

### 4.3 Problem areas

Another provision of the 1963 law was the instalment of communes with so-called ‘faciliteiten’ [linguistic facilities] (De Schryver, 1998), meaning that if a community harboured a considerable linguistic minority (on 1 September 1963), provisions were to be made enabling this minority to communicate in its own language with communal authorities and to obtain limited possibilities for instruction in its own language. This status was allotted to a restricted number of communes on both sides of the language border. The major provision, though, meant to put minds at rest, was that after 1 September 1963, changes in the linguistic status of communes and provinces became virtually impossible and could only be brought about through a very complicated procedure of changing the constitution. On top of a two-thirds majority required for any constitutional change, those with ‘linguistic implications’ require a majority within both language factions of the Belgian parliament. Almost everywhere this peace of mind was indeed brought about; two notorious exceptions, the so-called ‘Voerstreek’ and the Brussels suburban region (the so-called ‘Randgemeenten’) will now be treated in some more detail.

#### 4.3.1 *The Voerstreek*

The *Voerstreek* is part of the so-called ‘Land van Overmaas’, a small territory situated between the major cities of Aachen (Germany), Maastricht (The Netherlands) and Liège (Wallonia, Belgium). During the ‘ancien régime’ Dutch was the language of instruction and administration in the whole Overmaas territory (Goossens, 1998), but subsequently both a ‘Germanifying’ and a ‘Frenchifying’ tendency had become apparent. Also, it has always been almost impossible to distinguish between ‘Dutch’ and ‘German’ dialects in the region, on the basis of purely linguistic criteria (Nelde, 1979: 41).

From the end of World War I onward, when the Eupen region, a former Prussian possession, was annexed by Belgium, the 17 ‘Overmaas’ communes were part of three different linguistic regimes (Goossens, 1998). Two of them (called *Altbelgien* and *Neubelgien*) will not be dealt with here, since they are analysed by Nelde and Darquennes in this volume.

This leaves us with the six communes of the *Voerstreek* which gained political celebrity and a wretched reputation during recent decades (Murphy, 1988). Subject to both the Frenchification process which also affected the other

communes in the region and to Walloon immigration, they turned out a linguistically mixed region with a French-speaking minority. For that reason the 1963 law transferred them from the Walloon province of Liège to the Flemish province of Limburg. Since, however, they are not geographically linked to the latter province and are/were dependent, for various economic functions, on Liège, some of its inhabitants were not very happy with this transfer. This uneasiness has been exploited by Walloon activists, causing political commotion ever since. Yet, both Flemish determination and recent changes in the constitution which put the 'Voerstreek' firmly under the authority of the autonomous government of Flanders seem to have lessened political tension a good deal. Wynants (1980) explains why, even for autochthonous inhabitants, the established triglossic situation of old – Dutch dialect for informal communication; Standard Dutch in primary schools and in church; French in secondary education and part of the administration – was finally disturbed and eventually changed because of political attitudes. From 1964 to 2000 the political faction advocating a return to the Francophone province of Liège managed to secure an, ever diminishing, majority in the local city council. As a result of the latest communal elections (October 2000) though, the opposite faction came into power. Consequently, a return to Liège is no longer on the political agenda of Voeren's city council and of the majority of its inhabitants. A recent and extensive analysis of the present situation as well as its genesis is to be found in Vandermeeren (1996).

#### 4.3.2 The Brussels suburban region

The 1963 law also affected the status of some suburbs in the Brussels region where the officially bilingual territory is restricted to 19 communes which together constitute Brussels as a political entity. Ongoing Frenchification of Brussels which is discussed below, also affected some of its suburbs. Mostly because of immigration of French speakers but also partly because of upward social mobility behaviour affecting part of the autochthonous population some of these communes lost their former exclusively Dutch-speaking character and pressure was put on consecutive governments to annex them to bilingual Brussels (Sieben, 1993). Yet, surrendering to Francophone demands was politically unfeasible and, afterwards, made constitutionally impossible. Some of these suburbs, though, appeared to harbour not only important French-speaking minorities but in some cases even *de facto* majorities. Six of them, Drogenbos, Kraainem, Linkebeek, Sint-Genesius-Rode, Wemmel and Wezenbeek-Oppem, officially received a 'faciliteiten'-system (De Witte 1975; Witte 1993a) but remained part of Flanders and, consequently, officially Dutch-speaking. This way the risk of Francophone overspill to other than these six communes had been considerably diminished and recent evolution shows a significant decrease of Francophone influence in all of the hinterland communes, as was demonstrated in research by Deschouwer and Mariette (1993). The most recent constitutional change of 1993 also provided for the split of the province of Brabant as from 1 January 1995, cutting the Brussels periphery for good from the capital itself (Detant, 1998). This may very well bring to a conclusion in the near future a process which is to be discerned all along the language border, namely the increasing homogeneity of the language territory through assimilation of minority language islands.



#### 4.4 Pattern of fluctuation

What we have been witnessing in the ‘Voerstreek’ and the Brussels hinterland is not a fluctuation of the language border, but an erosion within Flemish borders, due to the sociological mechanism of ‘upward social mobility and integration’ and to Francophone immigration. Actually, the villages mentioned earlier are the only incidence of places really shifting from one community to the other.

#### 4.5 Language contacts across the border

As far as linguistic parallels and mutual influence on both sides of the linguistic border are concerned, some research has been done in the course of time, but the subject has never been extremely popular. The influence of French on the evolution of Dutch is undeniable and a logical consequence of a language in contact situation which has existed for centuries. The opposite phenomenon, although less prominent, has been established as well. An overview of research in both fields is to be found in Willemyns (1997a). There is also a (limited) tradition of research into mutual influence of dialects and dialect phenomena in Flanders and Wallonia, most of it conducted before World War II. In more recent times A. Weijnen is one of the most prominent names in this field (e.g. Weijnen, 1964). A recent overview with a discussion of case studies and possible explanations for similar linguistic developments on both sides of the Flemish-Walloon dialect borders is given in De Schutter (1999).

Both cases mentioned pertain to the field of historical linguistics, that is, the study of mutual influence due to the extremely long duration of language contact and demonstrable in language change that occurred a long time ago. The same goes for so-called ‘gallicisms’ in Dutch and ‘flandricisms’ in French, as they are spotted and denounced by purists on both sides of the border. Those too have been existing for ages but it is not known to what extent the phenomenon is still productive.

Apart from the bilingual Brussels region (see Treffers-Daller in this volume) there has not been, to my knowledge, any substantial research on linguistic contact phenomena in the present time.

### 5. Brussels

#### 5.1 General observations

Language shift in Brussels, spectacular though it may have been, is also a shift not affecting the language border as such. Here too, the pattern of fluctuation shows an erosion within the Dutch linguistic territory eventually rendering a city which used to be part of Flanders (*à part entière*) into a bilingual city with Francophone dominance. From a judicial point of view, though, a shift did nevertheless occur, since Brussels changed its status from (*de facto*) monolingual Dutch into (*de jure*) bilingual. Yet, there is not and there cannot be an answer to the apparently simple question of how many speakers are to be attributed to the Dutch or French speaking groups respectively (Baetens Beardsmore, 2000). The portrait of Brussels is one of immense complexity (Mackey, 1981) involving not only linguistic background and competence but also attitudes, social status, job

conditions, circumstances of discourse, feelings towards the interlocutor, etc.; in a word all of the sociolinguistic variables which are known to determine linguistic interaction in multilingual settings (Willemyns, 1997 and Treffers-Daller in this volume).

## 5.2 Language shift

Until the 19th century Brussels shared its linguistic fate with other Flemish cities: an important part of the social elite was bilingual and used French for most of the traditional culture language functions. The competence of the majority of the population was restricted to a Dutch dialect; other varieties of Dutch were only at the disposal of the few (De Vriendt & Willemyns, 1987). This situation existed in most Flemish cities and there was neither a typological nor a quantitative difference between the situation in Brussels and in other cities such as Antwerp, Ghent or Bruges. Consequently, since Frenchification was stopped and eventually reversed in Flanders but not in Brussels, an explanation can only be found in factors specific to the Brussels situation.

### 5.2.1 Historical development

Ever since the start of the Burgundian period in the 15th century (De Vries *et al.*, 1995: 50 ff.), Brussels has been a capital and consequently the number of courtiers, noblemen and influential government officials and civil servants has always been larger than elsewhere. It is precisely in these groups of people that the influence (and usage) of French has always been the most important (Witte, 1988, 1993).

Frenchification after the annexation by France was more intensive here than elsewhere in Flanders, not the least because of the presence of an influential group of French immigrants (Deneckere, 1954). After 1830, Brussels emerged as a symbol of Belgium and here the 'one country, one language' principle appeared to be more appropriate still than elsewhere. The strongly centralising Belgian policy, moreover, resulted in a disproportional high concentration of the country's financial and industrial power in the Francophone 'milieu' of the capital. Since power and wealth essentially derived from Walloon industry it is hardly surprising that the elite particularly favoured this region and its language.

At rather short notice Brussels became a pole of attraction to numerous immigrants from both the Dutch and the French-speaking parts of the country. In Brussels as well as in its suburbs there was an explosion of the population. Between 1830 and 1840 the population quadrupled (De Metsenaere & Witte, 1990: 3). Flemish immigrants mostly consisted of lower-class and poor people, whereas Walloon immigrants mostly consisted of upper-working-class and middle-class people (De Metsenaere, 1988). The latter immediately fortified the Francophone population. As to the former: 'the pressure from the top social stratum to adopt its French language filtered down through the middle-classes and from them into the "labour aristocracy" of skilled workers, but generally stopping short at the lowest categories of service personnel and day labourers, made up to a large extent in the 19th century of Flemish immigrants to the capital' (Baetens Beardsmore, 1990: 2). Consequently, until far in the 20th century being Flemish (and speaking Dutch) used to be associated with being poor or even being socially and culturally retarded.

An additional handicap for both immigrant and autochthonous Dutch-speaking ‘Brusselers’ (the English language seems to have no appropriate term to designate the ‘inhabitant of Brussels’; ‘Brusseler’ will be used to fill this gap) was that their habitual language was a dialect, i.e. a variety with a very limited social prestige. Consequently, the majority of the lower middle and working classes tried to acquire mastery in the only language which appeared to make upward social mobility at all possible. Hence, the attractiveness of the French educational system was immense in a period of rapid development of mass education.

The unprofessional and fraudulent censuses in Brussels (Gubin, 1978) showed an enormous increase of the ‘statistical’ amount of allegedly French-speaking inhabitants, and the judicial consequences of censuses were very real.

### *5.2.2 Linguistic legislation*

An additional reason why the development in Brussels was different from Antwerp or Ghent was the fact that either most of the linguistic legislation did not apply to Brussels or had to be paid for by concessions intensifying the Frenchification of the capital. This situation changed as soon as the major struggle in Flanders was over and the Flemish Movement could start paying attention to the capital as well (Witte & Van Velthoven, 1998).

The turning point appears to have been when Flemings agreed to give up the advantages of their numerical majority in the country at large in favour of parity in administration for Brussels. This implied that Dutch-speaking ‘Brusselers’, even after having become a minority group, were nevertheless allotted half of the high ranking civil servants in the administration of Brussels’ 19 communes (Willemyns, 1997).

Several measures taken on the level of the national government guarantee Dutch speakers in Brussels a position on all kinds of levels, which they never could have extorted by virtue of their sole numerical strength. A very eloquent example is to be found in the school system. Although the number of pupils in the Dutch school system had very much deteriorated in the 1950s and 1960s, a combination of measures accounts for a constant increase of the population of Dutch schools from the late 1970s onward (Baetens Beardsmore, 1990), as opposed to the decrease of the school population in the country at large and in French schools in Brussels in particular.

Other measures, then, have entailed consequences which were completely unpredictable. The reinstalment of the so-called ‘freedom of the head of the family’, meaning that Dutch-speaking families could choose French education for their children and vice versa, was very much feared by supporters of the Dutch cause in Brussels who expected language shift to be increased by it. Completely unexpectedly, it appears to be the ‘heads’ of French-speaking families who, to an ever increasing extent, use their ‘freedom’ to choose Dutch education for their children. Consequently, pupils in the Dutch schools increasingly originate from linguistically mixed or homogeneously French-speaking households (D’hondt, 1999).

Also, as Baetens Beardsmore (1990: 5) points out, Flanders’ increasing economic resources made it possible to put up structures in Brussels which enabled ‘the individual to function as a monolingual. Schools, hospitals, welfare

services, cultural instances, recreational facilities have all been set up to service either community in its own language. Hence the institutional pressures to Frenchification have been eliminated and ... the minority speaker (was enabled) to maintain his ethnolinguistic identity'. It enabled him also to profit maximally from the gain in prestige the language had acquired in the country at large.

An internal factor which has to be stressed is the shift in linguistic behaviour and attitudes away from dialects in the direction of the standard language. Among supporters of the Dutch cause there has always been a general awareness that meeting the French challenge was only possible by increasing the importance and usage of Standard Dutch, the only variety (if any) able to equal the social prestige of French. This awareness was particularly strong among inhabitants of the bilingual Brussels region. Inquiries have demonstrated that here indeed, the shift from Dutch dialects to Standard Dutch started earlier and has been more massive than elsewhere in Flanders (De Vriendt & Willemyns, 1987: 224–225). This factor is to be added to those mentioned before and is to be considered one of the most important contributions from the Dutch-speaking 'Brusselers' themselves to the dramatic change of the Brussels linguistic scene.

Finally, the rapidly expanding population of foreign origin accounts for the fact that for probably one-third of the capital's citizens none of Belgium's languages is their mother tongue. Yet, for the overwhelming majority of those, French is their first 'Belgian' language.

## 6. Typology of language border change

The analysis of these various and differing instances of language shift will help to explain my initial assumption concerning the 'language border' concept. History proves that demarcation lines between dialects of different languages can remain remarkably stable over centuries, but also that changes in the political and/or social constellation may account for dramatic alterations leading to language shift and eventually language loss. The point that I would like to emphasise though, is that only (conscious or semi-conscious) language planning initiatives may entail durable, irreversible change. Planned political interference of various kinds (and linguistic legislation is only one of them) accounts for a process of socially determined shift, resulting in language erosion on one side of the language border and eventually in complete loss. Since language planning initiatives may be of a contradictory nature – either to encourage the 'offensive' language or to support the 'defensive' one – political and sociological factors will decisively determine the eventual outcome. The fact that language planning methods in France and in Belgium are so completely different in nature will help to clarify that matter.

### 6.1 The French type

France is an officially monolingual country where French is the only official language. Ever since the French Revolution constant and determined pressure has been put on the 'allophone' regions to accommodate, both officially and privately, to the official policy. This had led to a massive shift of which French Flanders and Alsace are only a few examples (Bister-Broosen, 1998; Ryckeboer, 1997). As a consequence of the monolingual assumptions of the central govern-

ment language borders were neither protected nor was their mere existence accepted in any legal or official way and so there has been no official protection or even function for minority languages in France; their usage has, on the contrary, constantly been fought and banned. Consequently they have deteriorated everywhere, in French Flanders almost to the point of complete extinction, emptying the still existing ‘language border’ of almost all practical relevance nowadays. Yet, even in this very restricted sense the language boundary has shifted considerably in a northern direction over the last two centuries. A quantitatively and qualitatively very restricted form of bilingualism and/or diglossia, and what Dorian (1982) calls ‘semi-speakers’ is all that has survived the aggressive language planning activities (namely linguistic legislation and social pressure) devised by the French government and establishment.

## 6.2 The Belgian type

The evolution in Belgium has been completely different, mainly because of a very different historical evolution:

- Prior to 1794 (annexation of the Belgian territories by France) there has never been a consistent linguistic policy (mainly because there has never been a central government!).
- Both the French (up to 1814; Deneckere, 1954) and the King of the ‘United Netherlands’ (from then till 1830; De Jonghe, 1967) legislated on linguistic matters in the ‘one country – one language’-sense, albeit it with completely different intentions.
- The ‘founding fathers’ of independent Belgium meant to appease linguistic unrest by constitutionally declaring ‘the use of the languages optional’. In a nation dominated by an industrialised and powerful Walloon part and a mainly French-speaking Flemish nobility and bourgeoisie, this meant the perpetuation of the dominance of French over the majority, i.e. the Dutch speaking, yet politically powerless Flemings.

During all this time the internal language border between Dutch and French continued to exist practically unchanged and unchallenged since it was simply an informal line on dialectologists’ maps having no official or political implications whatsoever. The struggle of the so-called Flemish Movement for cultural and linguistic rights for Dutch speakers gradually changed the picture. Bitterly fought, yet only gradually implemented linguistic legislation resulted, in the 1930s, in the *de facto* acceptance of the territoriality principle legally acknowledging the existence of language communities. The next step, consequently, had to be the official delimitation of these communities; in other words the official determination of the language border. Subsequent constitutional reforms finally transformed Belgium into a federal state with regional governments having extensive legislative power within their territories confined by language borders. These borders were laid down in the constitution and made virtually unchangeable. Consequently, each Belgian town or village has been allotted a specific linguistic status and the official language of each individual is not a matter of personal choice but of the territory she or he lives in.

### 6.3 Patterns of change

The changes that have occurred can be classified into different types or patterns:

- (1) 'Monolingualisation' of formerly bilingual or bicultural villages as is the case of some of the language border communities.
- (2) 'Bilingualisation' of formerly mostly monolingual villages, i.e. 'Frenchification', for example, in the border villages of Brussels, some of which have indeed been annexed to the Brussels bilingual community in the course of time.
- (3) A specific evolution in Brussels itself, mainly of the type mentioned in (2).

Political evolution in recent decades has stabilised the language border and made drastic changes virtually impossible in the future. It appears that:

- changes have become 'definitive' over time mainly by securing the linguistic homogeneity of administrative entities;
- ongoing shift has been frozen by firmly embedding shifting villages into a monolingual community. Investigations have shown that Frenchification not only seems to have stopped but is being slowly reversed (Deschouwer & Mariette, 1993).

As a result we are now in the presence of a firmly monolingualised Belgium, divided into autonomous communities based on linguistic homogeneity and determined to reduce the political consequences of language contact at their borders to a strict minimum. In so doing the language border has become the most important internal boundary to which all pre-existing administrative delimitations were subordinated. The only interesting place left (from a socio-linguistic point of view) is Brussels. The principal of territoriality does not apply here; there is no official demarcation line between speakers of both languages and no way of officially controlling language contact or potential shift either.

In Belgium at large the language border is no longer a mere linguistic notion but a legal, administrative and political reality. This evolution has completely changed the nature of the coexistence of the country's various linguistic communities – firmly embedded in their own monolingual structures – and has also demonstrated how decisive the implications of language planning activities can be.

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# Language Use and Language Contact in Brussels

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Brussels occupies a very special position on the Linguistic Frontier, because the 19 communities that form Brussels-Capital are an autonomous region within the Federal State of Belgium. The article first gives a short overview of the historical development of various aspects of the situation of the Region, as these are essential for an understanding of the institutional and constitutional framework within which Brussels functions currently. The main focus of the article is on knowledge and use of the varieties of French and Dutch in Brussels-Capital, and on the educational system, which received a lot of attention in recent research. Finally, some attention is given to attitudes towards the languages and language varieties and to linguistic aspects of language contact.

## Introduction

Brussels occupies a very special, if not unique position on the Linguistic Frontier, because the 19 municipalities which form the Brussels metropolis are an autonomous region in what is now the federal state of Belgium. Because of its special status, in this volume a separate paper is reserved for the description of the historical background, the educational system, the language varieties used, the attitudes of the speakers towards these language varieties, and linguistic aspects of language contact in Brussels.

## Language Knowledge and Language Use: Historical Perspectives

Brussels is situated on the Germanic side of the Linguistic Frontier, in a territory that used to be entirely Dutch-speaking.<sup>1</sup> All observers agree that Brussels is originally a Dutch-speaking city, but the emphasis needs to be on the word 'originally' (Deprez *et al.*, 1981: 94). Until the middle of the 18th century it was still almost homogeneously Dutch-speaking, except for a small French-speaking elite (Van Velthoven, 1987: 21). After Belgium became independent in 1830, Dutch continuously lost ground in Brussels, as a result of a process of language shift towards French, generally known under the term Frenchification. Many factors are responsible for this phenomenon. First of all, it is important to realise that French was the only official language of the country until 1898 (McRae, 1986: 25). In the second place, the international prestige of French also played a role in the process of Frenchification. The prestige of French as an international language contrasted sharply with the lack of prestige attached to the local variety of Dutch spoken by the majority of the inhabitants of Brussels (De Vriendt & Willemys, 1987: 202). The short period during which the Northern and Southern provinces were united under King William I (1814–1830) was insufficient to strengthen the position of Standard Dutch. This is not only due to the fact that Dutch rule was preceded by a period of 20 years of French rule (1795–1814) in which Dutch was excluded from official use. The causes of the delay in the development and

spread of Standard Dutch in Flanders go back to the political split of the Dutch-speaking territory in the 16th century, when the Northern part of the Low Countries revolted against the Roman-Catholic Habsburg monarchy, but the Southern part remained under Habsburg domination (Van de Craen & Willemys, 1988). The South lost many members of its intellectual elite to the North. Although the southern elite contributed to the standardisation of Dutch, the speakers in the South were cut off from this process. As a result, standardisation stagnated in the South and French took on most of the functions Standard Dutch obtained in the North.

After Belgian Independence, the Flemish provinces were once again cut off from the Netherlands. Knowledge of Standard Dutch was far less widespread in Flanders than in the Netherlands at that time. According to Willemys (1984; in De Vriendt & Willemys, 1987: 224), 'Standard Dutch is however used considerably more in Brussels and surroundings than in the remaining part of Flanders'.

Apart from the factors mentioned above, the school system contributed to language shift, as until the end of the 19th century, the language of primary education in Brussels was French.<sup>2</sup> In particular with the introduction of compulsory primary education in 1914, the school played a major role in the process of Frenchification in Brussels. It was not until after World War I that a Dutch-speaking school system was gradually built up (De Vriendt, 1984). As is well known, Dutch-speaking university education was not available anywhere in the country until 1930, when the University of Gent became Dutch-speaking, as a result of pressure of the Flemish Movement.

Finally, economic factors contributed to enhancing the prestige of French. In the 19th century, the economic position of Wallonia was much stronger than that of Flanders, due to large-scale capital investment in heavy industry (Van Velthoven, 1987: 17). Flanders, on the contrary, sank into poverty, which made it even easier to associate Dutch with poverty and backwardness. After the World War II, however, heavy industry was confronted with a fundamental crisis throughout Europe, and Wallonia was no exception (Witte & Van Velthoven, 1999: 200). Due to industrial development in Flanders, the economic power relations were reversed, with Flanders overtaking Wallonia for the first time in the 1960s.

## Language Censuses

The process of language shift in Brussels is reflected in the language censuses, but their interpretation remains very difficult for many reasons, one of them being that each time different questions were asked. The first official language census of 1846 shows that the percentage of the population that used French most frequently was much higher in Brussels (37%) than in Gent (5%) or in Antwerp (1.9%). Even if the Brussels figures may be exaggerated,<sup>3</sup> they show that Frenchification was much faster in Brussels than elsewhere in the country. This was in part due to Walloon immigrants, who formed the majority of the immigrants in the first half of the 19th century (De Metsenaere, 1987). Between the language census of 1866 and the last language census in 1947, the number of Dutch monolinguals dropped sharply, from 46.2% to 9.5%, whereas the number of French monolinguals rose from 19.3% to 37%. In 1947 24.4% of the Brussels

population was registered as using Dutch exclusively or primarily, and 70.6% as using French only or mainly (McRae, 1986: 295). All these figures should however be seen as indicating tendencies rather than exact proportions, because the results of all language censuses are heavily contested for methodological reasons. For the last three censuses, an additional problem was that the climate was very hostile to the Flemish, because of Flemish collaboration with the German occupant during the two world wars (see Gubin, 1978 for a detailed criticism of the census data).

For Brussels and its suburbs in particular, the census results had direct political implications. Since the language law of 1932, municipalities in the area surrounding Brussels had to adopt external bilingualism (in contacts with the public) if they counted more than 30% Francophones. As soon as this figure rose to 50%, French also became the internal language of the municipal administration, in addition to Dutch. Clearly, the expansion of Brussels – which continued to annex more and more Flemish municipalities – formed a major threat to the Flemish cause. In 1963, the boundaries of the Brussels agglomeration were officially established and confined to 19 municipalities that formed part of it so far. Six municipalities on the border of the agglomeration, situated in the Dutch-speaking part of the province of Brabant, obtained a special status with so-called facilities for Francophones: Drogenbos, Kraainem, Linkebeek, Sint-Genesius-Rode, Wemmel and Wezembeek-Oppem (Witte, 1993: 12; see also Willemyns in this volume). From the Flemish perspective, the delimitation of Brussels was a very important milestone, which limited the danger of the French ‘oilstain’ (olievlek) spreading over the Flemish country-side. From a Francophone perspective, on the other hand, this delimitation meant the imposition of an artificial ‘collar’ (carcan) on the natural growth of the capital.

It is impossible to give any official figures of the numbers of speakers of each language group after 1947, because language censuses have been abolished, due to the tensions they created. A number of surveys of language knowledge and use were carried out from the 1960s onwards, each of which came up with a different result. In these surveys, estimates of the percentage of speakers of Dutch range from 14% to 27% (see Treffers-Daller, 1994 for a detailed discussion). Janssens (2001) shows how difficult it is to obtain reliable data on knowledge and use of Dutch in Brussels. In a survey of 2500 Brusselers, Janssens shows that 10% claims to come from families in which only Dutch (or a variety of Dutch) is spoken, but 70% of the same sample claims to have a reasonable knowledge of Dutch. One of the problems with the survey is, of course, that data are based on reported language behaviour, rather than observed language behaviour, and it remains unclear to what extent the data represent actual knowledge and use.

Another problem with many surveys is that they implicitly or explicitly assume speakers are either Dutch-speaking or French-speaking, and exclude the possibility for speakers to be classified as being bilingual. Clearly, figures about the number of bilinguals are very difficult to give, because speakers may have very different opinions about the meaning of the notion ‘bilingual’. An extreme example of the problems involved in assessing the number of bilinguals in Brussels can be found in a survey in *Le Soir* (1985), which claimed there were only 1.8% ‘absolute bilinguals’ in Brussels. The figure is probably so low because many people hesitated to say that they were absolutely bilingual, despite the fact

that they use French and Dutch on a daily basis. In addition, it is probably true to say that both language groups have negative attitudes towards bilingualism. Francophones used to consider bilingualism to be useful for the Flemish, but not for the Walloons (Destrée, 1923), whereas the Flemish feared bilingualism was nothing more than a transition to French monolingualism, which was no doubt the case for many indigenous inhabitants and Flemish immigrants in Brussels. It is not surprising therefore that in reforming the Belgian state individual bilingualism has not become a model goal (Witte & Baetens Beardsmore, 1987: 8). The priority has rather been on creating bilingual structures, based on individual monolingualism. In practical terms, this means that it is now possible for the individual in Brussels to use only French or only Dutch in political and administrative matters, education and cultural activities.

### **The Constitutional and Institutional Framework**

As for its constitutional and institutional status, Brussels occupies a very special position on the Linguistic Frontier, because Brussels-Capital is an autonomous region in the federal state of Belgium. In the course of a 25-year long process of reform of the state, in which finding a solution for 'the Brussels problem' was the most difficult issue, Brussels became one of the three autonomous regions of the new Federal State (see also Willemyns and the bibliography to that contribution in this volume). In 1980, the political institutions of the Walloon Region and the Flemish Region were put in place, but it took until 1988 for the Brussels-Capital Region to obtain its own political institutions.<sup>4</sup> The first elections for the Brussels Council took place in 1989.

The Flemish had long opposed the institution of Brussels as a separate region, because they feared that Brussels and Wallonia together could form a front against Flanders (Detant, 1995: 19). In addition, the Flemish felt that the best way to protect the interests of the Flemish population in Brussels was to maintain as close a link as possible between Flanders and Brussels. In the compromise reached during the second constitutional reform, the Francophones had to make a sacrifice too in that they were unable to obtain the breakthrough of the 'carcan': the limits of the Brussels-Capital Region remained unaltered. The Flemish, on the other hand, tried to maintain the links with Brussels as clearly as possible by choosing Brussels as its capital (Witte, 1998: 14). The officially bilingual Region of Brussels-Capital is situated between two officially monolingual regions: a monolingual Dutch-speaking Region, Flanders (Vlaanderen) in the North, and a monolingual French-speaking Region, Wallonia (Wallonie) in the South.<sup>5</sup> The Regions are to a large extent autonomous, which means that they have their own regional governments and their own parliaments, known as the Councils.

The division of labour between the different levels of government is a very complex affair in Belgium. In the first place, there is the Federal Government and the Federal Parliament, which remain responsible, among other things, for finances (in order, for example, to guarantee monetary union), the army, important parts of civil, commercial and criminal law, social security, foreign affairs, relationships with other members of the European Union and NATO, an important part of health care and major aspects of the country's internal affairs. The responsibility for other matters is distributed between the three Regions

(Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia) and the three Language Communities (the Flemish community, the French community and the German community). The Regions are responsible for matters relating to their respective territories, such as economic policy, employment, regional development, agriculture, housing, transport, energy and so forth. Matters relating to culture and education, however, are the responsibility of the three Communities. The Flemish and the French Communities therefore each exercise their competencies in cultural and educational matters in their respective Regions, as well as in Brussels.<sup>6</sup>

The complexities of the division of labour between the different governmental levels in Belgium become very clear if one realises that there are six different governments (including the Government of the German community), each of which has a share of the administrative and legislative power.<sup>7</sup>

The Council of Brussels-Capital is allowed to vote regional laws, called ordinances, in matters relating to its competencies, and can thus develop a genuine regional legal system, valid only in the Region of Brussels-Capital, within the limits of the boundaries set by Federal Law and European legislation. As conflict between the two language communities in the Council cannot be ruled out, even after federalisation, a so-called *alarm bell procedure* has been put in place. This means that in case two-thirds of the members of a linguistic group consider a particular proposal to have a negative impact on the interests of that group, the Regional Government can intervene.

The inhabitants of Brussels-Capital elect their deputies for the Council directly by compulsory voting. As the political parties are split along linguistic lines, the composition of the Brussels Council gives an interesting perspective on the relative importance of both language communities in the metropolis. Currently (elections of 1999), 64 (or 82%) of the 75 Council deputies belong to French-speaking parties and 11 (or 17%) to Dutch-speaking parties. It would, however, be a mistake to come to any conclusions regarding knowledge or use of the two languages in the Capital on the basis of voting behaviour. As there are no bilingual parties, bilinguals have to choose either a French-speaking party or a Dutch-speaking party and they may well choose on the basis of issues entirely unrelated to language matters.

### Languages Varieties in Brussels

A description of the language varieties that are being used in Brussels is more complex than in many areas around the linguistic frontier, because of the wide range of varieties that are being spoken, and because of the terminological confusion around these varieties. De Vriendt and Willemyns (1987) distinguish four different varieties of Dutch, and four different varieties of French. As we have seen above, traditionally, the Brussels population used to speak a local variety of Dutch, sometimes entitled 'Brussels Dutch' (De Vriendt & Willemyns, 1987; Treffers-Daller, 1994) or 'Brussels Flemish' (De Vriendt & Goyvaerts, 1989). This dialect belongs to the group of Brabantic dialects spoken in the central part of the Dutch-speaking territory of Belgium. Local inhabitants often refer to it as 'Brussels' or 'Flemish', a term which linguists reserve for the Flemish dialects that are spoken in the West of Flanders only. Nowadays very few speakers are monolingual users of Brussels Dutch, as dialect usage is going down everywhere in the

country, but particularly in Brussels (see Willemyns, 1979 on reported knowledge of dialects by Flemish students from various Flemish provinces). According to De Vriendt and Goyvaerts (1989) the everyday use of this dialect nearly always implies that the speaker also has an active command of French, which is, among other things, related to the tendency of the Brussels population to visit French rather than Dutch schools: traditionally, therefore, the inhabitants of Brussels tended to choose French rather than Dutch as their code for formal and written purposes.

The use of standard languages is another very complex matter. Two varieties of Standard Dutch are being used in Brussels: Belgian Dutch and Standard Dutch. De Vriendt and Willemyns (1987: 204) define Belgian Dutch as 'a supra-regional language which is more or less standardised and may, for those who speak it, function as a standard language'. It differs from Standard Dutch, one of the three official languages of the country, in that it is influenced by Brabantic dialects and because it displays many archaisms, dialecticisms, gallisicisms, purisms, etc.

As for the French varieties, it is important to see that there is no such thing as an indigenous Brussels French variety, because French is an 'imported' language in Brussels (De Vriendt & Willemyns, 1987: 205). Yet, French as spoken by the inhabitants of Brussels may possess sufficient common characteristics to consider it a separate variety (Baetens Beardsmore, 1971). According to De Vriendt and Willemyns (1987: 206) Brussels French is a kind of Belgian French that is isolated from other varieties because of its particular status in Brussels. Standard French is the second official language of the city. It is generally used in the media and in other formal domains.

## Attitudes

In this section I will try to summarise some findings in relation to attitudes towards Brussels, its inhabitants and its languages, as they can be found in the literature, in particular in McRae (1986). Clearly, these attitudes must be seen in the context of the problematic intergroup relations between the Dutch-speaking and the French-speaking populations in Belgian society as a whole. Brussels does, however, occupy a special position in Belgium, and there is certainly evidence that the inhabitants of Brussels, 'Brusselers', as we will call them, see themselves as distinct from the Flemish and the Walloons.

A first important statement about the Brusselers comes from Jules Destrée (1912: 11, my translation) in a famous open letter to the King. In his opinion, there are no Belgians in Belgium: only Walloons and Flemish. He gives the following, extremely negative evaluation of the Brusselers:

They seem to have combined the shortcomings of the two races<sup>8</sup> and to have sacrificed their good qualities. Their means of communication is an awful gibberish, that has been popularised by the Beulemans and the Kaeckebroek families,<sup>9</sup> who unwittingly stress the comical aspects of this language use. They are ignorant and sceptical. Their ideal is a kind of comfortable mediocrity. They don't believe in anything, and are incapable of generosity or enthusiasm. (...) These inhabitants of the capital (...) are not a separate people at all; they are a collection of half-breeds.

This negative view of the inhabitants of Brussels also emerges from recent studies into group images and attitudes, a very detailed overview of which can be found in McRae (1986). According to McRae (1986: 92), the sharply pejorative images can be explained on the basis of frustration and perhaps envy on the part of the more disadvantaged periphery in relation to a more favoured centre. On the other hand, it may well be the case that the Flemish and the Walloon groups in the conflict, which saw a complete separation of all public services in Brussels into a French- and a Dutch-speaking network as the only solution, have little sympathy for those who have found a pragmatic solution to the problems, and use both languages in their everyday lives, seemingly without encountering conflict. Just like bilinguals anywhere in the world, Brusselers can be heard switching languages according to interlocutor and topic. For the above Walloon observer, this pragmatic attitude is evidence for the fact that Brusselers 'do not believe in anything' and that they are 'halfbreeds'. Such negative attitudes prevail in much more recent literature, also on the Flemish side, where the fact of alternatively using two languages is seen as a failure to be consistent, and those who demonstrate such behaviour are classified as 'ambivalent' (Louckx, 1978). In addition, from a Flemish perspective, the indigenous inhabitants of Brussels leave the impression of being 'very Frenchified' (Louckx, 1978: 58). Their behaviour contrasts sharply with that of the 'bewuste Vlamingen', who speak Dutch consciously and deliberately in Brussels under all (or almost all) circumstances (Deprez *et al.*, 1981). There is some evidence, however, that indigenous Brusselers (born and bred in one of the 19 municipalities) do not consider themselves to be either Walloon or Flemish, but a separate category (Louckx, 1978; Treffers-Daller, 1994). Many of the informants in the latter two studies expressed pro-Belgian and anti-federalist views, as well as a marked antipathy towards regional political parties and Flemish and Walloon nationalism. In mainstream Belgian politics, it would be hard to find any defendants of the ideal of a bilingual Brussels in which French and Dutch would live together harmoniously nowadays, but in the 19th century this view was prevalent among the so-called 'Flamingants de Bruxelles' (Gubin, 1978). They considered the hybrid character of the city to be a distinct asset. Bringing two languages together in one town was considered to be stimulating and enriching, a privilege unfortunately denied to monolingual nations.

Deprez *et al.* (1981, 1986) present a fascinating analysis of the language attitudes of secondary school pupils in Dutch-speaking and French-speaking schools in Brussels. The methodology and results of the matched guise studies they carried out cannot be discussed here in any detail, but some important findings should be mentioned. Deprez *et al.* found striking differences between the attitudes of French-speaking pupils and Dutch-speaking pupils towards a number of stimuli they were presented with: a set of eight different types of speakers in Brussels, ranging from a person who always speaks Dutch or a variety of Dutch, to a person who speaks only French in Brussels. In various subparts of the study the data were collected by researchers who presented themselves in different guises, which again are typical for the Brussels situation: a researcher from Antwerp who spoke Dutch, a researcher from Brussels who presented himself as a Frenchified Fleming (speaking either French or Dutch), and a researcher who presented himself as a Walloon unable to speak Dutch. As

the Dutch-speaking pupils belong to the minority in Brussels, they feel threatened by the presence of a researcher whom they perceive to be a member of the oppressing majority: the researcher who presents himself in their school in a French guise or in the guise of a frenchified Fleming. The French-speaking pupils, on the other hand, react less negatively to the presence of a researcher who presents himself in Dutch at their school. For these French-speaking pupils, who belong to the majority in Brussels, there is no real threat in the presence of a minority language speaker in their midst.

## Educational Issues

Much to the surprise of many outside observers, there are no French-Dutch bilingual schools in Belgium. Schools in Brussels (as well as in any other area of the country) use only one language of instruction, except for foreign language classes. This can only be understood from a historical perspective. As space does not allow us to describe the education in Brussels before 1830, the reader is referred to Behling and De Metsenaere (1979) for details about education in Brussels during the French period (1795–1814) and to Behling and De Metsenaere (1982) for the period of unification with the Northern provinces (1814–1830). According to McRae (1986), for half a century after Belgian Independence, most teaching in Brussels was offered in French to generations of Dutch-speaking pupils, most of whom understood little or nothing of what was said in the classroom. In addition, many of the teachers did not understand Dutch (Van Velthoven, 1987: 34). It is not until 1881 that Karel Buls, then mayor of Brussels, replaced the existing structure by a system of transmutation. Children were allocated to French or Dutch classes, according to the language they spoke. It was the school principal and not the parents who decided about the child's language. In three steps, children were prepared for French as the medium of instruction, as that was still considered the best solution for Brussels. The system failed, for many reasons, among other things, because of the lack of qualified personnel and prejudice on the part of the Dutch-speaking parents. The transmutation classes quickly became very unpopular and finally only the poorest children attended the Dutch classes. Dutch education then became synonymous with poverty and backwardness, and it was only through the medium of French that one could break out of this system. The Dutch classes were emptied in 1914 when the city council introduced the freedom of the head of the family for primary education (Van Velthoven, 1987: 36).

The language laws of 1932 laid down the principle of territoriality in language matters. For education this meant the language of instruction in Flanders, Wallonia and the German cantons was to be the language of the region (McRae, 1986: 220). The language laws of 1932 formed an important watershed in the country's educational history, as they made the formation of a Dutch-speaking middle class in Flanders possible.<sup>10</sup> In Brussels and in bilingual communes along the linguistic frontier, the language of instruction would be 'the mother tongue of the child or the child's usual language' (McRae, 1986: 220). The freedom of the head of the family was abolished (Witte & Van Velthoven, 1999: 138). The head of the family had to officially declare what the mother tongue of the child was, and there were control mechanisms which aimed to check this declaration. Despite



the fact that the head of the family was not free to choose the language of the school for his children, the declaration was open to manipulation by parents or school principals who believed that knowledge of French was a prerequisite to upward mobility. In practice therefore, according to Deprez *et al.* (1981: 105), the Frenchification of the Brussels population through education continued unabated. The language laws of 1963 abolished the transmutation classes and the number of Dutch schools was increased. In 1970 the 'liberté du père de famille' was reintroduced (Witte & Van Velthoven, 1999: 212). In compensation for the reintroduction of the freedom of the head of the family, the Flemish obtained some concessions: a considerable number of Dutch-speaking day-care centres were to be created and in Dutch-speaking primary schools the norms for splitting up classes were lowered significantly (Deprez & Wynants, 1989: 31).

Today the Brussels population is free to choose a French-speaking or a Dutch-speaking school and both networks are well developed, even though there are more French-speaking primary and secondary schools. There are Dutch-speaking and French-speaking primary schools in all 19 municipalities, but six municipalities do not have a Dutch-speaking secondary school (Elsene/Ixelles, St Gilles, St Joost-ten-Node/St Josse-ten-Noode, St Lambrechts-Woluwe/Woluwe-St Lambert, Vorst/Forest and Watermaal-Bosvoorde/Watermael-Boitsfort). A comparison of data from the Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie and the Communauté Française de Belgique shows that 36% of the primary schools (including infants and junior departments) in Brussels-Capital are Dutch-speaking and 64% are French-speaking. The proportion of Dutch-speaking schools is slightly lower at the secondary level: 29% and 71% (see Table 1 for more details).

The Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie (VGC) also provides numbers of pupils currently attending Dutch-speaking schools. The figures show that numbers in kindergartens and primary schools increased by 2% and 3% respectively between 1999 and 2000, whereas there was a slight decrease (0.05%) of pupils in Dutch-speaking secondary schools (see Table 2). It is interesting to note that the Dutch-speaking schools lose some pupils every year to French-speaking schools: in 1999–2000 7% of the children in the kindergartens left the Dutch-speaking school for a French-speaking primary school, whereas 6% of the children in the primary school went to a French-speaking secondary school. It may well be the case that these are children from homogeneous French-speaking families (see below). D'Hondt (1999) notes that the number of pupils in Dutch-speaking secondary schools dropped since 1990, the year in which the first counts of pupils in secondary education were made (Gatz, 1996). There is also evidence for a significant exchange with Flanders: on the one hand, 11% of the Dutch-speaking primary school population left Brussels for a secondary school in Flanders. On the other hand, the data of the VGC show that 892 (42%) of the 2103 pupils in the first year of the Dutch-speaking secondary schools come from the Flemish provinces.

A comparison of the figures in Table 2 with those provided by Deprez and Wynants (1989) shows that the Dutch educational system has clearly progressed since the 1980s. The numbers in Dutch-speaking primary schools had been dropping since the end of the 1960s, when 15,150 children were registered, and reached an all-time low in 1983–1984 when 8268 pupils were registered. In the

**Table 1** Dutch-speaking and French-speaking schools in Brussels Capital (all networks)\*

<i>Municipalities</i>	<i>Dutch-speaking schools</i>		<i>French-speaking schools</i>	
	<i>Primary infants + junior schools</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>French maternelle + primaire</i>	<i>Secondary</i>
Anderlecht	31	9	28	11
Brussel/Bruxelles**	25	11	67	14
Elsene/Ixelles	2	–	15	9
Etterbeek	5	1	12	8
Evere	6	1	6	1
Ganshoren	5	1	4	3
Jette	12	3	12	3
Koekelberg	3	2	3	1
Ouderghem/Auderghem	6	1	7	2
Schaarbeek/Schaerbeek	10	2	26	11
St Agatha–Berchem/ Berchem–Ste Agathe	7	1	3	–
St Gilles	3	–	8	6
St Jans Molenbeek/ Molenbeek–St Jean	14	2	17	3
St Joost-ten Node/ St Josse-ten-Noode	2	–	8	2
St Lambrechts Woluwe/ Woluwe–St Lambert	6	–	15	5
St Pieters Woluwe/Woluwe St Pi- erre	74	11	5	
Ukkel/Uccle	8	2	21	7
Vorst Forest	7	–	14	3
Watermaal–Bosvoorde/ Watermael-Boitsfort	3	–	7	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>97</b>

Notes: \* There are three main networks: the official subsidised network, the free subsidised network (catholic and neutral) and the network of the Communauté française/Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie. The figures were last updated on last updated 13/02/2001 (primary school) and on 08/03/2000 (secondary school).

\*\* The figures for Brussels refer to Brussels 1000, Haren/Haeren, Neder-over-Heembeek and Laken/Laeken.

Data source: Brussels Onderwijspunt, website of the Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie: <http://bop.vgc.be/scholen/index.html> and the site interréseaux de l'Administration Générale de l'Enseignement de la Recherche Scientifique de la Communauté Française de Belgique: <http://www.agers.cfwb.be/index.htm>

Francophone schools numbers fell too, however. The reasons for these falling numbers are to be sought in the drop of the birth rate and an urban exodus (Deprez & Wynants, 1989). In the 1980s the Dutch-speaking school population formed little more than 10% of the total Brussels school population, with the remaining 90% of pupils attending Francophone schools.

**Table 2** Pupils in Dutch-speaking kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools

<i>Kindergartens</i>		<i>Primary schools</i>		<i>Secondary schools</i>	
1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000
8666	8860	11,451	11,808	11,347	11,341

*Data source:* The website of the Brussels Onderwijspunt (Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie), September 2000.

It is interesting to note that, despite the fact that bilingual education does not officially exist in Brussels, Dutch schools are not only attended by children from homogeneous Dutch-speaking families (i.e. families in which both parents are Dutch-speaking, cf. De Bleyser *et al.*, 2001; Deprez *et al.*, 1981; Deprez & Wynants, 1989; Gielen & Louckx, 1984). Table 3 gives an overview of the development in Dutch-speaking primary schools, and shows that the percentage of children from homogeneous Dutch-speaking backgrounds in primary schools decreased steadily between the early 1980s and the academic year 1999–2000 (data from the Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie).

**Table 3** Language background of pupils in Dutch-speaking primary schools in Brussels

<i>School year</i>	<i>Homogenous Dutch-speaking</i>		<i>Homogeneous French-speaking</i>		<i>Homogeneous other language (neither Dutch nor French)</i>		<i>Mixed (Dutch and another language)</i>	
80–81	7225	85.1%	205	2.4%	171	2%	890	10.5%
99–00	2852	24.9%	3173	27.7%	2305	20.2%	3109	27.2%

*Data source:* Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie, in De Bleyser *et al.* (2001: 364).

This phenomenon, for which De Bleyser *et al.* (2001) coined the term ‘wild immersion’ is generally attributed to the following factors: the growing importance of bilingualism in Brussels, the fact that there are fewer immigrant children in Dutch-speaking school and the quality of the education. It is not known how many homogeneous Dutch-speaking families send their children to Francophone schools nowadays. According to a Market Segmentation Enquiry carried out on behalf of the NCC in 1979 (Deprez & Wynants, 1989), more children from homogeneous Dutch-speaking families attend Francophone schools than Dutch-speaking schools (7000 versus 5600). According to this enquiry, the majority of children of mixed backgrounds (Dutch/French) attend Francophone schools: 3200 children in Dutch-speaking schools and 20,000 children in Francophone schools. More recent information regarding the language background of the children in Francophone schools is however necessary to help clarify whether education continues to play a role in the Frenchification process in Brussels.

## Language Contact

Language mixing of all kinds (borrowing, code-switching and interference) have a very bad press in Brussels, but this is the case in many bilingual communities, according to Poplack (1980) who calls it a stigmatised sociolinguistic marker. In a situation of conflict between language communities, it is not surprising that this negative attitude towards language mixing is pronounced very clearly by various observers, who see it as evidence of the speakers being 'semi-bilingual' or unable to speak any language properly. Destrée (1912: 11) qualifies this mixture as an awful gibberish, and Van Velthoven (1987: 36) sees it as cultural impoverishment. Wilmars (1971: 80, my translation), a Flemish observer, gives the following characterisation of language use among Brusselers:

When a common Flemish speaker begins to speak French in Brussels, he quickly discovers that he will never be able to speak like a gentleman. And as he is unwilling to 'murder' the beautiful French language, he tries to overcome his language problems by simply chattering away, mixing French and Flemish. The result is the awful language usage that is ridiculed in *Pourquoi Pas*.

Treffers-Daller (1992) shows that code-switching is no longer current practice among the younger generations of indigenous inhabitants of Brussels. Among those informants who have been to Dutch-speaking schools, code-switching and borrowing was found significantly less than among those who went to French-speaking schools. In addition to the factors mentioned above, the polarisation between the two language communities in Brussels may be responsible for the fact that code-switching is not currently common practice. As Myers-Scotton (1993: 128) puts it: code-switching as an unmarked choice is not predicted to occur in 'communities where the main candidates for such switching are also symbols of present intergroup competition or conflict'. Finally, strong purist traditions on the French and the Dutch sides may well have played a role here.

Treffers-Daller (1999) shows that borrowing, the incorporation of features of one language into the other, on the other hand, is a frequent phenomenon in the local varieties spoken in Brussels. Brussels Dutch mainly borrows lexical items from French, whereas structural borrowing from French is limited. For Brussels French, the opposite is true. Lexical borrowing from Brussels Dutch is less important in Brussels French, but structural influences from Brussels Dutch can be found more frequently. The overall picture thus reveals basic asymmetries between the influences in both directions. These asymmetries can be predicted and explained with the help of Thomason and Kaufman's framework for contact-induced change. It is well known that many speakers of Brussels Dutch have experienced language shift in the direction of the prestige language French. As a matter of fact, there are few monolingual speakers of Brussels Dutch (De Vriendt & Willemyns, 1987: 217). As a result of the process of language shift, French as spoken in Brussels is typically marked by substrate (and adstrate) influence of the Germanic varieties. This influence becomes apparent in phonology and syntax rather than in the lexicon, as predicted by Thomason and Kaufman.

The fact that Brussels Dutch borrowed extensively from French is also in line with Bloomfield's observation that 'borrowing goes predominantly from the upper language to the lower' (Bloomfield, 1933: 461). Structural borrowing in Brussels Dutch is limited to relatively minor phenomena. Phonological, morphological and syntactic influence is mainly visible in the words borrowed from French. French phonemes only appear in French borrowings, but not in native words, and derivational suffixes from French are not attached to Germanic roots. On the level of syntax, it has been shown that the specific position reserved for French adverbs is mainly accessible for French borrowings, and hardly for native adverbs. Only in the extension of the use of *van* (of) has the influence of French become apparent in Dutch structures. This is however a very peripheral phenomenon. The basic syntax of Brussels Dutch has remained unaffected by French.

Phonological influence from the Germanic varieties in French, on the contrary, is not confined to lexical borrowings from Brussels Dutch. Brussels French is undoubtedly marked by Dutch phonological rules. On the level of syntax we have seen that constituents can be placed in the position before the subject. This occurs in sentences which do not contain any lexical item from Dutch. Thus, whereas structural influence in Brussels Dutch is clearly linked to lexical borrowing, structural interference in Brussels French is not connected to lexical borrowing at all. This confirms Thomason and Kaufman's (1988: 114–115) prediction that 'while borrowed morphosyntactic structures are more often expressed by actual borrowed morphemes, morphosyntactic interference through shift more often makes use of reinterpreted and/or restructured target language morphemes'.

More details about language contact in Brussels and about the similarities and differences between the Brussels situation and the contact patterns at other points along the linguistic frontier can be found in Treffers-Daller (1994, 1999).

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## Notes

1. During the last constitutional reform, in 1992, the province of Brabant, in which Brussels is situated, was split in two: the province of Flemish Brabant in the North and the province of Walloon Brabant in the South. Though situated in the province of Flemish Brabant, Brussels is administratively unrelated to province, except for matters of public order, for which the province remains responsible (Witte, 1998: 30).
2. De Vriendt (1984) however mentions the existence of Dutch-speaking classes in Catholic schools and points to the fact that in towns on the periphery of Brussels, such as Molenbeek (now one of the nineteen municipalities of Brussels Capital), Dutch-speaking schools were common.
3. In the census figures of 1866, the figure for speakers of French drops again to 20%. This may be an indication that the figure of 30% given for 1846 was exaggerated (Treffers-Daller, 1994: 15).
4. More details can be obtained from the webpages of the Federal Belgian Government (<http://belgium.fgov.be/>) and the webpages of the three regions, in particular the Region of Brussels-Capital (<http://www.brussel.irisnet.be/>).

5. The Walloon Region also contains the German-speaking cantons, all of which are situated in the Province of Liège.
6. To make it possible for each Community to develop policies specifically for Bruxelles three particular institutions have been created: the Commission Communautaire Française (COCOF), the Commission Communautaire Flamande (or Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie VGC) and the Commission Communautaire Commune (CCC). The COCOF consists of the French-speaking members of the Brussels Council and the VGC consist of its Dutch-speaking members. The CCC consists of both.
7. The French Community and the French Region each have different governments and different parliaments. On the Flemish side, on the other hand, one Government and one Council represent both the Flemish Community and the Flemish Region.
8. Destrée even goes as far as calling the Flemish and the Walloons two different races: the Germanic and the Romance 'race', though Witte and van Velthoven (1999: 41) comment that the broad French term 'race' is largely synonymous with 'nation'.
9. Fonson and Wicheler's (1910) famous play *Le mariage de Mlle Beulemans* and Léopold Courouble's series of novels about a family called 'the Kaeckebroek owe their popularity to their exaggeration of the peculiarities of Brussels French and their Flemish calques.
10. McRae (1986: 221) points out that the laws only applied to schools subsidised by the state. Private unsubsidised schools could still exist outside the law.

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# German in Belgium: Linguistic Variation from a Contact Linguistic Point of View

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In this paper the situation of the German minorities in Old and New Belgium is presented. Following some geographical notes, the process of federalisation and its repercussions for East Belgium are briefly described. A discussion of linguistic factors *vis-à-vis* these minorities located along the Germanic-Romance linguistic border then follows and will lead on to the central part of the article. For methodological reasons this is divided into one part dealing with external linguistic factors and one on internal linguistic factors. The paper concludes by focusing on issues that broadly characterise recent research on New and Old Belgium. To position the German minorities in Belgium in a broader context their analysis is preceded by a general and regional European perspective.

## The European Perspective: Breaching and Building Borders

It would be simplistic to state that the national borders within parts of the European Union have entirely lost their significance in the wake of the Schengen Agreements. For example, the border between Germany and Belgium on the E40 motorway may be less physically visible and administratively painstaking than it used to be some 15 years ago. Customs officials have disappeared as have the small roadblocks, so that apart from a few empty buildings, the occasional presence of the *Bundesgrenzschutz* on a desolate parking space and traffic signs that change colour and shape when entering Belgian or German territory, one wouldn't even notice that one is moving from one country into another. The same goes for the countryside, where the danger of being caught by the 'flying customs squad' on short cuts that wind themselves unnoticeably round the border is now almost non-existent. In contrast to its decreased physical and administrative presence the German-Belgian border mentioned above is, however, still highly present on a psychological level, insofar that it remains quite difficult for the authorities of the German-speaking Community who are in need of skilled German-speaking workers to attract Germans. Although the difference in wages is not considerable, the latter remain very reluctant to work across the border. The border – and one could add, a border in general – appears to have different degrees of permeability depending on one's reason for crossing. For example, one of the main problems encountered is the development of the Euregio-Meuse-Rhine that was founded in 1976 and now consists of the Dutch province of Limburg, the German region Aachen (as part of North-Rhine-Westphalia), the Belgian provinces of Limburg and Liège and the Belgian German-speaking Community as an autonomous part within the province of Liège. Although this region (which was founded with the purpose of economically enlivening the border areas of Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany by means of cross-border activity) is doing well economically, it seems that its inhabitants – except for shopping and tourist activities – stick to their borders and do not consciously display any sense of euregional identity. A



survey conducted during the mid-1990s showed that only 4% of the 3.7 million inhabitants were familiar with the name ‘Euregio-Meuse-Rhine’.<sup>1</sup> And although considerable amounts of money have been invested in public relations since then, it remains doubtful whether the situation has improved.

Regions like the Euregio-Meuse-Rhine that were created for economic purposes and consequently are rather artificial in character, build a rather sharp contrast to regions that have been long actively or (out of necessity) latently present within the member states of the EU. In the wake of the Maastricht Treaty it is mainly those ‘culturally defined’ regions that are the driving forces behind the process of regionalisation that – at first sight, paradoxically – encompasses a process of globalisation and internationalisation.

## Language and Cultural Diversity

The present simultaneous process of institutionally backed-up parcelling and unifying within the EU (known as ‘glocalisation’)<sup>2</sup> and the cobweb of borders that remains as one of its consequences provides political, sociological, judicial and economical research with new perspectives. Of particular importance at present is the question how much ‘denationalisation’ a state within the ongoing European tendency towards ‘glocalisation’ can bear, what effect this ‘glocalisation’ will have on ‘nationhood’ (cf. Mäder, 1999), how blurred issues such as ‘European’ and ‘regional identities’ should be interpreted (cf. Keating, 1997), *Whose Europe* we are in fact discussing (cf. Smith & Wright, 1999) and who will economically benefit from it and how.

But even if Europe (EU) is primarily associated with economic and political integration, it is multilingualism and education (cf. Hinskens *et al.*, 2000, Nelde, in press) that will prove decisive factors of a Europe of the Regions. That is reflected in the previously mentioned Maastricht Treaty, where art. 126, 127 and 128 (art. 149, 150 and 151 in the Amsterdam Treaty) stress a European multilingualism and multiculturalism (as already mentioned) as a central European dimension. Therefore it is of utmost importance to reflect on which shape the linguistic landscape within the Europe of this millennium will (have to) take, not only within the institutions but also within the several member states, who sometimes groan under Europe’s increasing weight. Most of these member states – with the exception of such ‘multilingual states’ as Belgium and Luxembourg – still have one national language – a remnant of the 19th century nation-state ideal (cf. Truchot: 1999, 1). The integration of different groups and autochthonous speech communities was long left to the will of the respective nation-state they willingly or unwillingly resided in and was strongly dependent upon the organisation of the state as a centralistic or federalist entity. With the Treaty of Maastricht at least the political will is expressed to reduce the marginalisation of minority speech communities. The Treaty thus is a welcome aid to the Charter on Regional and Minority Languages and probably will contribute to the development of the minority speech communities, some of which often find themselves in a disadvantaged situation in border regions.

## The German Minority Speech Communities in Belgium

The situation of the autochthonous European minority speech communities was thoroughly documented and described in the Euromosaic report (Nelde *et al.*, 1996) where contact linguistic research helped to shed light on the interplay between geographical, economical, cultural, political, sociological, judicial and linguistic factors.

From all the investigated minority speech communities listed in the Euromosaic-report (for a more detailed outline we refer among others to Nelde *et al.*, 1996 and Nelde & Weber, 1998), we have chosen to single out the German minority speech communities in Belgium because of the predominant role attributed to the German Belgians in this research report. These are located alongside the well documented Germanic-Romance linguistic boundary that makes its way from the French North Sea (Dunkerque), flirts with the Belgian-French state border, then cuts across Belgium where it runs south of Brussels to make its way to the Belgian province of Luxembourg and then south of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the eastern part of France to Switzerland where it turns to Italy and subsequently gradually evolves into the Germanic-Slavic language border. Curving across several national territories the Germanic-Romance language border has given rise to the existence of several thoroughly investigated minority speech communities: the Dutch ('Flemish') in French Flanders, the German in Old and New Belgium, Alsace-Lorraine and South Tyrol, the Ladin ('Romanch') in Switzerland and Slovene in Northern Italy.

### Geographical notes on Old and New Belgium

Turning to the German minority speech communities in Belgium, one is confronted with a heterogeneous situation. The German parts of Belgium can be divided into areas that are now commonly known as Old Belgium and New Belgium. Old Belgium, with an estimated total of about 40,000 German speakers, belongs to the Belgian state since it was founded in 1830 and comprises (since 1839)<sup>3</sup>:

- (1) Old Belgium North, bordering the Netherlands (more specifically the province of Limburg) to the north, the Flemish Fouron area to the northwest, Wallonia to the west, and the officially German-speaking area of New Belgium Eupen to the east.
- (2) Old Belgium Central, a small area that lies to the southwest of St Vith and contains one village (Bocholz) and several hamlets.
- (3) Old Belgium South that consists of the Arlon (Arel) region along the western border of Luxembourg and borders France to the south.

These areas do not form a single unit and are not administratively connected to the eastern region, known as New Belgium, that was ceded by Prussia to Belgium following the First World War. This region consists of:

- (1) New Belgium Eupen that borders Germany to the east and Old Belgium North to the west.
- (2) New Belgium Malmédy that lies to the northwest of St. Vith, is Walloon and has only a small German-speaking minority.

- (3) New Belgium St Vith that also borders Germany to the east, New Belgium Malmédy to the northwest, Wallonia to the west and Luxembourg to the south.

The officially German-speaking area of Belgium with its c. 68,000 German speakers covers nine municipalities: the four municipalities of Eupen (Kelmis, Lontzen, Raeren and Eupen) and the five municipalities of St Vith (Bütgenbach, Büllingen, Amel, St Vith and Burg Reuland). New Belgium Eupen and New Belgium St Vith together form the German-speaking Community of Belgium. Like the areas of Old Belgium, New Belgium Malmédy is part of the French Community of the federal state of Belgium.

### **Some notes on the language based process of federalisation**

The ‘division’ of the Belgian state into communities and regions is the result of a process of federalisation that was triggered shortly after the Second World War by civic upheaval resulting from language-related socioeconomic differences between Dutch (Flanders) and French speakers (Wallonia).

With the first constitutional reform of 1970/71 the Dutch, the Walloon and – to a lesser degree – the Brussels region were created and appointed mainly economical powers. The Dutch, the French and the German Cultural Community that were also created were changed into language communities with the second constitutional reform of 1980. Since then the Flemish, the French and the German-speaking Community have had their own government, executive power and authority in matters relating to individuals as well as direct power over cultural matters. The latest constitutional reform of 1993/94 turned Belgium officially into a federal state.

The slow, consensus-based process of reshaping a unitary state into a federal one has undoubtedly benefited largely from the language regulating principle of territoriality. Until the beginning of the 1960s, the linguistic principle in effect in Belgium, with rare exceptions, was the personality principle. It was not until the linguistic legislation of 1962/63 that a precise demarcation of linguistic territories was drawn up and language use in education, administration and the workplace (i.e. language use between employers and employees) was officially regulated. Since then it has been possible to distinguish different linguistic territories [as a function of linguistic planning]:

- (1) The monolingual territories of Flanders and Wallonia that make up the two largest monolingual regions of the country. They are subjected to strict monolingualism, with Dutch to the north of the linguistic boundary and French to the south.
- (2) The bilingual territory of the capital, Brussels. Here Dutch and French each have their own linguistic infrastructure, which in principle prevents one language from being favoured to the detriment of the other.
- (3) Monolingual territories provided with linguistic facilities for the minority (for example, Fournon-Voeren, Comines-Komen, Mouscron-Moeskroen). Because the establishment of a strict linguistic boundary cannot perfectly take into account the minorities located on one side or the other of this boundary, Belgian language policy includes protective measures for the Dutch, French, and German border minorities (North Old Belgium, New

Belgium Malmédy). The territory officially recognised as German speaking in eastern Belgium (New Belgium Eupen, New Belgium St Vith) is equally affected by this ruling, which means that French enjoys certain rights in this German-language sector.

- (4) Monolingual territories without particular rights for autochthonous speech communities. Despite the fact that wide-ranging protection was assured even to very small minority groups, certain sectors still exist which are deprived of any kind of linguistic protection. This is notably the case for German linguistic territories in Belgian Luxembourg like South Old Belgium (near the town of Arlon/Arel) and Central Old Belgium (near Boholz-Beho north of the Grand Duchy). In these regions French was instituted as the sole administrative language.

This brief overview not only displays the modifications that were introduced by the territoriality principle in the Belgian organisation of linguistic territories. Although one could state that the legal establishment of an inner Belgian language frontier permits a systematic progression for the three languages in question – French, Dutch and German – and their dialects within their own territories, the overview also reveals the limitations of the territoriality principle, the systematic application of which could well be the source of new conflicts.

Despite all the negative criticism the principle of territoriality has given rise to in the past, it can now be affirmed that Belgium – as was the case with Switzerland – owes a certain socio-political and economic stability to the principle of territoriality. The vehemence and emotion of linguistic conflicts have shown an inverse tendency over the past few years since the implementation of the linguistic law. Some – mainly political – commotion is only to be heard when in the course of the still ongoing state reform the transfer of additional competences to the regions and the communities is being discussed.<sup>4</sup>

#### *External linguistic factors*

Because of geographical, historical and political circumstances both New and Old Belgium show a clear multilingual situation that – in accordance with the legislative principle of monolingual language areas – does not present itself as institutional bilingualism but predominantly as individual di- or triglossia. Accordingly, the speakers have two or more linguistic codes and effect code-switches in many daily situations without difficulty. Thus a particular ('diglossic') structure can be seen in this apparently voluntary choice of domains which is contrary to the initial impression of bilingualism: apart from the few unimportant contacts in which all idioms are interchangeable, the linguistic domains of each idiom are clearly distinct from one another and most often are mutually exclusive. The choice of language is determined by so many situational, contextual and other extra-linguistic factors that code-switching is unlikely outside this structure.

#### **Old Belgium**

The diglossic situation in Old Belgium can be characterised as follows:

- (1) Old Belgium North: Besides standard French also Lower Franconian/Limburgian dialects are spoken.

- (2) Old Belgium Central: Besides standard French also Moselle Franconian dialects are spoken.
- (3) Old Belgium South: Besides standard French also Moselle Franconian dialects are spoken.

French is the only official language in Old Belgium. One exception in Old Belgium is the already mentioned area around Montzen. There only one of the Belgian facilities to protect minorities applies – namely the exceptional use of German in correspondence with governmental bodies. Each individual municipality may apply for these ‘facilities’, but so far not a single one has done so. This is hardly surprising since linguistic fieldwork has abundantly shown that the linguistic awareness amongst the Old Belgians is very low. The taboo on German in the Old Belgian territories that had its origin in both world wars has largely been broken in the 1960s and 1970s. But people still face constant psychological pressure concerning the daily decision for or against a desired or imposed language variant. This psychological pressure is far stronger in Old Belgium than in New Belgium. Accordingly, every language user is forced to a mainstream attitude that in most of the cases turns against German. This accounts for the fact that German in Old Belgium disappeared from administration, education, the law and partially also from the church during the last four decades. Nowadays its dialect forms are merely spoken in the homes and villages of Old Belgium. The degree of Frenchification however shows some geographical variation. In the eastern parts of Old Belgium the proximity of the Netherlands and Germany seems to effect a positive influence on the surviving chances of German. In the western parts of Old Belgium that are geographically oriented towards the Walloon region the often stigmatised German mother tongue is, on the contrary even threatened in its last place of refuge – the family nucleus. Where it has taken decades for the linguistic boundary to shift a few miles from west to east it now seems that one or two generations suffice for the former Prussian state border, i.e. the borderline between Old and New Belgium, to coincide with the official linguistic boundary of the Belgian kingdom.

### **New Belgium**

New Belgium, where German is the official language and language of the territory – which makes German one of the three national languages –, shows a triglossic situation:

- (1) New Belgium Eupen: Besides standard German (as the official language) also Low Franconian/East Limburgian dialects (in the western part) and Ripuarian dialects (in the eastern part) as well as standard French are spoken.
- (2) New Belgium Malmédy: Besides standard French (as the official language) also standard German and Walloon dialects are spoken.
- (3) New Belgium St Vith: Besides standard German (as the official language) also Ripuarian dialects (in the northern part) and Moselle Franconian dialects (in the central and southern part) as well as standard French are spoken.

In New Belgium Eupen and New Belgium St Vith standard German can be used in all official and unofficial domains. Dialects mainly replace standard German

in oral communication. French is being promoted by the government of the German-speaking Community who points out the clear economic advantages of knowledge of this language (cf. <http://www.euregio.net/rdg/studie/001.html>: 3).

The attitudinal profile of the New Belgians is characterised by their position between on the one hand a French and a German cultural sphere and on the other the Belgian state that can count on their loyalty. They in a way still feel an ethnic-historical bond with Germany that used to be clearly expressed in the designation 'German Cultural Community' as it was used before the constitutional reform of 1980/81. Through that reform the name changed into 'German-speaking Community'. Such a designation – resulting either from historically based ideological reasons or the semantic limitation of the French word 'germanophone' to the German language, thereby disregarding the Dutch language – is not used for any other German minority with the sole exception of the German minority in Alsace-Lorraine.

### *Internal linguistic factors*

#### **Some general remarks**

Trying to describe the internal linguistic factors of German in New and Old Belgium one has to consider a few noteworthy facts that concern the situation of the German language in general. First of all it has to be noticed that in contrast to Slavic or Romance languages, the perception of a standard form, certainly in the case of German as a pluricentric Germanic language, is – in a minor way even for German Germans – far less visible, in no way dependent on a standardising measure, and represented as a standard palette with variants fluctuating away from the norm so that the tension between a linguistic norm and a linguistic change is probably only describable as a continuum based polarity. The difficulties in describing or categorising the struggle towards a standard multiply even further under the influence of a foreign pattern of communication. It is mainly the attempt to try to come to terms on various grammatical levels with a material world foreign to the German language that leads to variations that clearly leave their mark in countries in which German is a minority language.

A thorough investigation of the linguistic interferences, transferences and variations arising in the different contact zones along the Germanic-Romance language boundary could possibly give rise to an extended catalogue of language contact universals. A comparison of language contact processes in different contact areas will, however, always be a risky undertaking since – as Einar Haugen made clear – the different language contact areas have a historically unique ontology and since – as can be traced back in the work of Uriel Weinreich – it remains to a considerable degree unclear whether the linguistic outcomes of language contact are due to and/or shaped by structural differences between the involved languages, the psychology of the involved interlocutors, sociocultural factors, arbitrary processes or a combination of these. But as can be witnessed in the work of, among others, Claudia Maria Riehl (1996), Bernd Spillner (1992) and Jeanine Treffers-Daller (1988, 1997) these considerations hitherto have not paralysed the zealous quest for contact universals. It would be worthwhile to compare their and others' findings thus indicating universals that

are not limited to one particular side of the border but cover the whole range and straddle both sides.<sup>5</sup>

### Characteristics of Belgian German

Several investigations have shed their own light on the linguistic aspects of German in Old and New Belgium. In 1964, for example, Doris Magenau studied the German written language in Luxembourg and the German-speaking parts of Belgium. Her corpus was limited to newspapers: for Old Belgium she investigated *Die Fliegende Taube*, for New Belgium, among others, the *Eupener Nachrichten* and *Grenz Echo* (cf. Magenau, 1964: 109–10). She concludes that the newspapers of New Belgium only show few peculiarities (Magenau, 1964: 146).

This somewhat strong conclusion may have been brought about by the comparison with the French dominated neighbouring Old Belgian newspaper then an investigation of *Grenz Echo* from February to May 1973 (when *Grenz Echo* was already the sole remaining German newspaper in Belgium) revealed quite some peculiarities (cf. Nelde, 1974). This particular investigation focused on articles about typical Belgian political, cultural and economical topics and letters to the editor. The latter showed to be a particularly rich source of failures and so did the local sports section and small local advertisements.

Larger, non-local advertisements, however, displayed quite a few ‘aberrations’ too, e.g. in such cases where Belgian or foreign firms translated their texts especially for *Grenz Echo* or had them translated by second-rate translators. Even German firms were found to advertise in incorrect German. At the time of the investigation these findings were related to the situation of still strongly present Belgian centralism that manifested itself in a ‘centralistic translation policy’ using the Brussels translation offices as a link for all three language communities. But although Belgian centralism has since the 1970s been taken down on a political and administrative level, it remains present on an economic level where large Belgian firms with a more or less national monopoly still exist and foreign firms are still often represented by one central distributor or one central main importer. And that these firms have not changed their translation policy is obvious from such examples in which a Korean car manufacturer wants to put ‘das *Pünktlein* (after the Dutch word: *het puntje*; instead of the usual *Tüpfelchen* or *Punkt*) auf dem i’ [the dot on the i] in offering his customers a ‘Dachreling für den Gepäckträger’ (cf. *Grenz Echo*, 22 October 1999: 15). As a consequence, a possible buyer could find himself not only with a brand new car but also with a porter who is the proud owner of a roof rail, then: ‘Gepäckträger’ is clearly a literal translation of the French word ‘porte-bagages’ that is also used in Dutch and is translatable as ‘bagagedrager’ (‘luggage rack on a bicycle’ or ‘a person carrying luggage’; German: ‘Gepäckträger’) or as ‘bagagerek’ (‘roof rack’; German: Dachgepäckträger).

Examples such as the above show that *Grenz Echo* has remained an attractive source to track down peculiarities of Belgian German: even if they don’t originate from wrong translations then an investigation of *Grenz Echo* during one week in 1997 (the week from 8–14 March, cf. Hladky, 1999: 4) showed that the original classification made by Nelde still holds. This classification will be presented here, displaying examples from both investigations and a few other examples we could find in recent publications. After a few peculiarities on the

morpho-syntactic level the semantic-stylistic and the lexical level will be presented. It goes without saying that the representativeness of *Grenz Echo* (with not more than 15,000 daily readers) for the state of Belgian German in general should not be overestimated. In order to be able to draw more general conclusions other publications and other means of communication should be incorporated in an investigation.<sup>6</sup>

### Morphosyntactic level

Only in a few cases can variant forms be characterised as completely ungrammatical. Archaic, hypercorrect or rarely used forms are more the case here. The following morphosyntactic areas are represented as the causes:

(1) Prepositional verbs with variant prepositions

Sie heiratete *\*mit* Heinrich (French: elle se marie *avec* Heinrich; Dutch: ze trouwde *met* Heinrich) [She married with Heinrich].

Inwiefern trägt ein durch Luftschadstoffe belasteter Innenraum *\*bei* (instead of *zu*) der Entstehung von Umweltkrankheiten bei? [In how far does an interior that is filled with air full off harmful substances contribute to the development of environmental diseases?] (Hladky, 1999: 85)

Doch sollten sich die Universitäten noch stärker *\*an* (instead of *nach*) den Bedürfnissen der Wirtschaft ausrichten. [Anyway, the universities still should be guided even more by the needs of the economy] (Hladky, 1999: 85).

(2) Prepositional verbs with variant cases

Sich auf *\*einen* (instead of *einem*) engen Raum zusammenpferchen [To press oneself together on a tight space].

Der schreckliche Mord an *\*die* 16-jährige (instead of *dem/der* 16-jährigen) [The terrible murder of the 16 year old] (Hladky, 1999: 90).

So gingen die beiden Titelaspiranten torlos in *\*den* (instead of *die*) Kabinen. [And so both title-chasers went into the changing room without scoring a goal] (Hladky, 1999: 90).

(3) Variant uses of prepositions

*\*in* (instead of *auf*) der Hälfte der Strecke [being halfway].

*\*zur* (instead of *an der*) Tagesordnung stehen [to be on the agenda] (Hladky, 1999: 87).

der Traum *\*für* einen (instead of *von* einem) guten Startplatz war zunichte [the dream of a good starting place was dashed] (Haldky, 1999: 87).

(4) Case variations

der Vortrag eines jungen *\*Landwirten* (instead of *Landwirts*) [the speech of a young farmer.

Nachdem die Föderalregierung vorsichtige Hypothesen zu Wachstum und *Zinssätze* (instead of *Zinssätzen*) aufgestellt hatte. [After the federal government had formulated cautious hypotheses concerning growth and interest rates] (Hladky, 1999: 90).



fünfzehn Punkte nach sieben \**Spiele* (instead of *Spielen*) [fifteen points after seven games](Grenz Echo, 12 October 1999).

- (5) Variant uses of prefixes with verbs  
 wie oft der Fahrer sich dem Mitfahrer \**hinwendet* (instead of *zuwendet*) [how often the driver turned to his passenger].  
 Diese sind jetzt \**gefordert* (instead of *aufgefordert*), ihre Zukunft mit zu gestalten. [These are now invited to help shape their own future] (Hladky, 1999: 86).
- (6) Infringements of verb valencies  
 Machen Sie wie unsere Kunden instead of 'Machen Sie *es ...*' [Do as our customers].  
 Heute erwartet man, daß er \**sich* immer gleich bleibt [Today one expects him to remain himself] (Hladky, 1999: 84).
- (7) Infringements of word order  
 'Einige *haben schon gehört oder gelesen* von den Jesus-Bewegungen' instead of 'Einige *haben schon* von den Jesus-Bewegungen *gehört oder gelesen*'. [Some have already heard or read about the Jesus-movements].  
 'Der Minister *weist hin* auf eine baldige europaweite Verbotregelung' instead of 'Der Minister *weist* auf eine baldige europaweite Verbotregelung *hin*'. [The minister draws attention to an approaching impending Europe-wide prohibitory order] (Hladky, 1999: 92).

Ungrammatical features are not simply classified as mistakes by speakers whose mother tongue is German. Rather, there is a hierarchy emanating from those features that are valued most highly as ungrammatical (see (1) in above list) to errors that lie on the permissible side of the line (see (7) in above list).

### Semantic-stylistic level

On this level much depends on non-linguistic factors such as the level of education and culture, the socio-economic and politically involved willingness to adopt foreign systems of languages and values, or the prestige of the contact languages. At most, characteristics of a language of translation, produced by transferences and interferences, can be distinguished, such as inexactitude, vagueness and inaptitude as an expression of the results of linguistically creative efforts. That leads to the following – possible – catalogue of variation:

- (1) Literal translations into the target language of the minority render comprehension with the outside world more difficult.  
*Interpellationen* [interpellations] – in the language of politics the use of internationalisms and French forms occurs more frequently than in standard German.
- (2) Linguistically creative efforts are only then successful if areas of outer and inner minority concepts are taken into consideration.

*Stiftung für Berufsbildung im Bauwesen* for the French *Fond de la Formation professionnelle de la Construction* [Foundation for the professional training in the building industry].

- (3) The lack of a conceptual world in a standard language which fits the minority can often result in a typical quality of German being worn out: so-called momentary compounds fill in the gaps of a linguistic system.  
*Entminierungstrupp* instead of *Entschärfungstrupp* (army brigade that delouses).
- (4) A lack of linguistic feeling and the social structure of the addressee-group, whose sociological elite has often already undergone a language shift, lead to an excessively frequent use of colloquial expressions or, less frequently, regional variants.  
Benco löst sich auf ohne zu klumpnern [Benco (i.e. a brand of cacao) dissolves without lumping together].
- (5) The frequency of foreign lexemes lies distinctly above that of standard language not subject to interference.  
*Occasion* (French: occasion) for 'Gebrauchtwagen' [second-hand car].
- (6) Internationalisms with nationally influenced nuances acquire the meanings belonging to the dominant and interfering contact language so that the minority language shows a great number of elaborations in meaning.  
*Garage* or *Atelier* for 'Autowerkstatt' [service station].
- (7) Uncertainties in expression lead to a tendency for verbalistic words to increase in size for which so-called expletives are, above all, responsible.  
absolut [absolutely]; gewissermaßen [in a way].
- (8) The separation of the monolingual, standard-language world leads to certain failures in comprehension which, in an active use of the language, often shows as incomprehensible double semantics.  
Unnützlich bewerben, wenn nicht seriös [No need to apply, if not serious].

### Lexical level

This level is most intensely subject to fluctuations, dependent on fashionable, ideological, political-educational and socio-economic factors of the conceptual environment of a minority.

Characteristic features of the nominal field are two of the word-formation patterns diverging from the standard language: the use of auxiliary languages on the one hand and the occasional use of foreign lexemes as Belgicisms (Gallicisms, Italianisms, Netherlandisms, etc.) on the other. These lexemes usually occur as components.

- (1) Auxiliary languages

#### *Latinisations*

According to the Swiss model (*Pro Helvetia; pro inventute*) multilingual countries use Latin or Latinised concepts in order to avoid impractical repetition for economically unaccountable, aesthetic or informative reasons (e.g.

postage stamp prints, club signs). At the same time, an actual or alleged objectivity is thereby aimed for in language conflict zones.

*Belga* [a brand of cigarettes];  
*Commodo-Verfahren*;  
 drei Runden vor *Ultimo* (Hladky, 1999: 95).

#### *Frenchifications*

Besides the apparent neutrality of Latinised symbols, the prestigious status of the dominant and interfering language is regarded as being worthy of imitation within the economic field – above all amongst small and intermediate languages without any importance in the world – so that foreign terminology is preferred to native or standard language symbolisation.

*Crèmerie* [ice cream parlour];  
*Croissanterie* [place where croissants are sold];  
*Eclaireure* [girl scout] (Hladky, 1999: 95);  
 Der amerikanische *Pneu*-Produzent [the American tyre manufacturer] (Hladky, 1999: 95).

#### *Anglo-Americanisations*

As the significance of French decreases in the world, English has, to a considerable extent, already taken over the fashionable, international importance which French formerly possessed. Consequently, a decline in French *vis-à-vis* English has already been linguistically noticeable in the economic field.

*Gasoil* and *fuel* are superseding *Mazout*.

This phenomenon is secondary, however, since the increasing importance of ‘franglais’ may be partly responsible for it.

*Building*; *Meeting*; *Halle* instead of ‘Hausflur’; *Parking* instead of ‘Parkplatz’ (Hladky, 1999: 95).

‘Non-Belgian’ terminology can originate from Frenchifications and Anglo-Americanisations as well as minority speakers in the same way as its imposition by a social and economic preponderance of the majority over the minority.

## (2) Foreign lexemes as Belgicisms

A division of these numerous lexemes, which are apparently of enormous influence for linguistic functions in a contact zone, is made according to the degree of deviation from the standard language, whereby comprehension should serve as the criterion for acceptability.

#### *Equivalencies of standard language*

These are concerned with lexemes which correspond to the standard language. Therefore they may still be understood by speakers of the standard language.

*Elementarschule* (French: école élémentaire) [elementary school].

#### *Characteristic formations of minority speakers*

In the rarest cases, these new formations are new creations. They are generally derivations and, more usually, compounds. Normally, the exact seman-

tics of these formations remain hidden to the speakers of the standard language.

*Associative formations*

Owing to his knowledge of foreign abstract ideas and inter-nationalisms, the standard speaker is, in many cases, in the position of being able to associate the approximate meaning of these concepts.

*Bruttonationaleinkommen* [gross national product];

*Milizpflichtiger* [conscript].

*Characteristic formations without standard reference*

These comprise lexemes which the standard speaker can neither associate nor identify without knowledge of the different situation in the neighbouring region. Thus he can ascertain only with difficulty whether the occasional concept is related with or without an equivalent in the standard language.

*Parallel forms*

Owing to a lack of contacts in the economic or educational sector, new concepts arise which are available in the standard language and already occur with their own symbolisation.

*Promotion* [promotion; whereby the word is also used for the 'promotion' of e.g. a football from second to first division and the last year of secondary education].

*Formations in a foreign environment*

Without an exact insight into the political-administrative functioning of structures in the environment of minority languages, such formations which cover a foreign material environment remain incomprehensible. In addition, it is characteristic that abstract ideas are often taken up as sentence-expressions so that a transfer into the individual mind of the standard speaker is only possible by means of definitions or paraphrases.

*Dioxinkrise* (*Grenz Echo*, 26 July 1999) [This refers to a Belgian governmental crisis caused by the contagion of fodder with dioxin].

*Sondierer* (*Grenz Echo*, 28 July 1999) [is the equivalent of the French word 'formateur' that is translated into Dutch as 'formateur' and refers to the person who is charged with forming a new government].

It is obvious that, on the most important grammatical levels, such effective variations greatly influence the linguistic behaviour of a diglossic speaker in a minority language area.

## Outlook

Looking back on linguistic research that is related to Old and New Belgium it appears that the focus of linguistic research on interferences, transferences and error analysis as illustrated above was typical of the 1970s. In the midst of the first phases of the federalisation process it was a way to search for the internal linguistic consequences of language contact in a multilingual country: in that, it contrasted with and was at the same time complementary to the philological, etymological and dialectological research that was prevalent in the 1960s and

had contributed to the establishment of the political language border. A turn to more socio-linguistically related issues came to a head during the 1980s and profited from contact linguistic methodology that was being developed for research on minority speech communities, and in the 1990s to aspects of europeanisation and regional development and their consequences for the German minority speech communities in Belgium.

Within this variety of linguistic research it is mainly contact linguistic research in the 1980s and 1990s that has empirically grasped such phenomena as language contact and conflict and has helped to shed light on aspects of language attitudes, language maintenance and language shift. It will be the task of further research to add on to this legacy and to investigate the contact and conflict potential that constantly changes shape because of altering political, economical, social and cultural circumstances in a critical and interdisciplinary way. Considerable attention should above all be paid to the Old Belgian areas since it cannot be the task of the researcher to take situations that have arisen out of a historical and political coincidence for granted and to overlook the persistent asymmetrical language that is characteristic of border regions. In this sense the Old Belgian areas still represent a challenge for those contact linguists who wish to investigate subcutaneous and sublimated language contact and conflict on an empirical basis.

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### Notes

1. Euregio Maas-Rhein, Interreg II. *Jahresbericht 1996–97*, 15.
2. ‘Glocalisation’ is understood here as ‘globalisation’ encompassed by ‘localisation’ whereby ‘localisation’ here also encompasses ‘regionalisation’.)
3. For more details on the history of the German minority speech communities we refer to Pabst (1979).
4. For further reading on the linguistic situation in Belgium we refer to the articles listed in the bibliography as well as to the contributions of Albert Verdoodt, Roland Willemyns, Rudolf Kern and Sonja Vandermeeren in Goebel (1997).
5. As in Treffers-Daller’s research on Brussels and Strasbourg.
6. Other examples can be found in Kern (1979), Combüchen (1998) and Riehl (1996).

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# Luxembourg, a Multilingual Society at the Romance/Germanic Language Border

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In 1839 the current borders of Luxembourg were drawn approximately along the Romance-Germanic language border. From that moment on, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was inhabited by a population speaking a German dialect, while by historic tradition and political opportunity, the administrative and judicial language continued to be French. This paper focuses on two aspects: the study of the interference between Lëtzeburgesch on the one hand and French, German and English on the other. The description of the present linguistic situation based on a sociolinguistic survey done in 1997. Bourdieu's concept of the legitimate language is modified to match the Luxembourgish situation of 'triglossia with trilingualism' and the legitimate multilingual language competence, which requires a subtle understanding of the combination of different varieties of the three languages officially in use in Luxembourg, is depicted.

## Introduction

### A multilingual country

In order to properly understand the linguistic situation in Luxembourg, we must take into account Luxembourg's geographical position, which places it on the linguistic border that cuts Western Europe more or less along the length of the river Rhine in a Germanic and Romance area. During the Middle Ages, Luxembourg overlapped this frontier and since the decree of 1340, shared the administration of a Walloon area and a German area. Then in 1839, following the Belgian revolution with which Luxembourg was associated, the Grand Duchy was established by the Treaty of London within the territorial limits that are recognised today. It may be said that Luxembourg was the first modern state because, for the first time, the great European powers that imposed the territorial settlement followed the linguistic border to demarcate a territorial frontier, with the exception of some deviations for geopolitical (e.g. Arlon) or mere technical reasons.

So, in 1839, the general population, most of whom were peasants, spoke West-Moselle-Franconian, a German dialect. The nobility, the bourgeoisie and the senior functionaries spoke French, whilst the clerics preferred German. Moselle-Franconian was spoken in a region that largely overlapped the borders of the Luxembourgish State. But its evolution has been divergent in the four states concerned: Luxembourg, Belgium, France and Germany; evidence – if needed – that the language change is not dictated by an internal logic.

Since 1848 a policy of bilingual instruction has been followed, with German predominating in the lower and French in the higher classes. At the age of six the pupils start learning to read and write in German and at the end of the second class they begin with French. Nonetheless, only the most educated or those in contact with French native-speakers can speak French easily.

Luxembourg's path from a state to a nation (Trausch, 1992) was accompanied by a slow promotion of the patois: Lëtzebuergesch began developing from a German dialect to a distinct language, that became the symbol – and for many even the essence – of Luxembourgish identity.

Even though this was a consequence of its independence and its willpower to differentiate itself first from Prussia and later from the different German states, another element that favoured this evolution was the fact, that even at the beginning of the 19th century the Moselle-Franconian spoken in the duchy of Luxembourg, as a border dialect, was profoundly influenced by standard French as well as by the neighbouring Romance dialects of Wallonie and Lorraine.

The climax of this evolution was the law of 1984: Lëtzebuergesch was declared the national language of Luxembourg; French and German were accepted as administrative languages, while French was confirmed as the language of the law. So the present situation is often described by linguists as a 'triglossia with trilingualism' (Knowles, 1980) and will be described in the second part of this contribution.

### Overview of studies on Lëtzebuergesch

Research on Lëtzebuergesch is marked by two opposing phenomena. On the one hand, given that Luxembourg is a small country without its own university, academic research in all areas is still in embryo. On the other hand, as Lëtzebuergesch constitutes a major factor of national identity, the interest in its study is very high. Due to the lack of proper university-level research, secondary-school teachers dedicate themselves to the study of the language (Hoffmann, 1989). With no claim to being complete, the list includes Joseph Tockert (1875–1950), Hélène Palgen (1902–1993) and Robert Bruch (1920–1959). The latter is considered the founder of modern linguistics of Lëtzebuergesch. Fernand Hoffmann (1929–2000) took over and published, in cooperation with Gerald Newton, the work of reference on Lëtzebuergesch (Newton, 1996). Furthermore, several doctoral theses, stemming from both nationals and non-nationals, were produced. For example: Guy Berg – in the present context in particular the chapter *Luxemburg im Rahmen der Mehrsprachigkeitsforschung* (Berg, 1993: 115–51) and its extensive discussion of Kloss's concept of *Ausbausprache* (Berg, 1993: 86–114); Kathryn Davis (1994) for her original ethnographic approach, as well as the latest Peter Gilles (1999) on the standardisation of Lëtzebuergesch. Nico Weber (1994) contributes a very complete article, whereas the BALEINE study (Fehlen *et al.*, 1998) constitutes the first large-scale empirical sociolinguistic study of its kind in Luxembourg. Histories on German also cover Lëtzebuergesch (von Polenz, 1999: 118–9, 150–2, 167–9). An extensive bibliography can be found in Newton (1996: 258–81).

Besides the academic research, one must not forget the activities of the defenders of Lëtzebuergesch, regrouped in *Actioun Lëtzebuergesch (AL)*; the most prolific being Henri Rinnen (1914–1998). The meeting point for the two groups are the different commissions set up by the government to codify the language through the edition of dictionaries. Even though these efforts are too modest in the eyes of the militants of the AL, one cannot deny that they have intensified with the setting up of the *Conseil Permanent de la langue*



*luxembourgeoise* (CPLL) in 1998, as well as the increasing demand for courses of Lëtzebuergesch for foreigners, which is creating a new market for manuals and other didactic materials (Kartheiser, 2000). The CPLL ([www.cpll.lu](http://www.cpll.lu)) has created a new orthography (officialised by the *Règlement grand-ducal of 30 July 1999*) and currently works on two dictionaries and a spellchecker ([www.crppl.lu/cortina](http://www.crppl.lu/cortina)).

## Languages in Contact

Luxembourg, a multilingual country, represents an ideal case study for any study on interferences between different languages. By interference we denote the transfer of elements of one language to another at different levels such as lexical, grammatical, orthographical and phonological. We will focus on the lexical level, i.e. the borrowing of words. The phonetic interference has been studied by Krier (1981).

We shall concentrate on the study of *the interference of Lëtzebuergesch with French, German and English*. The *LUXEMBURGER WÖRTERBUCH* (Tockert *et al.*, 1950: Xxxiv–Xxxviii), the five volumes of which were published between 1950 and 1977, provides a global view, which continues to be valid. To date, very few studies have been dedicated to the influence of Lëtzebuergesch on the languages of the numerous immigrants. Pagliarini (1995) gives a few examples of the typical language of Italians in Luxembourg. Bento and Da Cunha (2000) have undertaken a linguistic study of the Portuguese immigrants, while Beirão (1999: 85–106) concentrates on sociolinguistic aspects.

## French–Lëtzebuergesch

Tockert (1910) presented the first systematic study from an etymological and cultural historical point of view, which later provided the basis for the *Luxemburger Wörterbuch*. Hess (1946: 81–3) compiled a list of 70 French loan words and Southworth (1954) catalogued more than 400, while Bruch (1969a) focused only on the vocabulary of the railroad. In general ‘these words reach into many fields: food and the accouements (*sic*) of eating; household articles; clothes and fashions; members of the family; the theatre; etc’. (Southworth, 1954: 19).

Some examples from the Hess list (in the 1999 orthography):

Lëtzebuergesch	French	English
Ënn	oignon	onion
Koseng	cousin	cousin
Kréischel	groseille	black currant
Pëll	poule	poult
Porträt	portrait	portrait
Rengglott	reine-claude	greengage
Serjant	serre-joint	clamp

Most ancient borrowings underwent alteration. Even if more recent ones have not been transformed in any way, at least their pronunciation has been changed: ‘The German language retains, as a rule, the final accent of French loan-words, whereas in Lëtzebuergesch these words often shift the accent to the initial syllable’. (Southworth, 1954: 5).

Borrowings from Walloon and Lorraine dialects seem frequent. Reisdorfer (1992) presents detailed research on 19 words borrowed from these *patois*, half of which are no longer in use, as are the mere folkloristic objects they designate (as the Halett and the Kuwi).

Lëtzeburesch	patois	English
Dabo	dabo	silly person
Halett	halette	headdress
Kulang	coulant	gutter
Kuwi	couvet	foot-warmer

The contact with standard French always was intense. It is not only the principal administrative language in Luxembourg, but also the language of prestige. In the 19th century it was also the language of communication used by the numerous Luxembourgish emigrants in France and Belgium. Even after 1984, when the law on languages recognised Lëtzeburesch as administrative language, the Luxembourg administration writes in French practically without exception.

Until very recently the Luxembourgers had an official French Christian name in their passport, whereas they used its popular Luxembourg version in everyday life. For men, the most frequent name was Jean (Jang), for women it was Marie, a name pronounced with the accent on the first syllable; other Marie were called Maria, still with the accent on the first syllable contrary to the German Maria, or they preferred a diminutive Marrechen or even Maréi (Tockert *et al.*, 1950: vol. III: 91).

A second incursion of the administrative language into everyday life includes the names of localities. A complete list on the internet site of the *Institut Grand-Ducal de linguistique, d'ethnologie et d'onomastique* (<http://www.igd-leo.lu/igd-leo/onomastics/villages.htm>) shows that with a few rare exceptions (example: L: Kiirchen, F: Basbellain, D: Niederbesslingen), the majority of the names vary only on the level of suffixes (example: L: -engen, F: -ange, D: -ingen) and prefixes (example: L: Nidder-, F: Bas-, D: Nieder- /Unter-).

It was only in the 1980s that the use of Lëtzeburesch instead of French on signposts and commercial signs became more usual. Until then at first sight, the country might have seemed French speaking to any tourist arriving in Luxembourg.

The French influence on Lëtzeburesch manifests itself by mechanisms, which constitute a continuum between borrowing and code-switching. Whereas some authors (Berg, 1993: 133) use the concept of code-switching merely for entire phrases, we would also use it for intra-sentential code switching, i.e. for portions of phrases, idiomatic expressions or even for single words, so as to take into account that virtually every French (or German) word can be used in Lëtzeburesch using some simple rules. (For instance: the French verbs can be borrowed, attaching the verbal ending <éiren> to the stem; while for the nouns the French suffix <ion> is changed in <ioun>.) Sometimes the Lëtzeburesch article is attached to the unchanged French noun. (For example: the title of the well-known comedy called 'La cage aux folles', which in its Lëtzeburesch translation is simply called *D'cage aux folles*.)

This practice is considered to be a bad use of the language, especially when Lëtzeburesch words exist, as well as the expression of a certain snobbery, of

which the authors of popular plays have never tired to make. The following fictitious example, however (Hess, 1946: 81) may be slightly exaggerated:

Dir sidd accuséiert d'Libertéit vun den Enchèren entravéiert ze hun.

F: Vous êtes accusés d'avoir entravé la liberté des enchères.

'correct' L: Dir sidd ugeklot, d' Fräiheet vun der Stee behënnert ze hunn.

E: You are accused of having blocked the freedom of the biddings

During discussions in Lëtzebuergesch on texts written in French, one can often hear sentences marked by the importation of ready-made French phrases, idiomatic expressions or technical words. While analysing a text *corpus* stemming from the debates of the *Chambre des Députés*, the Luxembourg parliament, F. Krier, differentiated two strategies:

*l'un découlant du besoin de combler une lacune dans la langue où l'on se sent moins bien à l'aise, l'autre représentant une fonction de stratégie discursive de la part de locuteurs qui maîtrisent parfaitement les langues en jeu.* (Krier, 1992: 55)

Example: 'Bei dem Projet *iwwert den Transport vun DECHETS TOXIQUES ET DANGEREUX...*' (Krier, 1992: 57)

*Projet* is considered by Krier to be a loanword, whereas *DECHETS TOXIQUES ET DANGEREUX* is deemed to be code switching. She does not mention the word *Transport*, which means that she implicitly regards it to be an 'authentically' Lëtzebuergesch word, even though it is also common in other languages. Among the 300 examples of code-switching that she indexed in her *corpus* of the parliamentary debates, 90% concerned French. In a more recent study Krier (1999) concentrates on a *corpus* of 195 idiomatic expressions used in the Chamber-debates: 14% are genuine Lëtzebuergesch ones, while 79% are borrowed from German and 5% from French.

### German-Lëtzebuergesch

Because Lëtzebuergesch is a Germanic language the interferences with the German language have a different status than those with French.

Germanisation of Lëtzebuergesch, i.e. the replacement of existing lexical and grammatical particularities of Lëtzebuergesch by standard German ones is not a recent phenomenon. For Bruch (1953: 82) it started with the progress of public education in the second half of the 19th century that also led to a loss of creativity. As proof he states the fact that, during the Colorado beetle plague in 1877, Lëtzebuergesch was unable to find a word of its own and simply took over the German word *Kartoffelkäfer* to refer to the harmful little beast, whereas a few years beforehand, it had created an original word, namely *Fixfeier*, to designate matches.

Even if the thesis of the loss of creativity has been contradicted by the invention of a great number of typical Lëtzebuergesch words for use in everyday life (*Bitzmaschinn*, sewing machine; *Bic*, ball point), the influence of the German language due to its proximity is considered a real threat, by the defenders of Lëtzebuergesch. Today, under the influence of the German media (above all television), existing Luxembourg words are replaced with German words. In a recent publication (Roth, 1999) 800 examples of abusive loans that should be avoided (of which the great majority stem from German), were counted:

Traditional word	recent loan	German word	translation
Benzinsstatioun	Tankstell	Tankstelle	petrol station
dëslescht	kiirzlech	kürzlich	recently
kregéilen	nörgelen	nörgeln	to bicker
plënneren	emzéien	umziehen	to move
Suckel	Schnuller	Schnuller	pacifier

Germanisation is not only limited to the lexical level, but also influences the syntax (Rinnen, 1998).

### Lëtzebuergesch-German

On the other hand, the interference from Lëtzebuergesch to German can be found in texts, which transcribe things said or thought in Lëtzebuergesch, especially in the Luxembourgish newspapers, which are mainly written in German.

In the majority of cases, interferences in German texts are considered to be irregularities or errors, above all if a 'correct' German word or expression exists. In order to combat the latter, as well as those in French, Bruch (1969b) already proposed specific language training, concentrating on interference and *faux amis*. Berg (1993: 137–40) provides a list of more than a hundred of what he calls his own '*persönliche Fehlleistungen*', which he compares to the recommendations in the *Wahrig* reference dictionary.

Interference	origin	WAHRIG	English
mehr schön	méi schein	schöner	more beautiful
die Zensur	d'Zensur	das Zeugnis	the report
das Krähenauge	d'Kréienan	das Hühnerauge	the corn
ich bin froh mit dir	ech si frou mat dir	ich liebe dich	I love you

We shall dwell on the latter example, because it illustrates the reciprocal inter-dependencies and interferences so well. In fact the younger generation uses the word *lieben* (to love) and even more so *verliebt sinn* (to be in love) readily in Lëtzebuergesch. The *Luxemburger Wörterbuch* suggests the expression *gär hunn* (to love), but also knows the word *liben*, however with an ironic, even negative connotation:

Liben *trans. Verb.*: «lieben» – *meist iron.*; du kanns mech l. (*abweisend*) – o lib mech (*abweisend*) – *sonst: gär* (s.d.) hun

When discussing the problem of the different national standard variations of German, Ammon (1995: 398–404) notes that in Luxembourg, no attempt to codify a specific variety has been made so far and that the external codification (for example by the *Duden-Institut*) remains in an embryonic state. His critical discussion (Ammon, 1995: 402–4) of a small list of just over a hundred words from a previous study sponsored by the *Duden-Institut* (Magenau, 1964) revealed that many are not really in use or considered incorrect. What remains above all, are the technical, administrative or legal terms used in Luxembourg, for which no precise corresponding German word exists. For illustration, a few extra terms shall be listed:

Luxembourg variety of German	Lëtzebuergesch	Standard German of Germany	English
Deputiertenkammer	Deputéierte Chamber	Parlament	Parliament
Protokoll	Pretekoll	Strafzettel	Ticket
Student	Student	Schüler/Student	pupil/student

According to the *Luxemburger Wörterbuch*, the word *Student* (or *Stodent*) is not only used indiscriminately for students and for pupils of secondary education but in jest even for primary school children. This example reflects a small rural society, where the levels of instruction tended to be low.

### Lëtzebuergesch-French

Given that French continues to be looked upon as the language of prestige, any deviation from the norms of classic literary French is considered an error, or even barbarism. Noppeney (1959), fervent supporter of the French-speaking world in Luxembourg, published an entire book criticising the errors that his compatriots tend to make. Many of these so-called errors seem to have been eradicated today (example: *académicien* instead of *universitaire* for academic) according to the most recent study on French in Luxembourg (Bender-Berland, 2000: 37), which presents an extensive analysis of grammatical and lexical specificities of the French used in Luxembourg.

Notwithstanding that a continuum exists between the occasional and personal mistake on the one hand and the generalised error on the other – as for German – very few words, above all used in an administrative environment, can be referred to as a specific variety of French in Luxembourg.

Luxembourg variety of French	Lëtzebuergesch	ROBERT	English word
place de travail	Aarbechtsplaz	emploi	situation
préscolaire	Préscolaire	école maternelle	preschool
tirette	Tirett	fermeture éclair	zipper
week-end	Weekend	résidence secondaire	vacation home

Often though, these so-called Luxembourgisms are in fact Belgicisms (tirette).

### English-Lëtzebuergesch

Since the beginning of the specific interest in the Luxembourg language in the 19th century, many observers were amazed by the apparent relationship between Lëtzebuergesch and English. The following examples of such correspondences are often quoted:

Lëtzebuergesch	English	German
Ham	ham	Schinken
Enkel	ankle	Knöchel
Knäip	knife	Küchenmesser
Maufel	mouthful	Bissen

Even if the Saxon ancestry of the Luxembourgers is no longer taken seriously nowadays, 'the idea none the less still finds discussion, probably in its ease of distancing the Luxembourgers from the Germans and bringing them closer to (...) the English' (Newton, 1996: 42). In a recent publication Weber (2001b) used this controversy as a pretext to conduct a study on the linguistic geography and history of the country. He concludes that in the majority of cases these correspondences can also be found in other dialects or stages of the historic evolution of different languages. A single example will suffice to show to what extent this research was far-reaching and of great scholarship:

Lëtzebuergesch	Enkel
German	Knöchel
English	ankle
Old English	anclēow
Dutch	enkel
Middle Dutch	anclau
Old Frisian	oncle(w)
Middle Low German	enkel
Ripuarian	enkel
Old High German	anchala
Old Nordic	ékkla

For other words (Weber 2001b), a loan from the French is most probable:

Lëtzebuergesch	Pai
English	pay
Old English	paie

In the case of some words, a direct and ancient loan from English is conceivable, even if other correspondences can be found somewhere in the evolutionary chain of German.

Lëtzebuergesch	Tipp <n>	tippen <v>
English	tip <n> (for rubbish)	tip <v>
Middle Low German	tip <n>	

Weber's study is interesting above all because it allows to back up the hypothesis of the '*Reliktraum*'. It explains the specificity of the Moselle-Franconian with the marginal position of this linguistic territory, which is accentuated by the lack of channels of communication until the end of the 19th century, as well as the presence of French as an administrative language and a language of prestige, that further reduced the contact with standard German.

Direct modern loans from English are frequently used in domains such as sports, science, technology and represent a phenomenon which is far from being specifically Luxembourgish.

Contemporary authors have tried to assimilate loans from English (as well as French) using a phonetic orthography, which has not been unanimously

accepted by literary critics, above all if the English word loses its readability in the process.

Break-down	Bréikdaun
Baby	Béibi
GI	Dji-ei

An analysis of the terminology of the neologisms used in Computer Sciences (Weber, 1993: 156–7) shows the predominance of English, whereas Lulling (1997) is in the process of analysing the lexical creativity of Lëtzebuergesch, particularly on the Internet. This study shows that creativity is far from dead, but that it makes strong use of interference, indeed the deliberate play on words: e.g. *Idiotenchat* (a silly chat).

### Multiple interferences

Especially for educated Luxembourgers ‘code-switching is a normal and expected pattern of interaction within their multilingual communities’ (Davis, 1994: 133). Given that the Luxembourg author addresses a public who knows both German and French, these language abilities are often used to create certain effects. In this way, Guy Rewenig and Roger Manderscheid, the best-known living authors and the first Lëtzebuergesch novelists, have often used this procedure, among others in order to reflect on the linguistic situation in Luxembourg. In Rewenig’s (1990) best-selling children’s book *Muschkilusch* (*mouche qui louche* = squinting fly), the young *Kätt* (*Cathérine* on her birth certificate) born into a working class environment, faces many problems when learning French at school. The more or less explicit goal of Rewenig and Manderscheid is to favour the encounter of the different communities in Luxembourg. This can be illustrated by a typical quotation from the poem ‘*den internationale match*’ (The International Football Game) by Manderscheid (2000) (the only two Luxembourg words are in italics):

Nous jouerons à la brésilienne  
 le meneur de jeu sera Ben  
 wir sind *technesch* besser  
 obendrein etwas kesser  
 avanti *dir* gentlemen.

A sophisticated form of language play consists of deliberately mixing up all known languages and inventing new words. One example from the famous *chansonnier* Putty Stein (1888–1955) is that he replaces the correct *Zylinder*, (the top hat), with *Cylendrier*, an invented French loanword.

While the writer uses this method deliberately, it also exists in the common language. An example for this multilingual creativity of the Luxembourgish language – others would call it the devastation of interferences – is the word for *rubbish tip*. The ‘correct’ *Tipp* is used less and less and is replaced by the word *Deponie*, a German borrowing. This affiliation is further accentuated by the addition of the German word *Müll* (rubbish), which also has overthrown the traditional word *Offfall* (from D: *Abfall*). In the space of two decades, *Tipp* has been transformed into *Mülldeponie*. In French texts written in Luxembourg the word

*déponie*, which is a lexical creation of Luxembourg-French, sometimes is used to replace the standard French term *décharge*.

## The Language Market

Being a very small country, Luxembourg's economy is, and has always been, dependent on foreign capital, as well as alien blue- and white-collar workers (Weides, 1999). A large number of these expatriates have come to live in Luxembourg, but only a few have settled. In order to clearly differentiate between recent immigrants on the one hand and the integrated immigrant population as well as the core-population on the other hand, we will, according to Norbert Elias, refer to the recent immigrants as 'newcomers' and the other group as the 'established' (Elias & Scotson, 1994).

Since the late 1970s, the establishment of the financial sector in Luxembourg has caused the entire Luxembourgish economy to boom, leading to a demand for a new workforce from outside. In the last 10 years, people from the immediate border regions of France, Belgium and Germany have come to work in Luxembourg, as both blue-collar and white-collar workers, returning to their countries of residence at night: they are known as *frontaliers*, or cross-border commuters (Fehlen, 1997) (see Table 1). Their motivation to learn Lëtzebuergesch is very low.

**Table 1** Salaried employment (31.03.2000)

<i>Residents</i>	65.2%
Foreign residents	27.7%
Luxembourgish residents	37.5%
<i>Transborder commuters</i>	34.8%
From Belgium	9.7%
From Germany	6.5%
From France	18.6%
Total salaried employment	242,267 100%

Source: IGSS, STATEC

At the beginning of this year, 36% of the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy were non-Luxembourgish nationals. One quarter of the resident population originates from Romanophone countries (see Table 2). In Luxembourg City, the capital, more than half of the population are foreigners. (Statistical information on Luxembourg can be found on [www.statec.lu](http://www.statec.lu)).

## The BALEINE survey

In the spring of 1997, Fehlen *et al.* (1998) carried out a sociolinguistic investigation, called the BALEINE survey. Baleine – the whale – represents an emblem for the foreigners who's integration in fact was the main subject of this research (see also Beirão, 1999). We asked a sample of 2002 people 19 questions about their language knowledge, their linguistic abilities and about what language they would be using in different situations: 24 variables, such as sex, age, income,



**Table 2** Population structure: Censuses ('000)

	1981	1991	2001
<i>Total population</i>	364.6	384.4	441.3
Luxembourgers	268.8	271.4	276.6
Aliens	95.8	113	164.7
<i>Country of origin (%)</i>			
Portugal	8.0	10.2	13.2
Italy	6.1	5.1	4.6
France	3.3	3.4	4.6
Belgium	2.2	2.6	3.4
Germany	2.4	2.3	2.4
Britain	0.5	0.8	1.1
Netherlands	0.8	0.9	0.9
Other EU	2.9	1.7	2.3
Other	2.9	2.4	4.8
Aliens	26.3	29.4	37.3

Source: STATEC.

educational level, nationality, country of birth, etc., were recorded in order to situate their position in the social space.

### *The Luxembourgers*

Here are some of the findings for the Luxembourgish nationals:

- Lëtzebuergesch is of course the language of Luxembourgers, but 1% of them can't speak it.
- It is the mother tongue of only 85% of them.
- Luxembourgers are multilingual, but their linguistic competencies depend on social position, age and also the region of the country.

A more synthetic view can be presented through cluster-analysis. Based on the data of 975 people of Luxembourg nationality and 29 active variables, Fehlen(1998) established the following typology of the language behaviour for four different clusters:

**The German-writers** (39%). In this cluster we find those, who can read, write and speak better German than French.

**The French-writers** (29%). In the second cluster, we find those, who prefer French to German. This preference has two distinct reasons: 7% have parents coming from Romanophone countries, the other 22% have a better than average education.

**The real French-speakers** (4%). In this cluster we find the people whose mother tongue is French: 47% of the members of this cluster consider Lëtzebuergesch to be their second spoken language and 23% their third spoken language. It is also interesting to see that only 40% of those who have a French father are in this cluster. The others are, at least linguistically speaking, better integrated.

**The minimalists** (28%). In most European countries these would be the monolingual people, speaking only their own language. But as the Grand-Duchy has

three official languages, in this cluster we find those least equipped with linguistic skills: 57% have only fulfilled primary school, 52% of them are between 60 and 70 years old.

The cluster of the 'minimalists' can be separated in two sub-clusters made up of those people, whom we will call respectively the trilingual ones (23%) and the bilingual ones (5%). The 'trilingual ones' claim neither to read (95%), nor to write (96%), nor to speak (94%) a fourth language; 58% of them have primary school educational levels; 50% never read books; 20% are unskilled and 15% are skilled workers, while 7% are farmers. They all have low incomes.

In the class of the 'bilingual ones', we find above all individuals belonging to the rural milieu, not very educated and old people. They are farmers (12%) or unskilled workers (21%); 60% say they never read books. In this group 44% say they watch television programmes in Lëtzebuergesch and 20% claim they read the Lëtzebuergesch newspapers. However, as the Lëtzebuergesch articles are practically non-existent and the television programmes in Lëtzebuergesch are limited to one hour a day, these answers suggest that for most people with low levels of education, Lëtzebuergesch and German seem to merge.

A multiple correspondence analysis confirms the strong relation between the knowledge of French and social position.

### *The Luxembourgers and the foreigners*

If we take in account the whole resident population, Luxembourgish and non-Luxembourgish nationals, French is the most widely used language in Luxembourg: 96% of residents can use it, against 81% for German and 80% for Lëtzebuergesch.

- French is the language most frequently used at work: 72% of the sample think that it is necessary to speak and even 81% think that it is necessary to write it. French has become the language of communication between Luxembourgers and foreigners.
- But foreigners too, can speak Lëtzebuergesch. For example 69% of the Germans and 57% of the Italians say that they use Lëtzebuergesch more or less regularly. Even 40% of the French, who are often considered to be very strongly monolingual and rather hermetic regarding foreign languages, claim that they use it sometimes. Moreover 15% did the interview in Lëtzebuergesch.
- Of the non-Luxembourgish nationals 10% estimate that Lëtzebuergesch is the language which they speak best.
- For foreigners the knowledge of Lëtzebuergesch is of course very strongly related to the length of residence in Luxembourg.

## **The legitimate competence in the language market**

### *Newcomers in the Luxembourgish social space*

To analyse the profile of the social make-up in Luxembourg, three groups of newcomers should be considered:

- (1) Immigrant workers, the majority of whom are Portuguese, continue to enter the country. However, these immigrants do not pose a direct threat to the social and economic position of the established, because they occupy the

lower end of the social scale, which has been freed by the social advancement of the established population.

- (2) The highly qualified executives of the large international companies and the civil servants of the European institutions do not compete for jobs with the standing population either. In fact, they are employed in areas which are not included in the social trajectory of the established population.
- (3) It is thus the *frontaliers*, the transborder commuters, who are in direct competition with the working population in Luxembourg and it is a popular, common-sense belief that they have a direct impact on the rate of unemployment, although it is the lowest in the entire European Union.

The counter-strategy of the established population against the perceived threat to employment is to secure work in a protected sector, where jobs generally are well paid. Such employment is mainly found in the public sector and some related sectors, such as the postal service and telecommunications, rail and energy. In March 1999, 36.3% of Luxembourgish nationals worked in public administration and associated sectors, 23.2% of active Luxembourgish nationals were civil servants (Fehlen & Piroth, 2000).

#### *Changes on the language market*

The mutations of the Luxembourgish social space are echoed by the recent rather paradox mutations of the linguistic situation:

Lëtzebuergesch is gaining increasing importance, as a language of writing and by replacing French in formal occasions. During the last 15 years, Luxembourgish literature has become successful; children's books and comics have been translated into Lëtzebuergesch.

But multilingualism also is increasing. In general more Luxembourgers speak better French than ever, as they are going to school longer and as they have more opportunities to communicate in that language. This is not true for most elderly and the less educated people, who often are forced to use French which they consider a foreign language.

Luxembourgers also speak better German, as they are immersed by German mass media, especially television. So Lëtzebuergesch is deeply penetrated by German due to the lack of distance between these two languages. Even if functionally standard-Lëtzebuergesch has undoubtedly the status of a language, linguistically it is moving closer to standard German.

While French dominates some sectors of professional life and the communication between the established and the newcomers, Lëtzebuergesch is generally accepted as the language of integration and courses in Lëtzebuergesch are becoming more popular with foreigners, who are choosing to stay in Luxembourg.

Weber (2001a) describes the present situation as follows: 'French is what keeps it together, multilingualism (and polyglossia) is what keeps it going, and Lëtzebuergesch is what keeps it apart'.

#### *A legitimate multilingual language competence*

Language is not only a means of communication; it is also 'an instrument of power' (Bourdieu, 1991). And to ask the apparently innocent question, 'What language do Luxembourgers speak?', is also to pose the question, 'Who belongs

to the Luxembourg linguistic community?’ or ‘Who may profit from the exceptionally good current economic situation in the tiny Grand Duchy?’

The concept of a *legitimate language* that Bourdieu developed for the monolingual French context has only to be slightly modified to be applied to Luxembourg’s multilingual situation. Instead of a legitimate language Luxembourg rather knows a *legitimate multilingual language competence*, which requires a subtle understanding of the combination of different varieties of the three languages officially in use in Luxembourg:

- First, a profound knowledge of Lëtzebuergesch, in the dialect of central Luxembourg – the koiné – with numerous adoptions from the French language. These adopted words are supposed to show that the ‘borrower’ is familiar with handling French and therefore expert in the area of language in which Lëtzebuergesch is lacking.
- Then, a high level of scholastic French, where the written language is as important as the spoken language. The French required is classical and ritual, rather than concerning everyday communication. French undoubtedly constitutes the language of prestige in Luxembourg: those who speak French ‘well’ (to distinguish this with other varieties of French!) are equally those who are the political decision-makers, who direct the economy and who have an important impact on cultural life.
- An understanding of German is required, but an overly good mastery is not well considered. German is used to write down what is said and thought in Lëtzebuergesch.
- English is the first real foreign language Luxembourgers have to master. French has become devaluated as it is used as means of communication with shop assistants, waiters and construction workers. In the building industry often a luso-luxo-french-pidgin is used (Hartmann, 1988: 109). As a result, English gains more importance and becomes the real means of distinction. The number of students (presumably the children of the cultural and economic elite) who study in England and the United States is increasing.

#### *Language and reproduction of the social space*

Bourdieu has closely examined the role of school in the reproduction of the social space (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979); his work in this area can be encapsulated in the formula: ‘School transforms those who inherit into those who merit’.

Linguistic capital plays a principal role in the selective function of school. Positive selection will be made amongst those children who possess the linguistic skills that are required at school, whilst those children speaking a ‘popular’ language will be penalised by the system. Both groups accept the ‘verdict’ of the education system as an objective judgement. Bourdieu calls this ‘gentle’ domination, symbolic violence.

In comparison with the schools of neighbouring countries, schools in Luxembourg are highly selective. School selection occurs principally by language. At school, French is regarded as the difficult language, taught rather for overcoming grammatical problems, than as a means of communication. Teachers in Luxembourgish schools use French to affirm their authority. (Hoffmann, 1987: 152). It therefore does not come as a surprise that no matter what level of French

the Luxembourgish attain, according to their scholastic level and the opportunities they have to practise French, there is a common fear of not being able to speak the language of prestige as well as they should. Certain situations, such as being asked by a shop assistant, in a more or less insistent manner, to speak French can give rise to feelings of humiliation, offence and embarrassment and the impression of having returned to school.

For the children of newcomers, and especially those coming from Romanophone countries, alphabetisation in German presents a nearly insurmountable hurdle. In the high school (*lycées*), the situation for pupils of Romanophone origins is not favourable either. Before attaining the scholastic level where French becomes the means of selection, pupils must prove their knowledge of German. And their shortcomings in German exclude their entry into the top classes in secondary education, where French is the language principally used and relegates them to the lower classes, where German dominates.

Confronted by these rules of selection, newcomers in Luxembourg will employ different strategies, according to their economic and cultural capital. Those least equipped with such capital will send their children to Luxembourgish schools, unaware of the obstacle posed by the use of the German language. Others will choose the school systems in Belgium or France, easily accessible given the small scale of Luxembourg, while the top executives of international companies and European civil servants have their children educated at international schools in Luxembourg; the rules as regards the reproduction of the social space in Luxembourg are thus bypassed.

### **Towards a Real Multilingual Society**

For the first time in modern Luxembourgish history, one can live and work in the major part of Luxembourg without ever speaking Lëtzebuergesch and by using French as a language for communication. According to the BALEINE-survey 20% of the residents say that they never speak Lëtzebuergesch. *Le Jeudi*, a French weekly, and *La voix du Luxembourg*, a French supplement to the most important daily newspaper *Luxemburger Wort*, have been published since 1997 and 1999, respectively. Different French or even English-speaking local-radio stations have been established during the last few years. The pressure from political organisations that defend the interests of foreigners (ASTI, CLAE) to offer alphabetisation in French for children coming from Romanophone families is increasing and the first pilot projects are planned for the near future. Esmein (1998: 98) discusses the possibility of two linguistic communities being established.

As the European Union no longer accepts nationality as criteria for access to most jobs in the public service sector of its member states, the Lëtzebuergesch language has become the last stronghold to restrict newcomers' access to this protected area. And those civil servants, who formerly favoured the speaking of French, are becoming fervent proponents of Lëtzebuergesch. So, the definition of legitimate linguistic competences will undoubtedly become a main stake in the Luxembourgish political field. In this context one may also ask the question, if the increasing interest in Lëtzebuergesch can be interpreted as a reaction of the established to the competition presented by the newcomers?

The number of newcomers – immigrants and transborder commuters – is steadily increasing, and the latest demographic projections estimate that Luxembourg will be home to 700,000 inhabitants by the middle of this century. This is a figure that conjures up a great deal of anxiety and subsequently, raises many questions regarding the integration of the newcomers, particularly from a linguistic standpoint. Will the newcomers adopt French as the language of wider communication with the locals? Will Lëtzebuergesch become an instrument of exclusion or integration? In which way will the ‘legitimate multilingual competence’ evolve? As a small society, which must cope with an economy that already has grown beyond its national boundaries, Luxembourg is an ideal case study for future questions connected to European integration, particularly from a sociolinguistic perspective.

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# Alsace

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After an overview of recent research on various aspects of the Alsatian language in a contact situation and a discussion of the function of the language and state border, there follows a historical overview of the genesis and development of that situation. The consequences of changes which have disturbed the linguistic unity of the Upper Rhine region are discussed in the third section. It also contains the most recent information as to who speaks what language to whom and when. In the following section contacts across the state border are analysed and the function of various linguistic codes on both sides of the state border are described. The sole real post-war innovation in Alsace is the introduction of bilingual instruction. This very laudable new policy – presented in the final section – will considerably enhance the bilingual competence of young Alsatians. Yet, this will probably not fundamentally change the linguistic habits of the Alsatians. Alsatian dialects do not enjoy any official support, have no official functions, and are hardly used by the younger generations any more. As far as daily language practice is concerned the language border and the state border are doomed to coincide within the lapse of only a few generations.

## Introduction

Alsace is a distinct speech community, characterised by a specifically organised use of both German dialects and the French standard language. This particular combination allows to set apart this community from either (1) any other territory where the French standard is used, (2) any other territory where a German dialect is used.

In case (2) the border cannot be anything else but the French-German state border and, consequently, in case (1) the border must be the ‘language border’. The latter, however, is much less clear-cut than the former, since we have to take into account the transition zone between the monolingual and the bilingual (or diglossic) territory.

As of today the state border is not only a political frontier but also a boundary dividing territories with markedly different linguistic behaviour and we see that both the state and the language border can indeed be sharply contrasted as to their function. To the east of the state border we have a territory (Baden) characterised by the sole use of (different codes of) German. To its west we have a territory (Alsace) characterised by the use of German dialects combined with the use of the French standard language. It is on the western side of this bilingual territory that we find the ‘language border’, i.e. the border that sets Alsace apart from the territories to its west, characterised by the sole use of (different codes of) French.

There are not many recent comprehensive studies for Alsace at large and the picture that emerges from the research is not always clear. Assessments of the future of Alsatian range from relatively optimistic to very alarming. Philipps (1980) is a factual and richly documented overview of the political and linguistic history of Alsace and the same goes for Hartweg (1981, 1984). A large amount of information on various aspects of public and private language use is to be found

in the articles edited in Akten (1989). Statistical information is available from the periodic censuses done by the government sponsored INSEE and from the polling institute ISERCO, published at regular intervals in the Alsatian newspapers and often commented in *Land un Sproch*, the journal of the René Schickele-Gesellschaft. An overview of those figures and a comprehensive analysis of previous research is to be found in Vassberg (1993). The most recent extensive review articles published on the scattered linguistic situation of Alsace, including both its history and its present-day situation are Harnisch (1996) and Bister-Broosen (1996, 1997). As far as the language border and mutual contacts on and across it between Alsatians and inhabitants of Baden are concerned, the most recent research is in Bister-Broosen (1998), including an overview of dialectological, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies so far.

## Past History

For scholars of language border problems Alsace is an extremely interesting territory. Not only has it always been a border region where two languages and cultures met but most of all, due to a specific historical evolution, it occupies a very special position among linguistic minorities in Europe (Harnisch, 1996). In less than a century Alsace has changed its nationality no fewer than four times and at every occurrence both the French and the Germans were eager to directly influence and manipulate the linguistic habits of the Alsatians and devised language policy measures on that behalf.

The major part of Alsace has been annexed by France since the Westphalian Peace Treaty (1648). The resistance of Strasbourg against the French lasted until 1681, whereas Mülhausen, which had an alliance with Switzerland, was incorporated into France only in 1797, as the result of a referendum. German-speaking Lorraine was annexed in 1766 (Akten, 1989: 59). Although it was decreed in 1685 that all official documents in Alsace had to be drawn up in French, there was no real language policy during the time of the monarchy, let alone a deliberate policy of Frenchification. The habitual policy of the French in annexed territories used to be to maintain the traditions and the language of the new subjects as much as possible.

The first real change occurred after the French Revolution, the new revolutionary leaders being the first to try to thoroughly Gallicise the Alsatian population. The propagation of French being one of the major revolutionary tasks, they intended to provide the subjects of all parts of France with a uniform language (Willemyns, 1997: 57). This Frenchification policy was to continue ever after. Initially, the practical effects in Alsace of the school system reform of 1793 (every commune in France had to provide a French language primary school education at no cost), were small mainly because of the lacking of sufficient teachers and students mastering the French language. On the other hand, French substituted German as the language of instruction in high schools and universities.

During the 'Second Empire' (1850–1870) we observe a systematic propaganda campaign on behalf of the use of French. One of its vital components was the policy of school authorities to almost completely ousting German. The churches, on the other hand, continued to consider German as the most important tool of instruction in their primary schools, with French as a necessary and important

complement. The success of boarding schools for girls accounted for a rapid progress of French amongst the middle class (Hartweg, 1989).

As a consequence of the Franco-German War the peace treaty of Frankfurt (1871) returned Alsace and Lorraine to Germany, as a *Reichsland*, in which, of course, the linguistic situation then changed thoroughly. The advance of French came to a halt and both the use and the prestige of High German enhanced considerably (Woytt, 1994). In all school levels German became the habitual language of instruction (Akten 1989: 60). The ‘assimilation’ progressed steadily: the returns of the censuses show that 94% of the Alsatian population indicated German to be their ‘mother tongue’. As Stephens (1978: 345) says: ‘Alsace, economically flourishing and with a modern, progressive administration, was beginning to grow accustomed to its new situation’; and Vassberg (1993: 17–18) adds: ‘Even many Francophiles saw positive aspects – economic and cultural – in German rule’.

As soon as the Versailles Treaty (1918) returned Alsace and Lorraine to France once more, the French authorities were very determined to start a policy of systematic assimilation, intended to Frenchify the Alsatian population at large once and for all. The main ‘weapon’ in this Gallicisation policy was to be the school, of which French was the sole language of instruction. Most of the ‘local’ teachers were forced to complete training periods in France, in order to obtain or to keep their teaching licence, and the so-called ‘*méthode directe*’ was officially introduced. This meant that without consideration for their actual situation, Alsatian pupils were considered to be in no different linguistic position than their colleagues in the rest of France and to have French as their mother tongue (Hartweg, 1984).

A fierce opposition, supported by most of the local political parties and the churches, succeeded in forcing the government to certain concessions as far as linguistic school regulations was concerned. Yet, it was generally felt that actually neither language really profited from this kind of situation. As an Alsatian member of the French Senate said: ‘The children are taught a language they don’t understand, and the language they do understand is not taught’ (quoted in Hartweg, 1984: 1964). Consequently, the compulsory measures of the French were responsible for a situation which has been labelled as *le malaise alsacien*, and Alsatians found themselves in a ‘schizoglossic’ situation, aggravated still by disturbed feelings of political allegiance.

In 1940 Alsace was occupied by the Nazis. Their language policy mirrored their general policy: it was ruthless and brutal. In August 1940 it was decreed that German was to be the only language authorised to be used in official domains, including the school system, but by then High German was felt to be the language of the Nazis, of occupation, of collaboration even (Hartweg, 1989). According to Stephens (1978: 351) Nazism probably ‘did more for the French cause in Alsace than all the French patriots in Paris up to 1939’ and Hartweg (1984: 1965) adds that, whereas in 1918 High German was regarded only as the ‘language of the adversary’ (*Sprache des Feindes*), in 1945 it was definitely considered and treated as an ‘adverse language’ (*feindliche Sprache*) and an insufficient command of French on the part of the Alsatians led to ‘diffuse feelings of collective guilt’.

After World War II, and for the first time in Alsatian history, the German language was banned from Alsatian schools (Akten, 1989: 74). At the same time the language policy of the French became more subtle, and yet more harsh than ever before. A campaign, using the slogan *C'est chic de parler français* (Beyer, 1989: 295), was meant to appeal to the desire for social integration and assimilation. Upward social mobility, it was indicated unmistakably, would only be possible through shifting to French! All of this was corroborated by harsh linguistic legislation: High German was completely banned from the school system. Parents of Alsatian-speaking children were officially warned that, if they wanted to prevent their children from being expelled from kindergarten, they had to make sure that they became French speaking almost overnight. This 'direct method', as it was called, although pedagogically completely absurd, appeared to be politically very successful, even if the consequence was that the 'Alsatian malaise' was intensified still. Another characteristic slogan during this campaign was the continuously repeated: *Oubliez chaque jour un mot de dialecte et apprenez un nouveau mot de français* [forget a dialect word every day and acquire a French word instead]! For most parents this was reason enough to switch to French since they feared that socialising their children in the dialect 'would lead to discrimination in the classroom and would jeopardise academic success' (Hartweg, 1984: 1967). It was not until 1952 that German was reintroduced as an optional subject in the two final classes of the primary school in those villages 'where the Alsatian dialect was still used as the main means of communication' (Hartweg, 1981: 100).

Also, the ever increasing immigration from the *intérieur*, i.e. the French mainland (Hartweg, 1984) as well as the *extérieur* (Gardner-Chloros, 1991) gradually put an end to the linguistic homogeneity of Alsace, first of all in urban areas. Consequently, a situation emerged, making it virtually impossible to function without a sufficient command of the French language. Gradually the dialect was restricted to private, informal domains and for many, this diglossic situation proved to be an intermediate stage leading to complete language shift, i.e. Frenchification.

Two factors seem to have been very important in this particular case of language shift. The first factor deals with the desire of the majority to assimilate the minority (Meeus, 1987: 737), mostly through a process of linguistic acculturation. French administration, which is famous for its centralisation policy anyway (Bister-Broosen, 1992), set up a systematic policy of Frenchification which assured the use of French in administration, jurisdiction, the mass media, religion and education. At the same time the immigration of civil servants and workers and the educational system contributed to changing the social environment. Finally the emphasis on French as the medium *par excellence* for upward social mobility has limited the number of domains in which the minority language was used.

The second factor deals with the opposite, namely the minority's desire to become fully assimilated (Meeus, 1987: 737) and in Alsace this has mainly to do with attitudes, i.e. the evaluation of both the function and the use of language. It is striking indeed how little the Alsatians have clamoured for linguistic and cultural rights (Gardner-Chloros, 1991: 13).

## Geopolitical Aspects of the Language Border

In traditional dialect geography the Upper Rhine territory is usually described as a continuum of Alemannic dialects in which the Rhine was never considered to be a real language border. Dialectologists discern three different dialect areas. The utmost southern part, with the 'Markgräflerland' on the right and 'Sundgau' on the left bank of the Rhine is South Alemannic. The so-called Upper Rhine area, North Alemannic, goes beyond Strasbourg until it reaches the border of the third area, the South-Rhinefranconian area, which occupies only a small portion of the Alsatian territory (Maurer, 1942). From a historical point of view, Franconian tendencies have mainly influenced the North Alemannic dialect. Since the main road for North-South traffic used to be situated on the left bank 'northern influences reached Alsace faster, more thoroughly and earlier than the right bank' (Ochs, 1940: 432). Furthermore, in the past the city of Strasbourg as the most important economic, cultural and clerical centre had an ever growing influence on the whole Upper-Rhine area on the right and the left banks both in the North-South and in the West-East directions. Freiburg assumed an influential role only after World War II and for the German side only.

The linguistic unity of the Upper Rhine region, as described in Maurer (1942), does not exist in that form anymore. France's language policy in Alsace mainly after World War II, the strong linguistic ties with that country and the fact that the German dialects are roofed by standard French were the main causes for the disruption of the former unity (Klausmann, 1990: 210). While Alsatian dialects still share many similarities with the other Alemannic dialects of German they also differ from them in important aspects, mainly because of the close contact with French and because of the fact that French, and not German, is used as the standard language. As a consequence, Alsace is turning more and more into a lexical relict area. On the other hand, a large number of French lexical borrowings have been incorporated in the Alsatian dialects (Hartweg, 1983).

Three linguistic and communication systems are presently coexisting in the Alsace area: standard French, standard German and the Alsatian dialects. Native speakers are only to be found of the first and the last codes, the number of people having been socialised in standard German being statistically irrelevant. Whatever competence in standard German Alsatians have, it has been acquired by learning German as a foreign language. Most people socialised in an Alsatian dialect have acquired mastery of standard French in very much the same way, i.e. as a foreign language as well (all Alsatians do indeed have at least some knowledge of French). People socialised in French only, on the other hand, often have no more than a passive knowledge of Alsatian, if any at all (Bister-Broosen, 1996: 138–9). French is the official prestige language, standard German is used almost exclusively in written form and the Alsatian dialects are mainly used orally (Bister-Broosen, 1997: 306).

An enquiry carried out by the polling institute *Iserco* in a representative sample of the Alsatian population of all generations revealed that in Alsace overall 70.7% of the population 'are able to speak Alsatian' (*Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*, 15 March 1990). More thorough investigations, including questions as to the domains in which, and the interlocutors with whom, Alsatian is used, usually yield much more alarming returns, showing a rapid decline of the use of

the language. In Bister-Broosen (1998: 53 ff.), based on an investigation in 1993 among youngsters (15–19 years of age), it is reported that, although 54% of the informants claim mastery of the Alsatian dialect, the use they make of Alsatian is minimal. The family, it appears, 'is the only domain in which dialect use is still considerable; within that domain it is conversation with the grandparents. It is less used with parents and hardly ever used with siblings and peers. The informants almost never use their dialect proficiency in public settings or formal domains' (Bister-Broosen, 1996: 154). This linguistic behaviour is typical for all informants. This means that, outside of this one domain, all sociolinguistic variables such as social class, sex, age, origin etc. lose much of their importance. Harnisch (1996), Hartweg (1984), Vassberg (1993) and others all came to identical conclusions.

The results of my enquiry clearly indicate that young Alsatians are fully aware of the rapid decay of the Alsatian dialects and their functional loss (see also *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*, 23 September, 1999 for identical results). Yet, they also strongly indicate that they do not want Alsatian to disappear. Especially those informants of whom both parents are born in Alsace continue to consider Alsatian part of their cultural heritage and identity. Although the interviewees are not well informed about the specific character of the genetic relationship between Alsatian and High German, they value German-French bilingual competence a lot. Consequently, it is not a lack of language loyalty which is responsible for the language shift in favor of the national language. Moreover, French appears to be not the only code to which prestige is ascribed: the local dialect enjoys some prestige in the eyes of the informants as well. Also, the informants don't feel that dialect competence would be considered to have negative societal consequences: Alsatian youngsters do not stigmatise the use of Alsatian. Language shift, therefore, seems to be induced by very pragmatic considerations instead.

But then, even positive attitudes, as they emerge in this investigation, will not be able to stop the decay of Alsatian. Since positive attitudes are very common during the final stages of language loss, they should, on the contrary, rather be interpreted as a warning that the loss of the Alsatian dialects has entered its final phase.

### **Contacts Across the State Border**

Dialect as well as all other codes have different functions on both sides of the French-German border. In oral communication in Germany there is a continuum of codes ranging from dialect over intermediate (city and regional) varieties to standard varieties. In Baden the 'deep dialect' has hardly been able to survive in urban environments and has been levelled out and raised to the higher varieties (Besch & Löffler, 1977: 20–1).

The oral communication in Alsace, on the contrary, is restricted to only two major codes, namely the regional dialect and the French national language. Although both are also used in 'Umgangssprache' functions, 'Umgangssprache' as an elaborate linguistic system (as in Germany) does not exist. The former diglossic situation has been disturbed since dialect competence has very much decreased in younger generations.

Consequently, a comparison between the Baden and the Alsace situation also allows for interesting conclusions as far as varying patterns of dialect loss are concerned (Bister-Broosen, 1998: 137 ff.) Although the phenomenon appears to be effective in the whole region under concern, there are striking differences both in the general tendency and in the development. In Baden as well as in Alsace we see that dialect loss means a decrease of the absolute number of speakers as well as a reduction of the number of domains and settings in which it is effectively used. Also the societal factors that normally govern dialect loss or decay in Western Europe in general are present in Baden as well as in Alsace. However, the situations are distinguished by more than the fact that in Baden it is the 'Umgangssprache' which profits from the dialect setback whereas in Alsace it is the genetically unrelated French standard language.

According to the investigation in Bister-Broosen (1998: 53 ff.) tendencies reported earlier in Baden are confirmed, namely as far as the influence of the variables 'social class', 'formality', 'urban-rural' are concerned. Other variables get more prominence, e.g. parents' origin. The 'typical' dialect user among Baden youngsters, as he or she emerges from this investigation, belongs to the lower class, has parents who are both born in the region, and is rural rather than urban. As to the usage made of the dialect, it is the most extensive, in private domains, in informal communication, and with peers. All of this allows for the conclusion that Baden follows a very 'typical' pattern of dialect loss. This is not the case for Alsace.

In Alsace too, the informants' answers yield results in which relics of traditional variable influence can still be distinguished. Yet, the investigation indicates that they are all easily overruled by one single factor, that is, the kind of interlocutor. Of all the factors usually favouring dialect proficiency (Lower Class membership, rural location etc.), there is only one which also considerably determines dialect usage, namely local origin. If all of this applies, 'the family' is the domain in which dialect use is still considerable; within that domain it is conversation with the grandparents. The fact that dialect is used less with siblings than with parents, and there less than with grandparents, proves that the young Alsatian dialect speaker is of the converging type: he or she will try to accommodate to the interlocutor. This accommodation, however, is restricted to the family domain. The informants almost never use their dialect proficiency in public settings or formal domains. This also explains why it is hardly ever used with siblings and with peers (Bister-Broosen, 1998: 75 ff.).

Summarising, it appears that the young Alsatians with a lower class, rural background, of whom both parents were born in Alsace are the most likely to be proficient in the Alsatian dialect. Even then, though, they will hardly ever use it outside the family.

The accommodating nature of the Alsatian informants is a characteristic of their linguistic behaviour in the 'other country' as well (Bister-Broosen, 1997). Contrarily to their Baden counterparts, they will mainly use the languages of the region, i.e. standard German and/or Alemannic dialect when visiting the other country. Also, they believe that there will be no major problems in either understanding people or being understood. The young Baden visitors to Alsace lack the linguistic competence or the accommodating nature or both to follow the example of their Alsatian neighbors. Also, they show no willingness or motiva-

tion to acquire any competence in French. Summarising: High German is the habitual language of personal contact between youngsters from Alsace and Baden. The possibility of using their Alemannic dialect is considered only by 13% to 22% of the Germans and 25% to 40% of the French (Bister-Broosen, 1998: 194).

Yet, youngsters from Baden and Alsace have only limited personal contact, and 75% of both groups report going there no more than three to five times a year. Only a limited number (15%) report regular contact (at least once a month). One of the consequences is the poor way the Germans are informed about the fate of Alsatian, another is that Alsations are increasingly unaware of the possible advantage dialect competence could have as a means of communication in the French, German and Swiss border region.

The public television channel *France 3 Alsace* broadcasts some four hours of regional news a week of which one and a quarter hour is in Alsatian (60 hours a year). There is also a one-hour programme broadcasted in collaboration with Swiss and German regional television stations.

The state regional radio (*Radio France Alsace* renamed *Radio France Bleue Alsace* since September 2000) has a weekly programme in which French and German light music is presented in both German and Alsatian (approximately 600 hours a year; [www.eurolang.net](http://www.eurolang.net)). Television and radio broadcasts from Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland can be viewed and heard in Alsace as well.

As far as the written press is concerned it is important to know that the use of German in Alsatian media used to be regulated by a law (of 13/9/45) containing restrictions as far as language use is concerned. The name of the paper, advertisements, announcements of the registry office and articles on sports or meant for the youth had to be in French. Moreover, at least 25% of the paper had to be in French anyway. Although this regulation was officially abandoned on 23 October 1984, the practice continues.

The two major Alsatian newspapers *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace* in Strasbourg and *L'Alsace* in Mulhouse both publish a French language as well as a 'bilingual' edition (meaning that it appears in German except for the parts mentioned above). The decline of the circulation figures of the bilingual editions between 1950 (c. 85%) and today (c. 15%) reflects the evolution of linguistic behaviour: French has almost become the exclusive language of reading. There are also bilingual weeklies and monthlies and the German language press from neighbouring countries is available in the news stands as well.

## A New Education Policy

The future of a minority language depends to a large extent on how it is treated in the education system. According to Philipps (1980: 90) and many other authors, the insufficient amount of German and/or Alsatian instruction is one of the paramount reasons for the present decline of the language of the Alsations. Yet, during recent years major changes have been introduced in the Alsatian education system, providing elementary schools with three different types of German language instruction (Bister-Broosen & Willemyns, 1998).

In 1972 the *Ministère de l'Éducation* introduced, on a trial basis, the so-called audiovisual 'Holderith-Method', which aimed at making the acquisition of High German easier through the medium of the Alsatian dialect. This method was



gradually expanded and initially the results were quite satisfactory, i.e. as long as the Alsatian dialect was the mother tongue of almost all students, and as long as the majority of the teachers still displayed a perfect command of the German standard language. Yet, 'the goal to guarantee German language instruction to all children and families who so desire is not met' (*Land un Sproch* 4, 1985: 13). In 1975 the 'Haby'-law made it possible to officially organise courses in 'regional language and culture' in France at large (Denis & Veltman, 1989: 17).

As a consequence of the 'Treaty of Friendship' between France and Germany, in 1984 an agreement was made between Alsace and the neighbouring state of Baden-Württemberg to promote close contacts between schools in the border region. This project started in 1986 under the motto '*Lerne die Sprache des Nachbarn – Apprends la langue du voisin*' [learn the language of your neighbour]. Although it was very much appreciated and quite successful, many Alsations quite rightly pointed out that in their case German was not only the language of their neighbours but their own language as well (Beyer, 1989: 298).

It is only during recent years that a much more important and fundamental change finally occurred. Because at the end of the 1980s the amount of dialect-speaking children and of teachers with a sufficient command of High German had diminished dramatically, the kind of German language instruction as offered by the 'Holderith-Method' was not very successful anymore. In 1980, therefore, advocates of Alsatian had urged the French Minister of Education to create a new system which, apart from German language instruction of three hours a week in all schools and starting in kindergarten, would also provide bilingual instruction to start in the first class of kindergarten, in which German would be the language of instruction during half of the week and French during the other half. Their demands were denied by the Ministry of Education.

In 1990 parents originating from approximately 20 different places in Alsace, once more strongly demanded this type of bilingual education. Since, once again, the demand was rejected, an organisation called *ABC-M-Zweisprachigkeit* (*Association pour le bilinguisme dès la classe maternelle* [Association for the advancement of bilingual education starting from kindergarten onward]) was founded to organise such an educational system on a private basis. Finally, in September 1992 the French Ministry of Education agreed to start with a bilingual education system itself and, simultaneously, to significantly increase the number of schools in which German language instruction of three weekly hours would be provided. Soon in the *Département du Haut-Rhin*, the *enseignement bilingue paritaire* got started, i.e. classes in which German and French each are the medium of instruction for half of the week (*Land un Sproch* 109, 1993–94: 9–11). Thirty-eight such classes were set up during the school year 1992–93. The *Département du Bas-Rhin* followed suit and in 1995 26 kindergarten classes offered bilingual instruction, whereas a system providing for six weekly hours of German language instruction was started in 26 other classes.

At the beginning of the school year 1995 the state school system in Alsace totalled 73 bilingual classes, attended by some 1500 students; 157 classes with 2951 students were providing six weekly hours of German language instruction (CRA, 1995). Yet, not only new bilingual classes, set up in several places, would increase the number of students, it would also increase automatically as the students advanced from one class to the next. The association

'ABC-M-Zweisprachigkeit' was in charge of 16 classes (*Land un Sproch* 116, 1995: 12).

In order to improve the teacher training a centre for bilingual instruction was set up in Guebwiller. It was the only such centre in France and as a pilot project it benefited from all means necessary to guarantee its good functioning. It was inaugurated in May 1996.

At the beginning of the school year in September 2000, the amount of bilingual classes in the state school system in Alsace had risen to 310 (in 152 different schools), and the number of students to 7000. The system currently works in 154 kindergarten classes, 155 elementary school classes and 11 collèges (secondary schools) (*Land un Sproch* 136, 2000: 10). Students in private schools and in the ABC-M-system are not included in these statistics.

A new accord between the French Republic and the 'region' for the period 2000–2006 intends to 'make possible a real language policy in the field of instruction and the media' (*Land un Sproch* 137, 2000: 3). It holds, among other things, that all of Alsace's 130 'collège'-regions will provide a bilingual section by 2006 (*Land un Sproch* 137, 2000: 10).

Currently Alsatian pre-elementary and elementary schools offer a three-hour and a six-hour programme of 'conventional' German language teaching. In the bilingual instruction half of the class activities are conducted and half of the subjects are taught in German. Although alphabetisation starts in French German is very soon incorporated into the reading lessons. In those regions where Alsatian is still widely used standard German is replaced by Alsatian in pre-elementary schools 'in order to facilitate the natural and gradual transition to standard German in the elementary school'. The final goal is to reach an equal competence in both French and German by the end of the elementary school, based on the principles and methods of 'natural language acquisition'.

Furthermore, it is intended to bring the children into contact with native speakers of standard German as soon and as often as possible, e.g. through school, class and teacher exchanges. Since the cooperation of parents is essential, parents who are able to do so are advised to use Alsatian with their offspring as often as possible, to provide them with German language books and papers and to have them watch German language television programmes regularly. Also, parents are encouraged to grant their children the opportunity of participating in immersion stays in German language environments.

In the state schools under the authority of the Strasbourg 'Académie' a yearly and very thorough evaluation is carried out by the academy's *Commission académique d'évaluation de l'enseignement des langues* (Petit & Rosenblatt, 1995). For the three systems involved, the competence in German as well as the competence in French and mathematics is evaluated.

Summarising the commissions' various findings, we see that bilingual instruction not only leads to a larger competence in German but to better achievements in French and mathematics as well. Consequently, both for pedagogical and educational purposes the system ought to be expanded and generalised as soon as possible. The evaluation of 1996 signals progress for the mastery of German as well as French, as compared to the preceding year. Once more the comparison between students of the bilingual and the monolingual system goes to the detriment of the latter (*Land un Sproch* 1996: 12).

## Conclusions

The current experiments with early bilingual instruction are not only in line with the wishes and the intentions of the Alsatian population but also with those of the regional political leadership. The evaluation of results has demonstrated that the system seems to guarantee better school performances, not only as far as German language competence, but also as far as general cognitive competence and the mastery of the French language are concerned. Research during recent years has demonstrated that the efficiency of bilingual educational systems and/or methodologies aimed at introducing bi- or multilingual skills is determined by the concrete goals one wants to achieve. Whenever it is the target to enlarge the competence in a less prestigious language, some kind of immersion method is probably the most adequate one (Vila, 1996). In Alsace, though, to demand a school system in which the early instruction would be solely in German may not be politically realistic yet. According to an inquiry in 1999 71% of the participants do not favour a 'total immersion system' in Alsatian schools (*Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*, 23 September, 1999).

The latest educational policy is a fundamentally new and very laudable orientation of the official policy, which will considerably enhance the chances of young Alsatis to acquire bilingual competence. The existence of ever more generations displaying an ever growing bilingual competence in French and standard German is a thrilling perspective indeed (also viewed within the framework of European unification) and one can only hope that Alsatian and French politicians and school authorities will not only continue their present bilingual policy, but will enlarge it and quicken its pace.

As far as the possible influence on the general linguistic situation in Alsace is concerned the relevant question is whether it is reasonable to expect that the recent educational changes could support the continuation or the reintroduction of general bilingual skills in Alsace at large. The loss of the Alsatian mother tongue is already so widely advanced and the possibilities of use for Alsatian or standard German in official domains so restricted, that even a generalisation of bilingual instruction is unlikely to bring about any consequential changes; the more so since a revival of the Alsatian dialects has never been the purpose of the policy makers who introduced the bilingual education system in the first place. The revival of High German in and through the educational system will certainly increase bilingual competence in general. It is not to be expected, though, that this will fundamentally change the linguistic habits of the Alsatis. Neither will increasing High German competence bring Alsatis to use this language among themselves in Alsace; nor is it realistic to expect that it will lead to an increasing use of the Alsatian dialects.

Officially the French Republic is a monolingual state in which no minority languages exist and, consequently, no language borders. The ultimate consecration of this fiction has been the adoption by the French parliament on 25 June 1992 of the constitutional amendment: 'La langue de la république est le français'. The *Conseil régional d'Alsace* restricted its reaction to unanimously approving, on 5 May 1992, a motion, asking among other things 'that France might, as soon as possible, accept a modern legislation to guarantee and protect its linguistic diversity'. Yet, it is clear that minority languages do exist in France (and not only in

Alsace), but that, based on the constitution, they lack protection and even the acknowledgment of their very existence. The hope that was raised after France had signed the Council of Europe's *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* in May 1999 faded away when France's Constitutional Council made clear that the French had no intention to also ratify the Charter (Larvor, 2000: 1). Yet, as Woehrling (2000: 21) states: France will never be able to stick to its reputation of the land of freedom if it continues to refuse to incorporate into that freedom also 'the cultural rights of which linguistic rights are an essential part'.

In modern industrial states the position of minority languages is extremely threatened. If they are not backed by solid political structures and the firm conviction of their speakers that they ought to survive and play an important role and, most of all, if they don't have a legally protected, clearly defined function alongside the national language, their future doesn't look very bright.

Alsatian dialects do not enjoy any official support (to put it mildly), have no official functions, are not particularly cherished by the majority of their speakers and are hardly used by the younger generations anymore. I agree with Willemys (1997: 64) that 'the minority language, structurally and functionally impoverished and no longer supported by innovating "injections" from a genetically related standard language, stands no chance against the domestic majority language and, thus, gradually vanishes'.

The strong supporters and advocates of Alsatian (e.g. those gathered in the *René Schickele-Gesellschaft*) are trying very hard to keep up their spirits and spread a message of optimism (as André Weckmann put it: *Allez, Frennd: noch nie nix vom Prinzip Hoffnung gheert?*). Yet, the only thing they can do is to proceed in a defensive way and to try to slow down a bit a process they can hardly influence, let alone stop. Their main strategy, that of encouraging bilingual competence (in French and High German) may, and probably will, be beneficial to the careers of many young Alsatians, but will not significantly interfere with the ongoing process of loss of the Alsatian dialects to the benefit of standard French.

Alsace may succeed in conserving its special character and specific cultural heritage for a long time still. Yet, as far as daily language practice is concerned, the language border and the state border are doomed to coincide within the lapse of only a few generations.

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# The German-Romance Language Borders in Switzerland

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This paper is concerned with language-contact phenomena at the borders of Switzerland's four language communities (German, French, Italian and Romansh), the legal status of the four Swiss national languages, and the language policies of individual bilingual and trilingual cantons. The historical movements of the language boundaries will be described; linguistic interference resulting from direct language contact at each of the language boundaries will be described in some detail; and recent research into linguistic cleavage and language attitudes will be summarised.

## Introduction

There are three language borders within Switzerland: French-German, Italian-German and Romansh-German. At all three borders, direct language contact is between spoken varieties, which in the case of German, Italian and Romansh means a local dialect. The dialects of French-speaking border areas have largely given way to standard French, but much French influence on Swiss German took place while the Franco-Provençal dialects were still in widespread use. This paper will summarise current views about language contact in Switzerland and highlight areas where more research is needed.

There are two major areas of research into language contact in Switzerland. The first and traditional area of study is concerned with the positions of the language borders and with evidence of linguistic borrowing. More recent research has focused on the relationships between members of the different language communities and inter-community attitudes. The Swiss German dialects have emerged as a major object of antipathy on the part of the Romance language communities and in particular the French-speaking population. It is not in the nature of the Swiss from any area to publicise abroad problems between their language communities, and Switzerland has been adjudged by some outside observers to be a model of language harmony (McRae, 1983: 114). Recent government research has shown, however, that the relationship between the language communities is not entirely harmonious (see in particular EDIa, 1989; EDIb, 1989, Kriesi *et al.*, 1995; *Verständigungskommissionen*, 1993).

## Language Policy in a Multilingual Nation

Switzerland is a quadrilingual nation in which all four languages, German, French, Italian and Romansh, enjoy equal status in law. At the last national census, in 1990, the proportions of speakers who claimed each language as his or her mother tongue were: 63.7% for German, 19.2% for French, 7.6% for Italian, 0.6% for Romansh, and 8.9% for languages other than a national language. The total population of Switzerland is 6.9 million and the absolute figures for each language are 4,374,694 for German, 1,321,695 for French, 524,116 for Italian, and

39,632 for Romansh. There were 613,550 speakers of other languages (BFS, 1993: 98–100). On bilingualism and multilingualism in Switzerland, see section headed ‘Individual Multilingualism’ below.

That the four language communities are able to coexist fairly peacefully in a country as small as Switzerland is partly due to the state policy of protecting the interests of all four communities. French, German and Italian have been guaranteed equality as national languages under the Constitution since 1848 (in Article 109, revised as Article 116 in 1874). Article 116 was revised in 1938 to include Romansh as a national language, but not as a language of government. This Article was revised once more in 1996 in the light of a government-sponsored report on the relationships between the four Swiss language communities (EDIA and EDIb):

- (1) Deutsch, Französisch, Italienisch und Rätoromanisch sind die Landessprachen der Schweiz.  
[German, French, Italian and Rhaeto-Romansh are the national languages of Switzerland.]
- (2) Bund und Kantone fördern die Verständigung und den Austausch unter den Sprachgemeinschaften.  
[The Federal Government and the cantons will encourage communication and exchange between the language communities.]
- (3) Der Bund unterstützt Massnahmen der Kantone Graubünden und Tessin zur Erhaltung und Förderung der rätoromanischen und der italienischen Sprache.  
[The Federal Government supports measures undertaken by the cantons of Graubünden and Ticino to maintain and promote the Rhaeto-Romansh and Italian languages.]
- (4) Amtssprachen des Bundes sind Deutsch, Französisch und Italienisch. Im Verkehr mit Personen rätoromanischer Sprache ist auch das Rätoromanische Amtssprache des Bundes. Das Gesetz regelt die Einzelheiten.  
The languages of government are German, French and Italian. In communication with speakers of the Romansh language, Romansh is also an official language of the Federal Government. The law will regulate the details.]

At cantonal level there is a fair degree of autonomy in linguistic matters: the unofficial Principle of Territoriality (*Territorialitätsprinzip*) reinforces the right of each canton to regulate language use in its own territory (EDIA 1989: ix; Viletta, 1981: 210). The Principle of Territoriality ensures that each language community can expect immigrants to adopt the language of the territory, thus reinforcing the monolingual status of most communes.

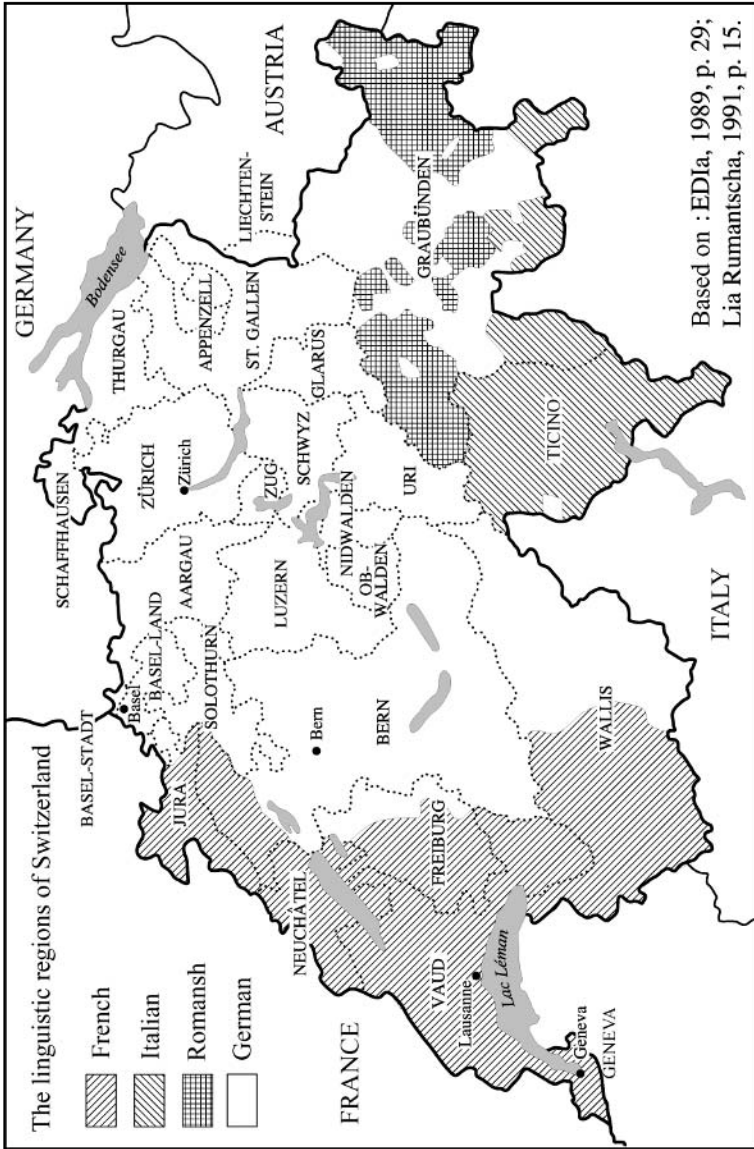
### Multilingual cantons

There are four multilingual cantons in Switzerland: Fribourg/Freiburg, Valais/Wallis and Bern (all bilingual), and Graubünden (trilingual).

#### *Fribourg/Freiburg*

Out of seven administrative districts in the canton of Fribourg (Ger. Freiburg), four are French, one is German and two are mixed. The cantonal constitution





Map 1 The linguistic regions of Switzerland

provides for the publication of all laws and decrees in both French and German. The University of Fribourg is one of the few bilingual institutions of education in Switzerland, while schools are monolingual. The city of Fribourg has 40,000 inhabitants, 57% of whom are French-speaking, 28% German-speaking and 9% Italian-speaking migrants. The interests of the germanophone community are defended by the *Deutschfreiburgische Arbeitsgemeinschaft* [German Freiburg Working Party]. Founded in 1959, this association petitioned the cantonal government in 1962 with a request for specific changes in language policy, such as better education for Swiss German children and bilingual street signs. In 1969 the working party published a 'language charter' (*Sprachencharta*), jointly with the *Institut Fribourgeois*. The charter inquires into issues relating to the coexistence of the French and German language communities. In particular this document defines linguistic identity and language rights (*Sprachencharta*, 1969: 57–63) and the duties of official bodies in matters of language planning (75–79). Despite the recommendations of the *Sprachencharta*, the majority of street signs are still only in French and a visit to Fribourg is still largely a monolingual experience (Rash, 1998: 37f.).

#### Valais/Wallis

Until 1798, the germanophone population of the Upper Wallis (Ger. *Oberwallis*, Fr. *Haut-Valais*) dominated the numerically superior francophone population of the Lower Valais (Ger. *Untervallis*, Fr. *Bas-Valais*) and the official language of the canton was German. In 1844, the cantonal constitution bestowed equal rights upon French and German, although French, the predominant language in the canton as a whole, increasingly dominated German in the practice of the cantonal authorities. In the 1940s a German-language association, the *Rottenbund*, was established in order to protect the interests of German speakers. Efforts to maintain equal status for French and German in Wallis have been largely successful and both languages are now used freely in the cantonal parliament. Two of the five members of the National Council (*Nationalrat*) representing Wallis are germanophone and all legal and other official documents are published in both German and French (Comby, 1990: 90). The canton has two bilingual institutions of higher education: the National School of Tourism (*Schweizerische Tourismusfachschule*) was opened in Sierre/Siders in 1983 and the School of Engineering (*Ingenieurschule Wallis HTL*) was opened in Sion/Sitten in 1988 (EDIA: 78).

#### Bern

Since independence was bestowed in 1979 upon the canton of Jura, formerly (since 1815) a francophone region within the canton of Bern, the francophone area of Bern has covered only 8% of its total area. Bern sees itself as linking German- and French-speaking Switzerland (Lefert, 1990: 103). The bilingual city of Biel/Bienne has 64,000 inhabitants, 57% of whom are German-speaking, 27% French-speaking and 13% Italian-speaking migrants. Originally germanophone, Biel has been bilingual since the 19th century, when workers migrated from surrounding French-speaking areas to find work in the clock-making industry. Biel has had a French grammar school only since 1955, but it is home to one of the few bilingual institutions of higher education in Switzerland, the School of Engineering (EDIA: 78). French and German were granted equal rights as languages

of cantonal government in 1988, although, as Lefert points out, the practice of this equality still leaves much to be desired: in 1989, for example, German-French translators outnumbered French-German translators by an astounding 40 to *none* (Lefert, 104).

### *Graubünden*

Before the French Revolution, the language of administration of the Raetian Leagues was German. From 1794 the cantonal constitution recognised four cantonal languages: German, Italian and two varieties of Romansh, although in practice German dominated the other three. From 1880 until the present day the cantonal constitution has recognised three cantonal languages: German, Italian and Romansh (in Article 50, later Article 46). The revised Article 116 of the Federal Constitution should eventually go some way towards reversing the current predominance of German in, for example, the cantonal tribunal (*Kantonsgericht*) and the texts of cantonal laws (Cathomas, 1994: 351). The fact that the cantonal capital, Chur, is germanophone strengthens the dominance of German in the canton as a whole.

### Individual multilingualism

One might expect a quadrilingual nation such as Switzerland to be home to large numbers of bilingual and multilingual people, but this is not the case. The national census of 1990 provides the following (self-reported) statistics for monolingualism, bilingualism and multilingualism:

	<i>German</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>Romansh</i>
monolinguals:	4,200,161	1,226,659	245,470	19,011
bilinguals:	504,629	284,791	39,168	6,098
multilinguals:	96,896	49,836	6,896	647

BFS, 1993: 42–47.

It is commonly assumed that there is a higher proportion of bilinguals among germanophone than francophone Swiss. Gottfried Kolde has shown that this is true for the bilingual cities of Biel/Bienne and Fribourg/Freiburg: the children of both cities are educated at either a German or a French school and do not seek contact with children outside their own language group; they learn the second national language at school as a ‘foreign’ language. In both cities, German speakers are better at French and speak it more willingly than the other way round; French speakers claim to have particular difficulty understanding the local Swiss German dialect (Kolde, 1981: 267).

Unlike the situation in the francophone and germanophone communities, the Romansh-speaking inhabitants of Graubünden are obliged to learn German, both in its standard and dialectal forms. Their bilingualism amounts to an ‘erzwungene Zweisprachigkeit’ (enforced bilingualism), as Romansh speakers have to be competent in German if they are to enjoy professional opportunities equal to their germanophone compatriots. A unique situation existing in the community of Bivio is described in detail by Andres Kristol (1984). He finds that many residents claim to be competent in four or five of the seven language varieties used in Bivio (two Italian dialects, two dialects of Romansh, Swiss German,

Standard German and Standard Italian). Kristol identifies Bivio as an ideal locus for language contact research, and provides a model which other researchers might feel inclined to follow.

### The Language Boundaries

Within the Swiss Confederation, German-speaking regions abut on three Romance language communities, the French in the west and south-west, the Italian in the south and south-east, and the Romansh in the south-east and east. The early historical development of the German-French and German-Italian language boundaries has been described by Stefan Sonderegger who concludes that, with the exception of a few minor movements discussed below, the boundaries were stable by AD 1100 (Sonderegger, 1967). The German-Romansh boundary finished its major shift eastwards by the end of the 15th century.

Kenneth McRae (1983: 17) attributes the relative stability of the Swiss language boundaries over the last millennium to the fact that the language boundaries 'cross-cut' other types of social cleavage (see also Richard Weiss, 1963, on the limited coincidence of language boundaries with cultural boundaries). In Switzerland, the French-German linguistic cleavage coincides with neither religious nor political cleavages. The possibility of a cleavage between the periphery of the nation and its centre is reduced by the fact that two-thirds of the political decision-making is devolved to the cantons. Kriesi *et al.* describe the attenuating and reinforcing mechanisms which help preserve the stability of the linguistic cleavage between French- and German-speaking Switzerland. The chief attenuating factor is federalism (Kriesi *et al.*, 32). A decentralised federalism such as that practised in Switzerland allows linguistic and cultural differences to be maintained and perpetuated, but also allows the different linguistic communities to coexist relatively unproblematically within the Swiss Confederation. The political system of proportional representation ensures that all cantons are represented at federal level and no region need be excluded from political power (see Wolf Linder, 1994, on consociational democracy and power-sharing in Switzerland). The language laws, which protect minority language areas within Switzerland, also help to prevent conflict between the four linguistic regions, as does the Principle of Territoriality, which requires newcomers in any region to communicate in public contexts in the language native to that region (and which excuses the autochthonous populations from learning other national languages). Furthermore, the political parties reflect ideological rather than linguistic differences: there is no party which represents exclusively Romance or German political interests.

Many of the attenuating forces just mentioned are neutralised by exactly the same factors. Thus federalism and the Principle of Territoriality can have the effect of reinforcing as well as reducing the linguistic divisions. Mechanisms of reinforcement include the army, the school system, the position of Switzerland within Europe and growing globalisation. While the army is sometimes proclaimed a unifying force within the nation, there are very few mixed-language units, and the organisation of army units at cantonal level reinforces the linguistic cleavage. As with the army, the educational system is organised at cantonal level and can thus counteract any movement towards a unified

Swiss national identity. Globalisation and the increased need for Switzerland to interrelate with the rest of Europe and the world tend to strengthen centralising forces and work against the attenuating aspects of cantonal autonomy. Finally, the media play an important role in reinforcing the linguistic cleavages in Switzerland; indeed, they are sometimes accused of perpetuating and even deepening the rift between German speakers and both French and Italian speakers. The structure of the news media in particular has the effect of increasing the gap between the linguistic regions: the majority of newspapers are distributed on a regional basis, and this works as a homogenising factor within the French and Italian language regions. The fragmented nature of the German-speaking region, which results from the existence of numerous dialects, is counteracted by such publications as the German-language *Blick*, which appeals to a cross-cantonal readership (Kriesi *et al.*, 1995: 36). The media of the three major language regions in Switzerland reinforce the linguistic and cultural homogeneity of each.

### Description of the language boundaries

Some of the most exact descriptions of the language boundaries within Switzerland were published in the latter part of the 19th century, most notably Zimmerli's account of the French-German boundary, published in three volumes between 1891 and 1899, and Neumann's description in 1885 of the German-Italian boundary in both Switzerland and Austria (see also Zemmrich, 1905 and Piémont, 1963). The boundaries described in these accounts have not changed greatly since their publication.

#### *The French-German boundary*

The French-German language boundary is much less distinct than the German-Italian: it only follows geographical barriers, such as watersheds, in the north of the canton of Jura and in the canton of Valais/Wallis. As Ger Peregrin discovered in 1982 when he undertook a walking tour along the entire length of the French-German language boundary, it is impossible to describe a sharp line on one side of which everyone speaks French and on the other side of which everyone speaks German (see also Blocher, 1923a: 183). During his journey, Peregrin recorded occasional language-mixing of French and Swiss German, which he claims to be rare in Switzerland as a whole, e.g.: 'Voilà drü Kafi au lait, ça fait vier füfzg' [Here are the three milk coffees, that will be four fifty] (Peregrin, 1982: 6). Apart from in the North Jura, where French dialects are spoken, the main dialect of French-speaking Switzerland is Franco-Provençal, although it should be noted that in the francophone towns and cities, and increasingly elsewhere, a Swiss version of standard French is spoken (Sonderegger, 1985, 1875).

The French-German language boundary runs from Colmar and Belfort in Alsace eastward into Switzerland, passing between Laufen and Délémont and thence south-westward through the cantons of Jura, Solothurn and Bern to the western shore of Lake Biel/Bienne and running through the city of that name. The language boundary then continues to the north-eastern shore of Lake Neuchâtel and veers to the south-east, crossing the lake of Murten and continuing through the canton of Fribourg/Freiburg. After passing through the city of Fribourg/Freiburg it passes between the rivers Saane (Fr. Sarine) and Sense to reach the border between the cantons of Bern and Vaud (Ger. Waadt). Cantonal

and language boundaries merge for a distance and follow the ridge of the Bernese Alps as far as the Wildstrubel, where the language boundary enters the bilingual canton of Valais/Wallis and bisects it, passing southward to the east of Sierre/Siders and crossing the political frontier with Italy not far from the Matterhorn (Rash, 1998: 183). There are two German-speaking communities in the francophone canton of Jura, Châtelet and Rebévelier, with 61.1% and 80% germanophone inhabitants respectively.

The greatest potential threat to the stability of the French-German language boundary exists in the low-lying land between the foot of the Jura and that of the Alps. There are, however, very few localities with mixed populations, apart from in the city of Biel/Bienne and in some communities between Murten and Fribourg/Freiburg (Bickel, 1994: 33). In general, the predominantly French-speaking areas are more linguistically mixed than the germanophone areas. This situation reflects that in Switzerland as a whole; for while the francophone region has over 10% germanophone inhabitants, the German-speaking areas have only 1.9% French speakers. All in all, it is possible to say that, although the French-German border is somewhat blurred, there has been no dramatic shift in the boundary and it is unlikely that one will take place.

#### *The German-Italian boundary*

The Italian-speaking (IS) canton of Ticino is separated from the germanophone regions to its north by a clear-cut boundary consisting of high mountains with formidable passes which, until the construction of the Gotthard railway tunnel in the 19th century and the Gotthard and San Bernardino road tunnels in the mid-20th century, were impassable during the winter months. Apart from the German language island of Bosco Gurin, which adjoins a German language island in N. Italy, the canton of Ticino is italophone. There are four further IS regions in the canton of Graubünden: the valleys of Puschlav, Bergell (south of Maloja), Misox, and Calanca, each of which is situated in a topographically quite inaccessible position. The Italian dialect spoken in all IS regions of Switzerland is a variety of Lombardic. With such clear geographic divisions, language contact tends to be limited (Moulton, 1941: 90), but linguistic interference does take place in both directions, and many inhabitants of IS Graubünden are bilingual (German/Italian), due to the fact that the cantonal capital, Chur, is German-speaking.

Hans Bickel (1994) argues that the integrity of the Italian language in Ticino is threatened not by a movement of the language boundary, but by internal migration. Migration is a serious problem only in regions that are already minority language areas, and Italian is a minority language in Switzerland as a whole. Ticino, with its mild climate and impressive scenery, holds particular attractions for germanophone migrants. The national census of 1980 disclosed the following statistics for the Lake Locarno area: 35% German-speaking population in Ascona, 25% in Brissago, 14% in Locarno (Bickel, 1994: 28). During the summer months, germanophone tourists (both Swiss and German) swell the non-IS element and further threaten the linguistic unity of Ticino. Furthermore, many major businesses in Ticino are owned by German-speaking compatriots and official measures have been taken to minimise the effects of the German 'invasion'.

### *The German-Romansh boundary*

The Romansh language area originally stretched from Graubünden (GR) as far as the shores of Lake Constance and included part of the cantons of Glarus and St Gallen (Sonderegger, 1985: 1875). The German-Romansh language boundary moved slowly eastward from the Middle Ages onwards. During the 13th century the Walser (originating as the German-speaking Oberwallis) migrated north-east to inhabit language-islands deep inside the canton of Graubünden. The chief areas of Walser settlement were the Safiental, the Valsertal, the Aversertal, Obersaxen, Langwies-Arosa and Davos-Klosters, and the germanophone enclave of Bosco Gurin in the canton of Ticino. The Surselva region of GR was also settled by Walser, but later re-romanised. There are five major Romansh dialects in the canton of Graubünden in eastern Switzerland: Surselva, Sutselva, Surmeir, the Upper Engadine and the Lower Engadine/Münstertal. A recently-devised standardised variety of Romansh, Rumantsch Grischun, has the status of a grapholect only.

The Romansh dialects no longer form a unified linguistic area; in fact one can no longer speak of a language boundary, for the Romansh areas of GR have declined steadily over the centuries, and what was once a firm block of Romansh territory has diminished into a number of Romansh language islands. Many areas still officially regarded as Romansh, especially those parts of the region which cater for tourists, also have large numbers of germanophone residents. The recent linguistic history of Domat/Ems illustrates the decline of Romansh in Graubünden. The advance of the German language into Romansh territories halted at this village, some 15 kilometres from the cantonal capital of Chur, during the 15th century. The village retained its strong Romansh character until the Second World War, when the largest industrial concern in Graubünden opened its headquarters there, bringing much-needed economic benefits to the area. The population of the village trebled over the next 40 years, with an incoming population consisting largely of German speakers (Allemann, 1988: 558ff.). In present-day Domat/Ems it is chiefly older residents who speak Romansh as their first language.

### **The development of the language boundaries**

The first peoples about whom we have firm historical knowledge to have inhabited the area that is now Switzerland were Celtic tribes. The most important of these, the Helvetians, inhabited the western and central region between the Alps and the Jura mountains. Rhaetian peoples inhabited the area which is now the canton of Graubünden as well as some areas to its east and south-east (the Ostschweiz and the Innerschweiz). When the Romans conquered the entire Celtic area, at around the time of the birth of Christ, a boundary was created between the Roman provinces of Rhaetia and Gallia Belgica which ran almost through the centre of what is now Switzerland (Zinsli, 1964: 11). After the arrival of the Romans, the Rhaetians adopted vulgar Latin as their language while the language of the Helvetians acquired a Latin overlay to form a Gallo-Roman mix (Lötscher, 1983: 31).


Celts and Romans lived together quite peacefully for some three centuries on what is now Swiss soil. Many Latin place-names survive from the era of Roman occupation, e.g. *Windisch* < *Vindonissa*, *Pfyn* < *Ad fines*, *Koblentz* < *Confluentia*,

1860



1980



 Romansh-speaking

**Map 2** The Romansh-speaking areas of Graubünden 1860 and 1980 (after Lia Rumantscha, 1991: 15)

The percentage of Romansh-speaking inhabitants in Graubünden declined from 39.8% to 21.9% between 1860 and 1980, and the percentage of German speakers increased during the same period from 46.0% to 59.9%.



*Augst* < *Augusta Raurica*. In AD 260 Germanic tribes, namely the *Alemannii*, crossed the *limes* and continued on southward to invade Helvetia. Rhaetia retained its Romance language, which still survives in the form of Romansh – although in a much diminished area. The Burgundians, who occupied the territory to the west (now French-speaking Switzerland), adopted the Latin language of the area. The Romans finally abandoned the entire region in around AD 400.

Phonological evidence can be helpful in establishing the chronology of Alemannic colonisation. The changes of the High German (Second) Consonant Shift were Alemannic innovations which spread northward throughout the Germanic language area from the fifth century onwards (Sonderegger, 1963: 33). Roman place-names which were adopted by the Alemannic tribes soon after their arrival in Helvetia have participated in the Consonant Shift; Roman names of places which were settled later are less likely to have been influenced. Thus the complete shift of /p/ to /pf/ or /ff/, /t/ to /ts/ or /ss/ and /k/ to /kx/ or /x/ in *Chäpfnach* (Zürich) (Lat. *Cappiniacum*) and *Zürich* (Lat. *Turicum*) provides evidence that the Zürich area was occupied by Germanic tribes before the sixth century. Place-names which have retained unshifted consonants were presumably settled after the eighth century, e.g. *Nuglar* (Solothurn) < *nugariolum* < *nucariolum* and *Gurtellen* < *curtinella*. Many place-names participated only partially in the High German Consonant Shift, e.g. *Tuggen* (Schwyz) < Gallic \**dukkones*, in which the 8th-century shift *d* to *t* has taken place but not the earlier shift from *k* to *kch*; and *Alpnach* < *Alpiniacum*, which has participated in the shift of *k* to *ch* but not the earlier shift of *p* to *pf* (Lötscher, 1983: 37). On the basis of such evidence of the presence or absence of shifted consonants in place-names, Lötscher concludes that many parts of western Baseland, Solothurn and Bern (to the west of the river Aare), as well the Rheintal region to the east of Zürich and the central cantons of Uri and Unterwalden, remained Romance-language areas throughout the eighth century. Lötscher documents one further factor to be taken into account when estimating the date of Germanic settlement of an area, namely the presence of a Romance final *-s*, which was dropped from germanised place-names in the sixth or seventh century, but is still present in many central Swiss place-names, including *Kerns*, *Kriens*, *Buochs*, *Näfels*, *Flums* and *Grabs*, indicating that Alemannic settlement of such places probably took place after the seventh century (Lötscher, 1983: 39). Place-names with *Walen-* (< Old High German *Walch* = *Welsche*), as in *Walensee*, *Wallbach*, *Walchwil*, are also seen as proof that the Romance language area was once much larger than it is today.

As with the periods of Roman settlement, place-names provide evidence of Germanic expansion. The names *Schwand* and *Schwendi* (from the verb *schwenden*, ‘to decorticate and then burn (trees)’) and *Rüti* (from the verb *roden*, ‘to clear forest’) are particularly characteristic of early Alemannic settlements (Lötscher, 1983: 44). Oskar Bandle classes place-names with the suffix *-ingen* as a leitmotif of the earliest Germanic colonisation. This suffix, meaning ‘major court’ (*Großhof*) was added to the name of the original settler, as in *Ermatingen*, *Kundelfingen*, *Berlingen*, *Wettingen*. Similarly, the suffix *-inghofen*, dating from the eighth century, survives in place-names with the ending *-ikon*, *-ikofen*, e.g. *Zollikofen*, *Zollikon*, *Kölliken* (Bandle, 1963: 268–275; Zinsli, 1971: 31–34). Not all place-names ending in *-ingen* date from the period of Alemannic settlement. Names were also formed with this suffix during the Middle Ages. Furthermore, a

number of *-ingen* suffixes derive from the Burgundian suffix *-ingōs*, romanised as *-ens*, which survives in French Swiss place-names such as *Lamboing*, *Tramelan*, *Basens* (now germanised as *Bösingen*) and *Tenterens* (now German *Tentlingen*). Such place-names are common along the present-day French-German language boundary and many have dual language forms, e.g. *Echarlens/Schärlingen*, *Vuipens/Wippingen*, *Promasens/Promasing* (Sonderegger, 1963: 40). The Alemannic suffix *-wil*, added to a settler's proper name, belongs to the early era of forest clearance, namely the seventh to ninth centuries, e.g. *Sigriswil*, *Walterswil*, *Heldswil*. According to Zinsli (44), this *-wil* suffix, a loan-word from Latin, is to be distinguished from the *-wil* suffix that is an abbreviation of Old High German *-wilari* < Lat. *villaris* ('belonging to the villa', Ger. *Weiler*). The latter is found in place-names dating from the ninth to 11th centuries, e.g. *Rapperswil*, *Neuwilen*, *Hüttwilen*. Sonderegger notes that place-names suffixed with *-ingen* are most commonly found in broad river valleys, while the suffix *-wil* occurs on less accessible belts of land between the larger valleys and in the foothills of the Alps (Sonderegger, 42; Zinsli, 45). Many place-names with *-wil* suffixes are found along the French-German language boundary and it has been suggested that their presence may indicate early movement of the boundary in the wake of Germanic settlement (Sonderegger, 42).

The *Alemannii* are the last settlers to have colonised the area that is now German-speaking Switzerland. While the western and southern borders of the germanophone area were largely stable by AD 1100, the German-Romance language boundary continued to move south-eastward from the 11th to the 15th century, to include the Romansh language areas of Glarus (in the 11th century), the Rheintal (in the 13th century), and the Walensee-Seeztal, Sargans, and much of western GR (by the 15th century). Chur was finally germanised in 1464 when, as a consequence of its destruction by fire, large numbers of German-speaking construction workers and craftsmen settled in the city. The Romansh-speaking communities of Graubünden are now no more than a number of language islands in a German-speaking sea.

### The 'Röschtigraaben'

Whilst outsiders may think of Switzerland as a model multilingual society, Swiss nationals regard the situation as far from ideal. Friedrich Dürrenmatt, a germanophone Swiss author living in French-speaking Switzerland, summarised the relationship between the French- and German-speaking communities thus:

Es ist eigentlich kein Verhältnis. Es ist ein Nebeneinanderleben, aber kein Zusammenleben. Was fehlt, ist der Dialog, das Gespräch zwischen Deutsch und Welsch, was fehlt ist sogar die Neugierde aufeinander, was fehlt, ist die Information. (quoted from *Verständigungskommissionen*, 17)

[There really is no relationship. It is a side-by-side existence, but not a co-existence. What is needed is dialogue between German- and French-speaking Swiss. We are not even curious about one another. We don't know enough about one another.]

Linguistic harmony in Switzerland is more of a passive coexistence than an active cooperation, as is demonstrated by the saying ‘les Suisses s’entendent bien parce qu’ils ne se comprennent pas’ [the Swiss get on with each other because they don’t understand one another] (Kriesi *et al.*, 1995: 140). Kriesi *et al.* report that although the cleavage between the germanophone and Romance-language communities is not a priority problem in Switzerland at the moment, the communities do believe in the existence of a rift (*‘fossé’*), cultural as much as linguistic, of which the francophone and italophone communities are more aware than the German speakers.

The term *‘Röschtigraben’* is frequently used to refer to the rift between the French- and the German-speaking communities of Switzerland. *Röschti* is a German Swiss culinary speciality made of grated potatoes; a *Graben* is a ‘trench’ or ‘division’. *‘Röschtigraben’* refers not merely to the language boundary itself, but also to the relationship between the germanophone and francophone Swiss, in particular to differences in their attitudes towards dialect-use. The term has negative connotations, and the fact that a (Swiss) German term is used to define the German-French linguistic rift appears to suggest that the German-speaking Swiss are responsible for its existence. The chief cause of friction between the germanophone Swiss and other Swiss nationals is the frequent and ever-increasing insistence of Swiss Germans on speaking their own dialect without regard for the linguistic knowledge of their interlocutors. Whereas the germanophone Swiss regard their dialects as symbols of national identity, the French Swiss do not value dialect at all highly.

The French-speaking community sees itself as belonging to a supranational francophone cultural community and accords high status to the French standard language; the attitude of the German Swiss to the remainder of germanophone Europe is more ambivalent, but it is always coloured by the fact that the German-speaking Swiss see themselves as culturally and linguistically remote from Germany (see also Rash, 1998: 272–274, on the attitudes of the French- and German-speaking Swiss towards one another).

### Interlingual Influence at the Language Boundaries

Where there are no marked sociocultural divisions to reinforce linguistic cleavages, as is the case in Switzerland, the development of resistance to lexical borrowing diminishes and interlingual influence is facilitated (Weinreich, 1966: 98). The direction of language transfer in Switzerland tends to be in the direction of German. Both the Swiss German dialects and Swiss Standard German are open to foreign lexical influences, whereas the French and Italian languages are only minimally influenced by German. The situation of Romansh is quite different: for some centuries language-shift has been taking place from Romansh to German in the canton of Graubünden.

According to Uriel Weinreich, the linguistic influence which results from direct language contact at linguistic borders is affected by two connected factors: by degrees of language loyalty, and by the status of the standard variety of the recipient language. The extent of language loyalty varies from one contact situation to another and according to the temperaments of the speakers, but in general speakers are more likely to defend their mother tongue from outside influences if

they have a strong emotional investment in it. Weinreich states that the term 'language loyalty' 'would designate the state of mind in which the language (like the nationality), as an intact entity, and in contrast with other languages, assumes a high position in need of being defended' (Weinreich, 1966: 99). Language loyalty is unlikely to be threatened in situations where societies on both sides of the language boundary are satisfied with their relationship but, when two cultures come into contact, one is likely to be objectively dominant or to be considered subjectively superior to the other. In such situations, language loyalties may be betrayed as members of the dominated or inferior culture attempt to associate themselves with the dominant or superior group, and in so doing adopt features from its language (Weinreich, 101).

The standardised ('pure') form of a language commonly becomes a symbol of group integrity (Weinreich, 1966: 100). It is more likely to engender feelings of loyalty and therefore to be defended against outside influences than is the dialectal form of the same language. This is true of the French language in Switzerland, which is considered by its speakers to be pure and superior, and is therefore less prone to outside influences than is the German language. Even though the germanophone Swiss hold their dialects in very high regard, there has long been a perception among both the French- and German-speaking Swiss of the francophone language community as subjectively culturally superior to the germanophone community (Rash, 1998: 198), and both the Swiss version of Standard German and the Swiss German dialects are especially open to French influences.

While the German language in Switzerland may be influenced by standard French because of the superior linguistic status of the latter, dialects are spoken in the other two Romance language areas. Influence is, however, more pronounced in the direction of both the Swiss German dialects and Swiss Standard German. The shift from Romansh to German in Graubünden provides a dramatic example of loss of language loyalty and is the result of the long-standing objective dominance by the germanophone community. The Romansh communities have no solidly unilingual hinterland and no city to serve as a cultural centre (as the germanophones have in Chur) (Weinreich, 1966: 84), and, although a standard Romansh language, Rumantsch Grischun, has existed for some two decades, it is chiefly a grapholect. Weinreich maintains that the Romansh communities are subordinate to the German dialect areas of Graubünden because of the functional inferiority of their dialects and because Romansh speakers hold these 'in a contempt so great that the mere suggestion of purism appears ridiculous' (Weinreich, 1966: 88). This may have been the situation when Weinreich was writing, but nowadays Romansh speakers are encouraged to respect and use their dialects: indeed it is the intention of the federal government to support and strengthen the position of Romansh through the application of the Language Article referred to in Section 1 of this chapter.

### General Romance-German influence

The fact that all the Romance dialects that border Switzerland share Latin as a common ancestor makes it difficult to be certain of the origin of borrowed linguistic features in the French, Italian or Romansh dialects. The history of the Latin passive auxiliary *venire* is a case in point. In his discussion of *kommen* (a

semantic borrowing of Latin *venire*) in place of *werden* as a passive auxiliary on the language borders of Wallis, Freiburg and Bern, William Moulton claims Franco-Provençal origin for the feature (Moulton, 1941: 45), though as he points out, Romansh passives are invariably formed with *venire* and Italian passives are frequently thus formed. Either language could therefore have supplied the usage. Charles Russ gives details of Italian-influenced usage for the German language island of Bosco-Gurin, where Swiss German *chu* (kommen) forms the periphrastic passive in place of Ger. *werden*, e.g. *aar esch aggstolta chu* ('he has been appointed') (Russ, 1990: 282ff.).

### *Phonetic influence*

In 1941, Moulton supported the findings of earlier research that the lack of velar fricatives in the German dialects of Graubünden is due to Romance (probably Romansh) influence, with /kk/ in place of /kx/ and /h/ in place of /x/ in words such as *decken* and *machen* (/tekkə/ and /makə/) (Moulton, 1941: 20; see also Kristol, 1984: 185–194, on the incidence of /k/, /x/ and /h/ and the absence of /kx/ in the Romansh and Italian dialects of Bivio). Other Southern Alemannic dialects have /tekkə/ and /makə/.

Max Pfister claims that the shift in German from /sp/, /st/, /sk/ /ʃp/, /ʃt/, /ʃk/ took place between the 11th and 13th centuries in Alpine communities bordering the North Italian dialect region. This phonetic innovation, which eventually affected initial consonant clusters in Common Standard German, also affected medial clusters in the Alemannic dialects, as in Swiss German *Schwöschter* (Pfister, 1984: 880). Moulton claims the shift from /s/ to /ʃ/ in vocalic surroundings in the Wallis dialects is the result of Franco-Provençal influence, as in /mi:ʃ/ (*Mäuser*), /ʃi:/ (*sie*), /reʃʃi/ (*Rösslein*), /hi:ʃi/ (*Häuslein*) (Moulton, 1941: 42f.).

### *Accent*

According to Moulton, the German dialects of Wallis are influenced by the Franco-Provençal accent patterns and thus give a 'very un-German impression'. This may be explained by the history of the germanisation process in Wallis during six or seven centuries; for as the Romance–German language boundary moved ever further into francophone territory, and Franco-Provençal speakers living in the bilingual border area learned German, German-speakers picked up 'faulty' accentuation patterns. Moulton suggests that the best way to describe the accent of a German-speaking Walliser is to liken it to the accent of a French or Italian-speaking learner of German (Moulton, 1941: 40). It may be that there is similar Romansh influence upon the accents of German-speakers in Graubünden. Further research into Romance influences on Swiss German accents would be welcome.

### *Morphological influence*

Moulton suggests Franco-Provençal or Romansh influence as the explanation for the inflected predicate adjectives of the dialects of Wallis, Uri, Glarus and of the Upper Bernese dialects. In these regions, language boundaries are formed with a variety of Romance dialects, all of which inflect their predicate adjective. Moulton gives examples from Wallis dialect: /dr ʃtall iʃ folle/ (Ger. *der Stall ist*

voll), /ix bi afu alti/ (Ger. *ich* (F) *bin schon alt*) and /diʃ ja:f sint wi:ssi/ (Ger. *diese Schafe sind weiss*) (Moulton, 1941: 46).

### Lexical influence

As Italian lexical influence upon German commonly stems from a North Italian dialect (N.It.), and as many of these dialects closely resemble the Romansh (RR) dialects, it is often difficult to be certain of the source of a particular loan-word. Geographical and demographic factors often help to determine the origin of a borrowing. Thus in areas where Romansh and Swiss German communities have existed side by side for many centuries, a N.It. source for loan-words in Swiss German is unlikely, whereas in remote mountain regions, the origin of words is less certain. The *Schweizerdeutsches Wörterbuch* (S.Id.) and Kurt Meyer's *Wie sagt man in der Schweiz?* (1989) provide numerous examples of such North Italian (N.It.) or Romansh (RR) loan-words. Word-fields associated with agriculture, eating and drinking, household equipment, weights and measures, and clothing have been most enriched by N.It./RR loan-words (Öhmann, 1974: 370f.), e.g. *Panitsch* < RR *panitscha*/It. dialect *panitz* ('fennel', Öhmann, 1974: 371), *Paleder* < RR *puleder*/It. *poledro* ('an inferior horse', S.Id. IV, 1147), *Palangge* < RR/It. *palanca*/Lat. *palanga* ('plank', S.Id. IV 1146), *Sch(g)arnutz* < RR *skernutz*/Tirolean German *scarnuz* ('paper bag', S.Id. VIII, 1301ff.), *Marend* < RR *marenda*/It. *merenda* ('sandwiches', S.Id. IV, 354), *Manestre* < RR *manestra*/It. *minestra* ('minestrone soup', S.Id. IV, 294ff.), *Pes* < RR *pes*/It. *peso* (a weight, Öhmann, 1974: 371), *Star* < RR/It. *star/ster* (a weight, Öhmann, 371), *Skalfin* < RR *sc(h)alfin*/It. dialect *scalfin* ('sole of a sock', S.Id. X, 9), *sfosieren* < RR *sfrossar*/N.It. *sfrosè* ('to smuggle', S.Id. X, 1).

### German-French Interference

French influence upon the German language in Switzerland has been investigated by Emil Steiner (1921), Berner-Hürbin (1974) for the period 1450–1550, and Rash (1989) for the period 1550–1650. German influence upon French has been described by Ernst Tappolet (1914–1917). Influence has been greatest in the area of lexis; phonetic and morphological influences are more limited. Language contact is direct at the French-German language boundary, and the Swiss German dialects, and thence Swiss Standard German, are subject to ample transfer from French patois and standard French. Since the formation of the German-French language boundary, transfer from French into German has been markedly greater than in the opposite direction.

### Phonetic influence

French phonetic influence upon German, even at language boundaries, is difficult to prove, though the French uvular /[R]/ allophone is frequently held to have influenced the Swiss German dialects (Lüdtke, 1984: 876). William Moulton has suggested that the preservation of Old High German nominal suffixes *-a* and *-o* in the German dialects of the canton of Wallis results from early German-Romance language contact at a time when the area was being gradually settled by Germanic migrants (Moulton, 1941: 19). Moulton also suggests that the change of *l* to */j/*, as in /eʃja/ (*Esel*), /xitsju/ (*kitzeln*) and /ʃa:ffji/ (*Schäflein*), in many parts of Wallis results from Franco-Provençal influence (Moulton, 1941: 41).

Moulton detects German influence on the Franco-Provençal dialects of the eastern francophone Valais in the form of the allophones of /x/, e.g. /exrirə/ for *écrire*, and its alternatives [ç<sup>x</sup>] (indicating a pronunciation between velar and palatal) or [h] (Moulton, 1941: 31). Conversely, the German dialects of Wallis often use [ç<sup>x</sup>] or [ç] where other Southern Alemannic dialects have [x], e.g. [ç<sup>x</sup>yo] (Ger. *Kuh*), [milç] (Ger. *Milch*), [siççer] (Ger. *sicher*) (Moulton, 40).

### Morphological influence

The loan-suffixes *-lei* and *-ieren*, both originating in French, became independently productive as early as the 14th century (Lüdtke, 873). The French definite article *le/la/les* may fuse with nouns, particularly in transfers into dialect, as in *Lursi* < *l'orge* (Steiner, 1921: 460ff.), *Lewat* < (*les*) *navettes* (Steiner, 489), *Lagoten*(*wein*) < *vin de la côte* (Rash, 1989: 345).

### Lexical influence

Ernst Tappolet (1914–1917) records some 1000 transfers from Alemannic dialect into Swiss French for the early 20th century. One-third of these words were only attested in very close proximity to the language boundary, and only 200 had wide currency throughout French-speaking Switzerland. Terms include *lāsturm* < *Landsturm* ('Home Guard'), *puts* < (*Offiziers*)*bursche* ('batman'), *ematlos* < *heimatlos* ('homeless person', 'tramp'), *putsi*, *potsi* < *putzen* ('to clean'), *tragner* < *tragen* ('to carry'), *kritse* < *Chräze* ('pannier'), *chinquer* < *schenken* ('to give (as a present)'), *vek* < *Wecken* ('bread roll'), *firob* < *Feierabend* ('evening after work') (Kratz, 1968: 480). The sort of vocabulary borrowed from Swiss German into French are everyday expressions rather than words used in elevated circles, in particular expressions for coarse or lewd behaviour: qualities which appear to be seen as typically germanic include 'Grobheit, Plumpheit, Energielosigkeit, Faulheit, Geiz' (coarseness, clumsiness, listlessness, laziness and meanness). Designations for disreputable or slovenly women have also been transferred from Swiss German, e.g. *Bache*, *Scheißhaus*, *Schlampe*, *Schlutte*, *Schnur*, *Scheibe*, *Tschupp*, *Wamme* (Kratz, 1968: 480).

The more copious flow of French vocabulary into Swiss German has been recorded by Steiner (1921). Many of his examples are found only in the dialects of a handful of villages close to the French–German language boundary and derive from Franco-Provençal; others derive from standard French and have wider currency. The following selection follows Steiner's division into lexical fields (Book 1, 45–90): geographical terms, e.g. *Ggumba* < *combe* (361); names of vegetables, e.g. *Bodangsse* < *abondance* (263), *Schurafe* < *chou-rave* (352ff.), *Schuprüssel* < *chou de Bruxelles* (352ff.), *Bummeliteer* < *pomme de terre* (527), *Puwärli* < *pois verts* (525); names of fruits and grains, e.g. *Schengssermeng-Bire* < *St. Germain* (561ff.), *Wullebusch* < *mouille-bouche* (485ff.), *Bummedäppi* < *pomme d'Api* (526ff.), *Lursi* < *l'orge* (460ff.), *Welsch-Renette* < *reinette* (548); household utensils, e.g. *Schofflete* < *chaufferette* (346ff.), *Märmitte* < *marmite* (473), *Potaschi* < *potager* (530), *Ggulös* < *couleuse* (374); watch-making terminology, e.g. *Durewis* < *tour aux vis* (587), *Egallisoar* < *écarrisoir* (397), *Päsfaguppe* < *pince à couper* (518ff.), *Dasso* < *tasseau* (580ff.), *Schalino* < *chalumeau* (338), *Rundel* < *rondelle* (556), *Ggänggi* < *quinquet* (538), *Gariir* < *carrure* (331), *Schwilio* < *chevillot* (349), *Tisch* < *tige* (583), *Wittschiffer* < *huit-chiffre* (440), and *Gelerettli* ('watch') < *quelle heure est-il* (536); (less commonly) dairy terminology, e.g. *Bretschi* < *brêché* (306ff.), *Fättere* < *faiture* (408);

'Konversationswörter', i.e. adjectives, adverbs and particles used to vitalise conversations when native words become hackneyed, e.g. *ale* < *allez*, *allong* < *allons*, *ebe* < *eh bien*, *bong* < *bon*, *sessä* < *c'est ça*, *bardi* < *par Dieu*, *gutigut* < *coûte que coûte*, *gummifo* < *comme il faut*, *tuschur* < *toujours*, *uribel* < *horrible*, *assez* < *assez*, *exgüsi* < *excusez*, *Geggschosserei* < *quelque chose*, *das isch Kwäschtio* < *c'est la question* (78–80). The semantic loan *Tochter* (Fr. *fille*), as in *Serviertochter* ('waitress') and *Lehrtochter* ('female apprentice') is a uniquely Swiss German word (Lüdtke, 1984: 874).

### German-Italian interference

Italian influence upon the German language in Switzerland has been researched by Berner-Hürbin (1974) and Fritz Gysling (1958/59) for the period 1450–1550, and Rash (1989) for the period 1550–1650. Linguistic transfer from Italian into German in Switzerland is chiefly of a lexical nature, but there is also evidence of some phonetic and morphological influences. According to Egon Kühbacher, there is practically no German influence on Italian (Kühbacher, 1968: 479). There is a clear need for more research in this area.

#### Phonetic influence

Russ describes Italian phonetic influence upon the German dialect of Bosco Gurin in the form of fronting of Middle High German diphthongs *uo*, *ou* and long high *u* under influence of the palatalised forms in the surrounding Romance dialects, e.g. *chiia*, *büap*, *müas* < MHG *kuo*, *buobe*, *muos*; *öiga*, *chöiffa*, *löibu* < MHG *ouge*, *koufen*, *loube*; *müiru*, *düw*, *hüs* < MHG *mur*, *du*, *hus* (Russ, 1981: 149).

#### Morphological influence

Italian influence upon German is evident in the Wallis dialect suffix *-elti/-etli*, as in *Mantelti* and *Schachtelti* (both added to German words), and *Fatzelettli* < N.It. *fazzoletto*. The suffix appears to be a fusion of the It. diminutive suffix *-etto* and Swiss German *-li* (Pfister, 885).

#### Lexical influence

The following borrowings into Swiss German and Swiss Standard German can be attributed to Italian: in the field of gastronomy, e.g. *Marroni* (Meyer, 203), *Peperoni* (Meyer, 223), *Polenta* (Kühbacher, 515), *Risotto* (Meyer, 242), *Salami* (Meyer, 249), *Zucchetto* (Meyer, 335). Written texts are sources of many Italianisms belonging to the field of finance, e.g. *Gant* < It. *incanto* (since the 16th century, Meyer, 146), *fallieren* (since the 16th century, Rash, 1989: 122; Meyer, 136), *Kassa* (Meyer, 182), *Kassier* < It. *cassiere* (since the 15th century, Berner-Hürbin, 1974; Meyer, 183). Some terms for domestic items also have a similarly long history, e.g. *Stabelle* (Meyer, 276), *Zoccoli* (since the 15th century, Meyer 334). A peculiarly Swiss type of Italianism is used with reference to the canton of Ticino, e.g. *Sopraceneri* (North Ticino, Meyer, 271), *Sottoceneri* (South Ticino, Meyer, 271), *Rustico* ('a small stone farmhouse' of the kind commonly used as a holiday home by German-speaking Swiss, Meyer, 248); similarly, a *Brissago* is a cigar manufactured in the village of that name on the shores of Lake Maggiore (Meyer, 106).



### German-Romansh interference

As pointed out by Bernard Cathomas (1985), there has been very little research into German-Romansh language contact since Uriel Weinreich's seminal work, *Languages in Contact*, was first published in 1953. He mentions as an exception the frequent newspaper articles, which tend towards emotional portrayals of Romansh as a language on the brink of extinction. Eastern Switzerland has experienced a steady germanisation over the centuries, reducing the status of Romansh to that of a minority language, and a functional bilingualism of all Romansh speakers has resulted. Lexical exchanges between German and Romansh are not as numerous as those between German and French, and are more commonly from German into Romansh than vice-versa. Research conducted at the turn of the 20th century shows that the Rhaetoromans acquired the products of industrial civilisation and the associated terminology from German-speaking Switzerland, and that neighbouring Swiss German dialects acquired terms for domestic and agricultural techniques and for mountain customs from Romansh (Weinreich, 1966: 57). Cathomas pleads for more detailed bilingual case-studies, particularly more investigations of phonetic and lexical interference in neighbouring German- and Romansh-speaking communities.

#### *Morphosyntactic influence*

Max Pfister lists a number of morphosyntactic influences from Romansh in the German dialect of Graubünden. The use of *kommen* in conjunction with adjectives in the sense of 'to become, to grow' (Ger. *werden*) derives from Romansh, where *venire* is used to form the future tense (the future tense in German is formed with the auxiliary *werden*). Hence GR dialect *du chušt ganz wisser* (Ger. *du wirst ganz weiß*, 'you are turning quite grey'); *leg di warm a, sunš khunšt krank* (Ger. *zieh dich warm an, sonst wirst du krank*, 'put some warm clothes on, or you will become ill') (Pfister, 1984: 881). The use of *kommen* as a passive auxiliary under the influence of Romansh *venire* is described in the section headed 'General Romance-German influence' above. In standard German prepositional phrases of place, the accusative case generally indicates a change of place and the dative immobility. This opposition may be neutralised or reversed in Graubünden dialect under influence of Romansh, e.g. *der wurum gäid under du* (acc.) *stäi/nu iser under du* (acc.) *stäi* (Ger. *die Schlange geht unter den* (acc.) *Stein/jetzt ist er unter dem* (dat.) *Stein*, 'the snake is moving under the rock/now it is under the rock'); *mier mahen üseri hohtsitsrays im* (dat.) *underland/mier bliben tsway bis drey teg ins* (acc.) *underland* (Ger. *wir machen unsere Hochzeitsreise ins* (acc.) *Unterland/wir bleiben zwei bis drei Tage im* (dat.) *Unterland*, 'we will be going to the lowland for our honeymoon/we will stay in the lowland for two or three days') (Pfister, 1984: 881). Swiss German word-order may also be influenced by Romansh, e.g. *i tet vroge jemand wu wayss* (Ger. *ich würde jemand fragen, der weiß*) < Surselvan *eu dumandass zatgi ca savess* ('I would ask someone who knows') (Pfister, 1984: 881). Many nouns which are neuter in German adopt masculine gender under the influence of Romansh, which has no neuter, e.g. *der Brot, der Geld, der Beispiel* (Pfister, 1984: 885).

According to Pfister, Swiss German morphosyntactic influence upon Romansh is very limited. He documents the verbs *festgiar* (Ger. *ein Fest feiern*, 'to

celebrate'), *subragiar* (Ger. *säubern*, 'to clean') and *putzagiar* (Ger. *putzen*, 'to clean'), which stem from Swiss German verbs plus the Romansh suffix *-giar* (Pfister, 1984: 885; for further minor morphological and syntactic influences see Brandstetter, 1905: 54–62). The following forms were found by the present author in Vieli and Decurtins (1962): the Romansh verbal suffix *-giar*, as in *schengegiar* ('to give'), and the Romansh nominal suffix *-egiader*, as in *schenghegiader* ('giver'), both deriving from the loan-word *schengetg* < Swiss German *Geschenk* ('gift'); the ending *-adad* is suffixed to Swiss German loans such as *fattadad* ('insipidness') < Swiss German *fatt* ('unsalted'), *zaiadad* ('toughness') < Swiss German *zäi* ('tough'), and *stolzadad* < SG *Stolz* ('pride'). The Swiss German diminutive suffix *-li* and the abstract nominal suffix *-rei* are documented by Pieder Cavigelli as being attached to Surselvan loanwords, e.g. *tatli* ('grandfather'), *tschicli* ('piglet'), *tschutli* ('lamb'); *sturnarei* ('fantasy, lunacy'), *tschapparei* ('the pulling up of stockings'), *tisslarei* ('the calming of a screaming child').

### Lexical influence

In his 1969 monograph on the germanisation of Bonaduz, Pieder Cavigelli provides an extensive inventory of Romansh borrowings into the Swiss German dialect of that town (Cavigelli, 1969: 512–546), supporting his findings with reference to Vieli and Decurtins (1962) and the *Dicziunari rumantsch grischun* (1939ff.). Cavigelli calls the loan-words '*Reliktwörter*' [relic lexemes] due to the fact that the original Romansh dialect of Bonaduz merged with the 'überdeckender deutschen Sekundärsprache' [superimposed German secondary language]: the older residents of Bonaduz, whose mother-tongue was Romansh and who became bilingual, retained key words of their Surselvan dialect when speaking German. There follows a selection of the Romansh loan-words listed by Cavigelli and by Vieli and Decurtins. The words are divided into two major semantic fields: agricultural terminology, and domestic vocabulary. Agricultural terms include *ansola* ('female kid'), *bransigna* ('cow-bell'), *cavagl* ('horse'), *iral* ('threshing floor'), *muletg* ('alpine pasture'), *paglia* ('chaff'), *puscha* ('cow'), *sella* ('saddle'), *suar* ('to sweat'), *tetta* ('teat'), *tschut* ('lamb'), and domestic vocabulary includes *baracca* ('booze-up, boozing'), *basat/basatta* ('great grandfather/grandmother'), *clutschar* ('to brood; to cry, to ail', listed by Brandstetter as a Swiss German loan in Romansh), *coga* ('damned, confounded'), *curascha* ('courage'), *giuven* ('boy, youth'), *maluns* (a culinary speciality made with flour), *palander* ('dawdler'), *pegliatalpas* ('mole-catcher', with semantic shift to 'idiot'), *recli* ('honest'), *tat/tatta* ('grandfather/grandmother'), *tic a tac e riz a raz* < Surselvan *tictac* and *rizr az* ('quarrel').

The *Schweizerdeutsches Wörterbuch* (*Sld.*) lists Romansh loan-words in other Graubünden dialects. Transfers are most frequently found in the agricultural and domestic domains, for example *Skaffe* < *sc(h)affa* ('cupboard', *Sld.* X, 4), *Skalper* < RR *scalper* ('chisel', *Sld.* X, 9), *Banitsch* ('dung cart', *Sld.* IV, 1286), *Ponz* < RR *ponzel* ('wooden container', *Sld.* IV, 1412ff.), *Botsch* ('ram', *Sld.* 1934), *Butsch* < RR *butschin* ('wooden vessel', *Sld.* IV, 1934), *Butschelle* ('Easter cake', *Sld.* IV, 1941), *Spus/Spüslig* and *Spusa* ('bridegroom' and 'bride', *Sld.* X, 578–582). Romansh influence upon Swiss Standard German and thence Common Standard German has been slight, the best-known examples being *Murmeltier* < Old High German *murmunto* < Romansh *murmunt* ('marmot'), *Gletscher* < RR/Lat.

*glacies* ('glacier'), *Lawine* < RR *labina* ('avalanche'), and *Rufe/Rufine* < RR *ruvina* ('landslide') (Sonderegger, 1964: 13).

One of the most informative documents of Swiss German lexical influence on the Romansh dialects is still Brandstetter (1905), who claims a considerable degree of transfer into Romansh from the Middle Ages onwards. Swiss German (SG) influence is found in many spheres, including the natural world, e.g. *luft* < SG *Luft* ('air'), *felsa* < SG *Felse* ('rock'), *viexla* < SG *Wiechslle* ('sour cherry'), *enta* < SG *Ente* ('duck'); agriculture, e.g. *hutscha* < SG *Hutschen* ('pig'), *pur* < SG *Bur* ('farmer'), *zuetschca* < SG *Zwetschgen* ('damson'), *meltra* < SG *Mälchteren* ('milking pail'), *gelti* < SG *Gelti* (a disease of cattle); the domestic sphere, e.g. *stebli* < SG *Stübli* ('living room'), *hissli* < SG *Hüsli* ('house'), *sims* < SG *Sims* ('sill'), *falla* < SG *Fallen* ('door handle'); tools, clothing and foodstuffs, e.g. *rispli* < SG *Risbli* ('pencil'), *uaffen* < SG *Waffen* ('tool'), *lismmer* < SG *Lismmer* ('knitted garment'), *underhosas* < SG *Unterhosen* ('pants'), *ruch penn* < SG *Ruchbrot* ('dark bread'), *spec* < SG *Speck* ('bacon'); anatomy and physiology, e.g. *clutschar* < SG *gluggsen* ('to brood'), *lefza* < SG *Läfzen* ('lips'), *trimbli* < SG *trümlig* ('dizzy'); psychology, e.g. *far calendars* < SG *Kaländer machen* ('to ponder'), *glisner* < SG *Glisner* ('hypocrite'), *hip* < SG *Chib* ('anger'), *hass, hassegiar* < SG *Hass*, *hassen* ('hatred, to hate'), *stolzadad* < SG *Stolz* ('pride'); and insults, e.g. *schluonza* < *Schluenzen* ('whore'), *tschampa* < SG *Tschampen* ('stupid woman').

## Conclusion

Research into language contact in Switzerland has two major strands: older descriptive accounts of language boundaries and language contact, and more recent sociolinguistic research. Traditional research into language boundaries describes actual geographical borders (as in Neumann, 1885; Peregrin, 1982; Piémont, 1963; Zemmrich, 1905; Zimmerli, 1891–99) and their historical development (Bandle, 1963, Sonderegger, 1963, 1967; Zinsli, 1964, 1971), and examines the results of language contact at those boundaries (see in particular Brandstetter, 1905; Cavigelli, 1969; Kratz, 1968; Kühebacher, 1968; Lüdtke, 1984; Moulton, 1941; Pfister, 1984; Steiner, 1921; Tappolet, 1914–17; Weinreich, 1966). This research still provides a useful basis for study, and where language borders have shifted since the early 20th century, the national census has provided more up-to-date information (see EDIa, BFS, 1993). Even though they record data which was in the main collected before the mid 20th century, dialect atlases and dictionaries remain valuable sources of information about lexical borrowing at language boundaries (DRG, 1939ff.; Gauchat *et al.*, 1970; Geiger & Weiss, 1950–59; Hotzenköcherle, 1975ff.; Jud & Jaberg, 1928–1949; *Schweizerisches Idiotikon*, 1881f.; VDSI, 1952ff.; Vieli & Decurtins, 1962).

Much of the more recent research into language boundaries is concerned with sociolinguistic and political aspects of Switzerland as a multilingual nation. The government-sponsored research which led to the publication of *Botschaft*, (1991); EDIa and EDIb, 1989; Kriesi, *et al.*, (1995); *Weisungen*, (1997) and *Verständigungskommissionen*, (1993) draws attention to the need to guard against a growing indifference to Swiss multilingualism. Issues of language contact and conflict have been dealt with in major works by Bickel (1994), Kolde (1982) and McRae (1983). In 1985, a large-scale survey was conducted into the language atti-

tudes of Swiss army recruits and the data have formed the basis of a number of studies (e.g. Bickel, 1994).

This paper has demonstrated that research into the language boundaries of Switzerland and cross-border language exchanges is uneven and by no means comprehensive. The major language boundary within Switzerland is the French-German border, and has been the subject of much investigation. It has been shown that the more significant linguistic interchanges between the two languages are lexical ones (Kratz, 1968; Lüdtke, 1983; Rash, 1989; Steiner, 1921; Tappolet, 1914–17). Investigation into Italian-German transfer is much more limited, and (possibly because of an inherited view that there is no German influence upon Italian) demonstrates only that there has been limited lexical influence and very little phonetic and morphological influence of Italian on German in the italophone canton of Ticino. Contact between German and Italian in Graubünden has also largely been overlooked. There is scope for much more research in both regions. The Ticino in particular is a major destination for German-speaking holiday-makers and there is likely to be far more inter-lingual transfer than has hitherto been recorded. The ever-shifting language boundaries between German and Romansh in the canton of Graubünden have been the object of a number of surveys, the most complete being Cavigelli's investigation of the germanisation of Bonaduz (see also Kristol's detailed account of multilingualism in Bivio). Similar research could usefully be conducted in any number of bilingual communities in this region, but the possibility that resources will be found to support the sort of major studies that are needed seems remote. For all three language boundaries there is scope for more research into phonetic, morphological and syntactic transfer, in particular into the general Romance influence on Swiss German that William Moulton has touched upon.

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# South Tyrol: German and Italian in a Changing World

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In South Tyrol the Italian and German languages have coexisted for centuries. After a problematic development in the first half of the 20th century the situation has stabilised through an intense programme to protect the German-speaking minority living there. Though these protective measures were introduced primarily to keep the linguistic identity of the Italian and German language groups stable, they have led to a considerable degree of individual bilingualism, especially with the speakers of German. At the same time certain means were introduced to facilitate the use of German in the legal and administrative context of Italy. So these steps at the end have led to an intensified contact between the languages, and there is a growing awareness of the advantages of speaking more than one language. With the opening towards Europe and with general trends in society like globalisation and individualisation, a new model of a bilingual identity is developing which takes into consideration its usefulness in modern transcultural interaction as well as its value for regional self-identification. This development also leads to a higher degree of linguistic variation in the society of South Tyrol.

## **Burden and Chances of the Past**

In South Tyrol populations speaking Romance and Germanic languages have coexisted at least from the Early Middle Ages onwards. This does not mean, however, that they were equally spread over the whole area from the crest of the Alps southwards to the 'Salurner Klause' (cf. Eichinger, 1996: 201–202; Riehl, 2000: 235).

The language groups have always been segregated regionally and to a certain amount they still are today. While most of the Italian-speaking people live along the rivers of Eisack and Etsch, the mountain region is a stronghold of the German-speaking population, and the speakers of Ladinian live there too. Language contact and individual bilingualism traditionally have been found in the southern part, where Italian is the neighbouring language, and along the rivers, where there is traffic and communication. In addition, the agglomerations around the towns of Bozen and Meran have always attracted people of both language groups – this effect accelerated due to economic modernisation and political development during the 20th century. But all in all the language groups lived side by side for a number of centuries with only a limited amount of out-of-group communication and individual bilingualism. This worked rather well because within the feudal system the ruling elites did not care too much about what languages were spoken by their subjects – and used French and Latin respectively for their upper-class communication. In addition, for a long time the area of South Tyrol belonged to the Habsburg empire, which had to deal with ethnic and linguistic diversity in many areas. Lastly, the predominantly rural way of life did not promote contact between the language groups – this concerns above all the German- and Ladinian-speaking population of the alpine valleys.



This picture has changed from the beginning of the 19th century onwards, when the vernaculars have been used in all official contexts and group identities have begun to concentrate around the topic of shared languages.

This emphasis on the relation of nation and language led to a critical development for South Tyrol. The national revival in Italy during the second half of the 19th century strengthened powers demanding that Italian should be spoken in all parts of the country, the natural borders of which were considered to be the peaks of the Alps. Within this national concept the idea of a multilingual organisation like the Habsburg monarchy seemed obsolete. So when South Tyrol after World War I became a part of Italy, this had immediate linguistic consequences, which showed particularly after the fascists took over in Rome in the early 1920s: they banned the use of the German dialects and of German altogether and forced the use of Italian – at least in all public domains. In the 1930s these activities were paralleled by an industrialisation campaign for the area around Bozen. Through this campaign a large number of Italian-speaking people of different origin were brought into this area, which strengthened the position of the Italian language. The final climax of the repression of the German-speaking people of South Tyrol was reached when, in 1939, they were forced to decide whether to stay with the German language and as a consequence move out of Italy, or to stay and shift to using Italian – this was what Mussolini and Hitler had agreed on in the so called ‘Option’. The vast majority had voted for staying with German and a large number of them had already been removed from Italy. When they came back after World War II the preconditions for the two language groups living together peacefully were not very promising. And indeed in the first years the Italian state only reluctantly complied with the demands of the peace treaties (cf. Alcock, 2000: 171). The unwillingness of the Italian government to do so in turn strengthened the feeling of belonging together within the German-speaking population. This finally led to a political clash, culminating in bomb attacks and similar acts of violence in the early 1960s. Solving this political problem was made easier when in the 1960s minorities and their representation in democratic societies became a general topic of political discussion. It fits into this development that in 1969 the so-called ‘Paket’ solution for South Tyrol was brought on its way. This set of laws gradually led to a far-reaching protection of the German- and Ladinian-speaking minorities in South Tyrol. It took from 1972 to 1992 to implement and bring into force these regulations. A formal end was put to this process when, on 11th June 1992, the Austrian government issued the ‘Streitbeilegungserklärung’, which had been agreed upon in 1969 (cf. Eichinger, 1996: 209–210). As since 1995 all the parties involved have become members of the EU, a new era in the political discussion about South Tyrol has begun. Now it has to be ensured that the level of protection achieved within the state can be kept up.

### **Ties with the German-speaking Neighbours**

Up to the recent past most speakers of German in South Tyrol were not exposed to an intense language contact. This stabilised the language situation as well as the fact that the German speaking population in South Tyrol – unlike the Ladinians – has never constituted a ‘Sprachinsel’, but represents the southern end of the coherent area where German is spoken as a mother tongue.

Until 1918 this connection was strengthened by South Tyrol being part of the Habsburg empire, where German was an official language. In principle, therefore, German in South Tyrol took part in the developments and standardisation processes which took place in the German language as a whole – and which came to an end during the 19th century. But the use of German in South Tyrol shares many characteristics with southern Germany, while standardisation of German followed a northern type of language and language use. And South Tyrol as part of the Habsburg empire after 1871 was cut off from the standardisation processes taking place in the German Reich. This is the beginning of ‘teutonisms’ and ‘austriacisms’, i.e. variants of national validity within standard German. And although this concerns Austria maybe more directly than South Tyrol, it got higher importance in South Tyrol, when – after World War I – German got the status of a minority language in Italy. All in all the linguistic relation with the German-speaking neighbours to the north is characterised by a mixture of binding and segregating factors. This holds for the standard language, but it also applies to spoken dialects. In the view of dialect geography there is continuity between the regional dialects spoken in the neighbouring parts of Austria and in South Tyrol. The dialects spoken in the mountain valleys of South Tyrol differ clearly, but the main isoglosses intersecting South Tyrol lead from north to south. The threefold west to east differentiation found there and analogously continued in Austria is much more important than the rather marginal north–south differences. In the whole of South Tyrol we find southern Bavarian dialects, which show Alemannic features in the west and Carinthian ones in the east (cf. Moser, 1982: 76–8; Lanthaler, 1997: 373–4). There are no really notable differences between the traditional dialects in North and South Tyrol, and there are no clear signs of structural influence of Italian on the traditional local dialects either, (cf. Moser, 1982: 79 ff.). However, we find some features which can be attributed to the language contact situation. So the higher intensity of modulation observed in the South Tyrol varieties when compared with Austria is attributed to the contact with Italian. Things look different from a more pragmatic view. Since the effects of modernisation have become more and more visible even in the remoter areas, there have been changes in the communicative practice, in the attitudes towards other varieties or the concept of multilingualism as a whole. For decades there have been debates about to what degree a South Tyrolean regional koiné was developing and if there was a regional standard. The mainstream of the argumentation held that only the standard of Germany was an acceptable norm, and that there was no vernacular form of German in South Tyrol but a number of related but separated dialects. It was also accepted that a bourgeois city variety existed, spoken especially by the middle class in Bozen, by politicians and in the media (cf. Lanthaler, 2001: 143–146; Moser, 1982: 87). This variety was not highly esteemed by the average South Tyrolean speaker of German.

There have been remarkable changes during the last decade of the 20th century. The ‘Paket’ regulations caused a far-reaching integration into the legal and administrative system of the Italian state. As a consequence there was a growing need for a German terminology able to cope with this challenge. There was a provision in the law for a committee which was to deal with this problem. This ‘Paritätische-Terminologiekommision’ develops terminological solutions

for the translation of Italian legislation into German, while at the same time taking into account the legal terminology used in other German-speaking countries (cf. Daniel *et al.*, 2001: 221; Mayer, 1998; Mayer *et al.*, 1996; [www.eurac.edu/publications](http://www.eurac.edu/publications)). This commission can rely on the traditional ties to the University of Innsbruck but also on the resources of the newly (1992) founded European Academy Bolzano, an institution whose existence and way of working reflect a turn in language policy in the 'After Paket-Era'. Up to then it was the main aim to tighten the connections with the other German-speaking countries, especially with North Tyrol, to back up political demands: therefore for a long time it was out of the question that there should be no university in South Tyrol. The German part of University education was taken over by the University of Innsbruck. The foundation of the European Academy and the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano (founded in 1997) with its international and multilingual approach and its concentration upon IT and economics shows a different orientation. The cooperation with Innsbruck concerning legal studies is continued (see Bonell & Winkler, 2000: 211–18).

The fact that this dramatic change in handling these politically critical questions did not produce too many problems reflects a basic change of the political constellation. All the states which had to deal with the situation in South Tyrol are now members of the EU and therefore subject to the conditions which are valid in this organisation. In this context the status which the German-speaking minority has reached within Italy has to be analysed and questioned again as to its effectiveness in the European framework. This has led to a positive reinterpretation of the language contact situation and the widespread German–Italian bilingualism caused by it. Speaking two languages, formerly seen as a more or less unavoidable side-effect of the political situation, is now perceived as an advantage for communication in the network of Europe. So at least the German-speaking minority in South Tyrol has taken advantage of being in a situation where its members were forced to communicate in both languages. In this new context the original advantage of the Italian-speaking group in South Tyrol, namely to speak the national language, turns out to be a disadvantage in the multilingual context and in the European perspective, as it stabilises a monolingual pattern (cf. Gubert, 1982: 210). But being embedded in the EU created also a dispute about the legal basis of the relatively comfortable situation of the German-speaking group. As many of the advantages gained by the 'Paket' regulations are based on measures of positive discrimination, they are always prone to interfere with anti-discrimination principles set up within the EU. There are already a few legal cases in which European courts questioned the organisation of bilingual life as it is managed by the South Tyrolean autonomy legislation. They concerned language use before the court and the validity of the 'patentino' (diploma of bilingualism issued after the 'Zweisprachigkeitsprüfung') as the only valid approbation of competence in German and Italian (cf. Alcock, 2000: 187 ff.). At the moment there are rather different opinions to what extent South Tyrol minority regulations are endangered by this legal interference (cf. Grigolli, 1997; Zeyer, 1993).

## Law and its Practice

Apart from these uncertainties the linguistic situation in South Tyrol is characterised by a lot of factors which have led to a stable status of bilingualism. As Italian and German are fully standardised national languages, there is no problem in using them as official languages. Many steps are being taken to develop the official parts of the German lexicon which have to fit the formulations and terminological traditions in Italy as well as in the German-speaking countries. But it is obvious that – especially in the field of jurisdiction – there are traditions to be overcome that go far beyond these technical problems. So even nowadays the use of German in court is not very common (cf. Zanon 2001: 172). As far as linguistics is concerned, this shows that it is not sufficient to provide for the necessary words to have a functional means of communication in a situation of cultural contact. In addition, one has to take into account the different traditions of speaking and formulation, of acting linguistically. At the moment, there is no more than anecdotal knowledge about these differences in South Tyrol.

Stable societal bilingualism is intended and provided by the regulations chosen in the field of education. They are all to be seen in the light of the governing principle of mother tongue education, which in practice led to the development of separated school systems for the German- and the Italian-speaking groups. All subjects are taught in the respective mother tongue of the children, which officially has to be stated in the ‘Sprachgruppenzugehörigkeitserklärung’. The other official language is taught from the second or third year of primary education. There has been political dispute about this segregation of schools since the ‘Paket’ process started in 1969 (cf. Czernilofsky, 1998; Riehl, 2000: 241). The German side defended it by stating that German speaking children in South Tyrol, who have one of the local dialects as their mother tongue, would be disturbed in their efforts to learn the German standard variety, if Italian interfered all the time. The Italian-speaking group criticised segregation as being an obstacle for their children to learning how to use German properly. According to them, children with Italian as their mother tongue have only restricted opportunities to use German outside school, so only bilingual surroundings at school can ensure that they acquire adequate communicative skills in German.

As the situation of German has remarkably stabilised and there was a political drift to a greater degree of multilingual competence in the 1990s, there have been experiments to modify the system of segregation (cf. Saxalber-Tetter, 2001). Experiments dealt with earlier teaching of the other language at school and with language programmes in pre-school education. But also more fundamental changes were attempted: an experiment with language immersion was begun but discontinued after a trial period of three years. At the moment, smaller steps in favour of the Italian-speaking group are being taken (cf. Bonell & Winkler, 2000: 200–6). These questions and especially the concept of monolingual schools still have high political priority (cf. Daniel *et al.*, 2001: 218–9).

The so-called ‘Proporz’, also introduced by the ‘Paket’ legislation, offers a means of stabilising the bilingual situation in the workforce within the public sector. It is prescribed in this regulation that jobs in the public sector have to be distributed in proportion to the relative size of the language groups (see Bonell &

Winkler, 2000: 99–138). It also demands a certain degree of knowledge of the other language, which is tested (at different levels) by the ‘Zweisprachigkeitsprüfung’. This examination is highly selective, especially for people with less formal education (cf. Astat, 1995: 167–8). As we said above there is still doubt if and to what extent the ‘Proporz’ regulations stand against European law. The problem of its effectiveness sharpens with the privatisation within the public sector, because privatised firms are not covered by this regulation. There is also a debate about the function of the ‘Zweisprachigkeitsprüfung’ in this context:

Während der Gesetzgeber die Zweisprachigkeitsprüfung ausschließlich als Nachweis für die berufliche Eignung im öffentlichen Dienst definiert, scheinen zumindest Teile der Bevölkerung in Südtirol sie vielmehr als ‘Brücke’ in eine zweisprachige Gesellschaft zu sehen. Unklare Vorstellungen darüber, was man unter einer ‘zweisprachigen Gesellschaft’ verstehen will, welche Art und welches Ausmaß an Zweisprachigkeit anzustreben bzw. erreichbar ist, widersprüchliche Vorstellungen darüber, ob man überhaupt eine ‘zweisprachige Gesellschaft’ anstrebt, die auf jeden Fall zweisprachige Individuen voraussetzt, oder ob man vielmehr die Gleichberechtigung beider Sprachen in Verwaltung und im öffentlichen Dienstleistungsbereich unter Wahrung einer Art ‘individueller’ oder ‘privater Einsprachigkeit’ anstrebt – all dies macht es sehr schwierig, ein angemessenes Anforderungsprofil für die Zweisprachigkeitsprüfung zu finden’. (Putzer, 2001: 161)

### **The Linguistic Situation Seen From the German Side**

It is the stability reached by the ‘Paket’ regulations and the feeling of security associated with this status, which now allows this new way of discussing how societal multilingualism should be handled in South Tyrol and what the role of societal and individual bilingualism should be. The traditional view of a German-speaking group which uses its dialects as their Austrian neighbours and a standard language which follows the norms fixed in Germany, and in addition to this was forced by the political circumstances to use Italian, has been an idealisation for quite a time, but seems now totally unrealistic. A less traditional view gained practical importance within the discourse of globalisation. For regions like South Tyrol, globalisation and the problem of how to react to its challenges came on the agenda during the 1990s (cf. Eichinger, 2001). Globalisation causes an increasing degree of international communication, and for South Tyrol such a development asked for a new balance between functioning in this transcultural modern world and showing one’s own regional identity. The tendencies of internationalisation were accompanied on the other hand by a growing degree of individualisation. This trend to accentuate one’s own individuality makes it much harder for traditional links and values to be recognised as something important for modern everyday life. Especially young urban people who have passed through higher education and who are the opinion leaders in western European societies therefore developed a new type of bilingual profile. On the one hand, such speakers of German in South Tyrol take advantage of the rights gained in the political struggle of the last 50 years. So when they use German,

they choose it as a symbol of a prestigious group within South Tyrol society, and at the same time profit from the functional value of German within Europe. On the other hand, these people do not mind using Italian or mixing Italian colloquialisms into their own talk. This means they symbolise by this type of language behaviour that they have integrated bilingualism as part of their own identity. This not only enables them to make practical use of their speaking two quite important European languages, but also implies a positive view of this bilingual identity. So what from a traditional point of view is a strange combination of language use makes sense on the level of modern social-symbolic evaluation. Being bilingual and stressing the fact that they want to be locally recognisable by using regional markers, these people are well prepared for the challenges of globalisation and they fit well into the context of European communication. It is obvious that the way the new university plans its studies and represents itself in public also suits this type of reasoning more than it evokes the traditional picture of the German minority in South Tyrol.

The preference for appearing modern as well as having a recognisable regional identity parallels the economic profile of South Tyrol. About one-eighth of the workforce belong to the primary (agriculture), not quite 30% to the secondary (production), and about 60% to the tertiary sector (administration and service). But a strong regional differentiation is hidden behind this overall picture, so that for example in the areas of Meran and Bozen the tertiary sector makes up for over 70% of the working population (cf. Astat, 1995: 183 and ff.).

These developments are also reflected in language use. There are clear changes in the use of the contacting varieties, which even led to the appearance of new language forms and to a different view of their use. Up to the late 1980s German in South Tyrol appeared in two distinct forms – (spoken) local dialect vs. (written) general standard – with nearly no connection existing between them. The situation was described as ‘diskontinuierliches Diasystem’ (Moser, 1982: 85), i.e. a system in which a spoken local and a written and officially spoken variety coexist without the intervening compromise of a regional spoken substandard (‘Umgangssprache’). This type of interpretation held until the 1990s (cf. Eichinger, 1996: 210–211), and it meant that South Tyrolean speakers, when confronted with linguistic challenges at an intermediate level between these varieties, reacted with code-switching or with the repression of the core features of their local dialects.

The picture has changed dramatically in the meantime: since the beginning of the 1990s the appearance of further regional substandards has been noticed (cf. Eichinger, 1996: 211). From the 1990s onwards research has emphasised a growing diversification of the linguistic network of the average South Tyrolean. What this means for the individual speaker is prototypically modelled in Lanthaler (1997 and 2001), where the effects of social age, of education, of mobility in region and society are exemplified by the linguistic biography of a girl from the remote alpine valleys. Lanthaler sketches the typical life of such a girl born in the late 1960s. At school she has to leave behind her local dialect, which used to be sufficient in her village, and has to adapt to different dialects spoken in other parts of South Tyrol. Finally, in the city of Meran, she has to cope with colloquial German, German-Italian bilingualism and with the German spoken by people from Germany. But when she comes back to the mountain

valley she departed from, the linguistic life has changed there, too. Mobility and contact have modified the social networks of the village speakers. In an earlier publication Lanthaler (1997: 377) sketches three varieties which are situated between the traditional local dialect and standard German firstly a form which avoids primary features of the local dialect, then a regional koiné, which takes its regional features from prestige varieties within the region, then a variety still regionally marked but intended for public and official use (so-called ‘unfeines Hochdeutsch’). This tripartition is still seen from a dialectological point of view (cf. Auer, 2001: 31). In the meantime, the discussion about the pluricentric character of German (cf. Ammon 2001) allows a more precise description and evaluation. Within this framework the situation in South Tyrol in general looks similar to the linguistic constellation in southern Germany or in Austria. There are of course certain differences, which are due to the minority situation. Both aspects can be shown when we look at the status of a spoken standard form of German. It is true that for southern Germany, for Austria and for South Tyrol, pure ‘northern’ spoken standard is a form which is not used very often. So in all three areas there is room for a spoken ‘high’ variety, which shows slight regional markers, but nevertheless is still to be counted as a standard variety. As for South Tyrol, the northern standard on the one hand is accepted as a normative ideal form; on the other hand it is still much more restricted in real use than in the other areas mentioned; and speakers in South Tyrol are much less sure about the degree or regional variation which is ‘allowed’ within the spoken standard of a pluricentric language. But there are signs for the emancipation of such intermediate forms.

If the ‘unfeine Hochdeutsch’ is a good candidate for this task, it can’t be decided until we know more about its characteristics and its use than we do now. Some phonetic features of the different varieties between dialect and standard are given by Lanthaler (2001: 139–141, 1997: 376–378). Whatever the form of such a variety of German will be, its function gets even clearer by the above-mentioned societal changes in the context of globalisation. As a consequence of this development, the opinion leaders within societies where regional concepts play a role have chosen symbolic forms for their self-representation which clearly show that they are, on the one hand, able to act in modern society, but on the other hand be positively aware of their local traditions. So linguistic markers of regional character are used more to symbolise this type of identity than to be a continuation of traditional regional language use (cf. Auer, 2001: 35–7).

With this new language situation in South Tyrol, variability and the ability to interact in an adequate way in different situations have also got into the focus of linguistic research. There has been a certain interest in questions of this type before: in quite a lot of earlier studies restrictions were applied as to the type of communication that was studied (for an overview see Egger, 1990, 1992). Research focused on the differences between language use in rural areas and in the cities (cf. e.g. Moser & Putzer, 1980; for the Italian side cf. Gubert, 1982), in the media (e.g. Pernstich, 1982), in school (Saxalber-Tetter, 1982) or in official contexts (v. Aufschnaiter, 1982). And this interest did not totally restrict itself to the use of different varieties of German; in some cases the relation to and interaction with varieties of Italian was taken into consideration, as studies on the language use in bilingual families show (cf. Egger, 1985). The influence of Italian on the German language used in South Tyrol was mainly studied with the inten-

tion to find out if it led to its deterioration. Lexical influence on different levels of speech and different techniques of its integration into the system of German were examined. Many of the examples and interpretations given especially in the studies of Masser (1982), Moser (1982), Putzer (1982), Moser & Putzer (1980) and Pernstich (1982) are still cited nowadays, whenever the question of lexical borrowing is dealt with (cf. Riehl, 2000: 237–8). The critical impetus which often underlies such early studies shows up clearly in formulations like the following one:

Wenn man in Südtirol *gettone* sagt statt des gekünstelten und schwerfälligen *Einwurfmünze*, so ist das kein Unglück. Auch nicht, wenn jemand auf dem Postamt einen *rekommandierten Brief* aufgibt. Doch wenn er sich nach der Postzustellung erkundigt und dabei fragt: *Non viene in der Früh?*, dann ist das schlimm, und falls so etwas – aus Gedankenlosigkeit, aus Koketterie oder aus welchen Gründen immer – üblich werden sollte, dann könnte man mit Recht, ja dann müßte man vom Verfall unserer Sprache sprechen. (Masser, 1982: 72–73)

In these short remarks the three arguments mostly used in the description and evaluation of language contact phenomena between Italian and German occur.

Firstly there is a discussion as to what extent one has to do with habitual loans, which are used and accepted by a representative part of the German-speaking population, or with a kind of code-switching, i.e. occasional loan processes. The aim is to know how far the German language is systematically affected by these processes.

Secondly a differentiation is tried between necessary and avoidable loans. So no one doubts that the integration into the political and legal organisation of Italy has linguistic consequences, and the question is only in which way to react. In the meantime the main trend in this respect seems to be the systematic use of the techniques of loan translations or transfers (cf. Lanthaler, 1997: 366). The linguistic handling of the influence of Italian everyday culture on everyday life in South Tyrol is much more complicated. There are lots of instances where the word coming from Italian fits much more naturally into the conversation than a German translation; the most cited example of this fact is without any doubt the word *gettone* (telephone coin), which, slightly adapted by an initial [tʃ], is part of the South Tyrolean lexicon (cf. Moser & Putzer, 1980: 151–152). Another aspect is highlighted by the fact that in colloquial South Tyrolean German quite a few of the modal words, particles, interjections and phrases which are typical of oral strategies, are taken from Italian. They are integrated to a different degree. A good example is the use of the particle or sentential adverb *magari* ('maybe'; cf. Moser & Putzer, 1980: 156): *Treffen wir uns magari um 10 Uhr?* 'Maybe we'll meet at 10 o'clock' (for the slightly different type *perfetto!* – *perfekt!* cf. Riehl, 2000: 237–8). But the influence doesn't stop at word level. There are also contact phenomena on the level of phraseology or syntax, for example the use of *machen* as a function verb in accordance with the corresponding use of *fare* in Italian.

The third argument is about what to do with these influences in the long run. There is no simple way to solve this problem. In the citation above we find the more or less purist alternative, which of course had a different status when the situation of German was not as stable as it is today (cf. Mall & Plagg, 1990).



We had to refer to studies of the 1980 to illustrate the discussion about contact phenomena between Italian and German in South Tyrol. With the changes in society that have occurred in the meantime, communicative practice and the estimation of bilingualism have changed considerably. So it would be very helpful to have new studies to describe this overall variation with new data (cf. Ammon, 2001: 12–14) and in a new theoretical framework, as, for the moment, we mostly rely on intuitive judgements (cf. Lanthaler, 1997: 366–7; 2001: 144, 147–8). Generally research in the 1990s studied linguistic variation in a sociolinguistic framework or in a more specific perspective, dealing with questions of language choice in situations of domains (cf. Eichinger, 1996), but also with diasystematic (e.g. diamedial) competence and variation (cf. Egger, 1993; Riehl, 1997, 2001). As is shown in Eichinger (1996: 225 ff.) – with data from the late 1980s – there is a stable dominance of the use of German in nearly all domains, but remarkable variation in certain situations which are characterised by external factors (e.g. at the working place) or internal social factors (age group and lifestyle; cf. Riehl, 1994: 120). It would be useful if the phenomena considered in our survey could be examined up to the present, as the changes in the social surroundings expect a change in the norms of communication too. To do this it would also be necessary to know more about structural features of central varieties used in South Tyrol today.

### **Enlightened Bilingualism**

And this refers not only to German but also to Italian and its varieties. Obviously the status of Italian in South Tyrol has changed. One of the main reasons for this change is that many speakers of the German-speaking group nowadays systematically use Italian. In the light of these changes research should deal with Italian not only as a source of interference on German but as one of the contact idioms with its characteristic features. The intention should be to accept – without mingling what is not to be mingled – that coping with the existence of the two languages and their contact is the normal state of affairs in South Tyrol. As this paper is written with an explicit focus on the German side a few hints concerning the status of Italian in South Tyrol might be in order. Italian is, as we have said above, traditionally spoken besides German in the region southward of Bozen ('Bozener Unterland') to the Salurner Klause, and to a certain extent in the cities. On the other hand, the status of Italian in South Tyrol was changed considerably during the period of fascism, when there was an era of strict Italianisation, which led to a lot of political problems later on. Apart from the political problems this development has consequences for the type of Italian found in South Tyrol. As Italian can be described as a pluricentric language, too (cf. Sobrero, 2001) and is subject to similar levelling processes between the varieties as German (cf. Stehl, 1994 and Auer, 2001), it is affected by the historical partition of the Italian-speaking group within South Tyrol. In the traditional bilingual part we can find the usual regional and diastratic variation (cf. Mioni, 1990: 23), and the Italian-speaking people in this constellation usually are used to the corresponding system of German varieties. For the other regions, especially for the surroundings of Bozen, the diversity of regions the Italians came from has led to the fact that the Italian used there is much less regionally characterised, so

that the spoken variety of it shows no striking regional features. But there is a rather strong diastatic difference: 'Beamtensprachform' vs. 'Arbeitersprachform' (Kramer, 1981: 102). The fact that most of the working class came from the Veneto explains the dominance of the Venetian accent in their variety (Mioni, 2001: 67). More recently there has been a tendency to use the Italian spoken in the city of Bozen as a standard variety and to get acquainted with the varieties of German spoken in the area (cf. Mioni, 1990: 23–4). In analogy to this distribution, the Italian of most members of the German speaking population is strongly standard oriented. The consequence is that for some of them standard Italian seems to be more natural (for historical reasons see Mioni, 2001: 68) than the standard variety of German ('High German').

Besides, the contact situation leaves subtle traces on both of the languages spoken in South Tyrol. So the type of intonation typical of the German dialects in South Tyrol (eine stärker modulierende 'Intonationskontur' (Riehl, 2000: 237)) is presumably due to Italian influence, as are certain pragmatic features. On the other hand, the phonological system of the German dialects seems to have an influence upon the pronunciation of Italian by members of the German-speaking group.

These short remarks may indicate that there certainly is a need for taking the Italian side of the language pair into systematic account to give a description and an explanation for the characteristics of the situation of language contact and linguistic variation we find in South Tyrol.

In the historical situation at the beginning of the new century the political discussion about the language situation has reached a new level. It is realistic to say (cf. Egger 2001ab) that in South Tyrol nowadays one tries to balance the relation of monolingualism and multilingualism in a new way. In doing this one has to strive for two conflicting goals: to take into account the new positive estimation of bilingualism and to maintain a distinct group identity.

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