

The Sociolinguistic State of Alemannic Dialects

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1 INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 WHY ALEMANNIC?

Switzerland and Germany are both, at least on paper, German-speaking countries. Given this fact, why is it that people from Germany, as soon as they cross the border into Switzerland, struggle to understand the locals? This was a question I found myself asking while I was living in Germany in the border city of Konstanz. Just past the train station and main shopping centre lay the Swiss border, but as soon as I crossed over, the conversations around me seemed to be in a totally different language. This wasn't limited to me, an L2 speaker either. Native German speakers who had not grown up in the border region reported a similar experience. So if it wasn't the German I had learned in school and was speaking in my day-to-day life in Germany, what language were they speaking?

I had a similar experience when visiting the French city of Mulhouse, near the tri-border between France, Germany, and Switzerland. While most street signs were in French, some street names had an alternative translation underneath in something that initially looked just like German to me, but it was just a little bit different. Here again, there seemed to be this almost-but-not-quite German that existed to various degrees. This is not, of course, some mystery that had gone unnoticed by all locals and academia. In reality, I was already marginally aware of the existence and nature of these language varieties, but this first-hand experience prompted me to research further.

Historically, the German language was a long dialect continuum, running from the far Northeast of the Netherlands through to southwestern Austria. The dialects in the region I was in (South Baden in Germany, German-speaking Switzerland, and the French region of Alsace) were various forms of a dialect group called Alemannic. In Switzerland it is referred to today (very broadly) as *Schweizerdeutsch* (de) (*Schwiizertüütsch* (al)¹, Swiss German), where it is, at first glance, spoken very widely. In Alsace it is called Alsatian (*Elsässisch* (de,al), *Alsacien* (fr)), where it seemed to be spoken by some, but not widely. In Germany however, where it is simply called Alemannic, or even more locally by the name of region or town in which it is spoken (e.g. Badisch in Baden, Emmendingerisch from Emmendingen), it was not at all clear *who* spoke it and *where*, as, at least in my own experience, I had not heard it spoken around me in my own day-to-day life. In addition to this, this posed the question of why - if this one dialect group was spoken and treated different in the three different countries - this was the case, and whether we could use observations from a case study such as this more widely in researching the interaction between countries and language.

These initial observations will be expanded upon in the Literature Review in the remainder of this chapter. Chapter 2 comprises the methodology and background for a study conducted into the use of Alemannic in Germany, while Chapter 3 discusses and analyses the study's results. Chapter 4 compares these results with previous research conducted on similar areas in France and Switzerland. Chapter 5 investigates the non-linguistic contexts of the three

¹ There is no standard spelling system for German dialects, and, as a continuum, there are large amounts of variation in pronunciation and spelling when the language varieties are written. As such, spellings in translations into Alemannic are fairly arbitrary and are given here to provide an impression of the variation between Standard German and Alemannic.

countries and assesses what factors could have led to the similarities or differences in Alemannic usage seen in Chapter 4, and Chapter 6 will attempt to summarise and isolate these extra-linguistic factors into more generally applicable observations on the nature of multilingual, diglossic language systems and their interactions with the relevant speech community.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 GERMAN DIALECT GROUPS

Contemporary Standard German² originated throughout the 16th and 17th centuries as a lingua franca and written language in the German-speaking nations of Europe between speakers of different dialects along the West Germanic dialect continuum. It is not a single specific dialect given prestige, but is rather an amalgamation of various dialects with their own prestige for various reasons. The development of this lingua franca is itself not totally clear to scholars (Salmons 2018), and will not be assessed here.

This dialect continuum comprises three main groups: High/Upper, Middle/Central, and Low German. These categories are delineated by a set of isoglosses indicating the completeness of the High German Sound Shift, a sound shift more complete in the southern-most (uppermost) dialects of the continuum (Salmons 2018).

Upper German is divided into three major groups, High Franconian, Bavarian, and Alemannic. The Alemannic dialects stretch from Lower Alemannic, spoken in southern and western Baden-Württemberg (with Swabian sometimes classified as Alemannic to the north-east (Russ 1990b)), through Higher Alemannic in the Swiss Plateau, into Highest Alemannic in Central Switzerland.

Of these groups of dialects, Lower Alemannic is unique in that it is spoken across the region where France, Switzerland, and Germany meet on the Rhine (see Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2), three nations with very different historical and contemporary language policies and systems. The area in Germany largely occupies the historical regions of the Markgräferland, the Breisgau, the Ortenau, and the Schwarzwald or Black Forest. To describe the region as a whole, the term South Baden (*Südbaden*) will be used in this thesis.

² *Hochdeutsch*, lit. High German but not to be confused with the High German dialects descended from Old High German, distinguishing them from the Low German of the lowlands in Northern Germany (Schönfeld 1990)

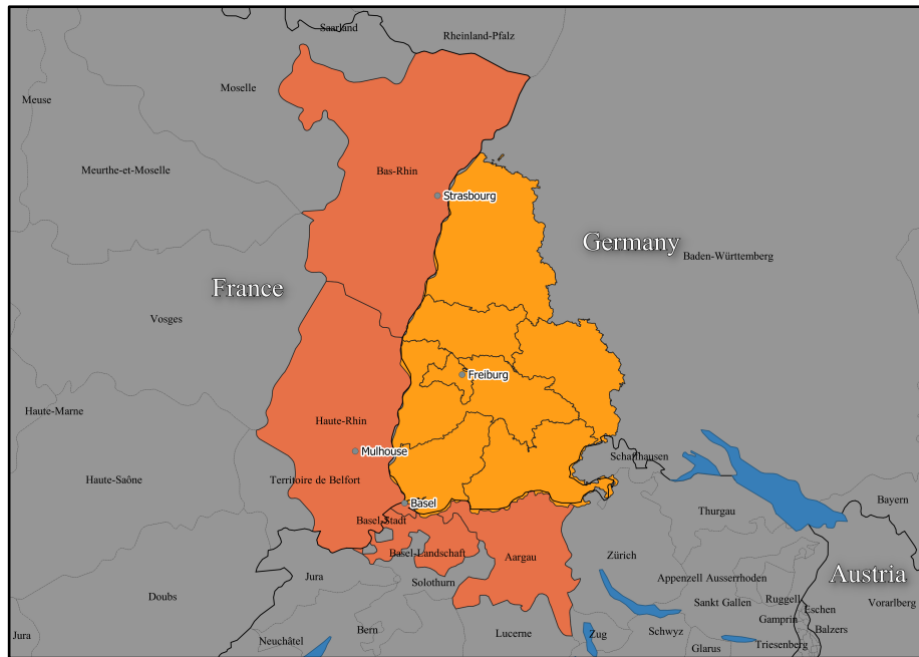


Figure 1.1: Administrative regions with Lower Alemannic-speaking populations across France, Germany, and Switzerland

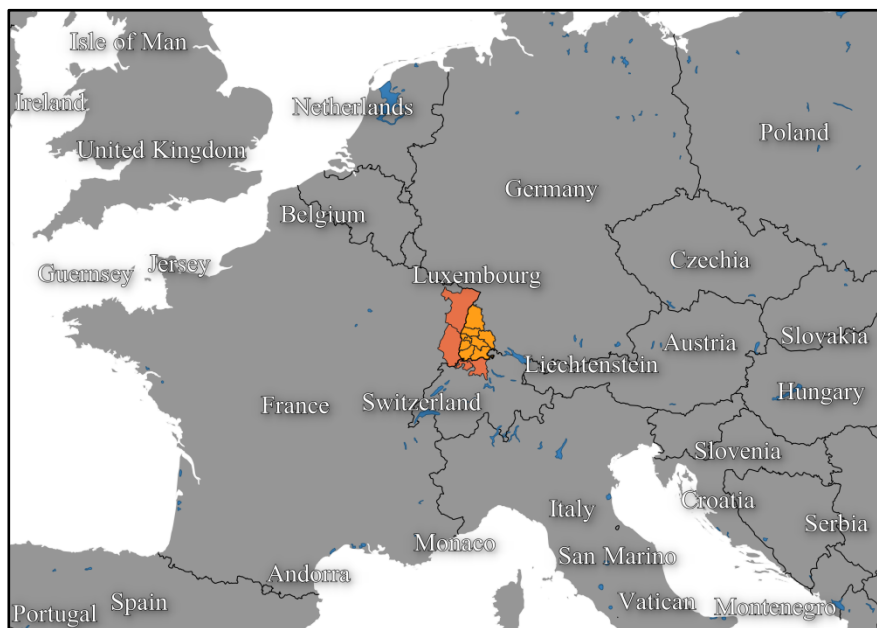


Figure 1.2: Administrative regions with Lower Alemannic-speaking populations in the context of wider Europe

1.2.2 BACKGROUND OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS

The idea that language and culture, or language and social context, would have any influence on each other is not new. Franz Boas suggested in 1911 that there was likely some connection whereby language was influenced by culture, though that the reverse was likely not the case (Boas 1911), a hypothesis supported by his student Edward Sapir (Sapir 1929). Despite this early discovery of the connection between language and culture, the field did not develop for another few decades (Mesthrie et al. 2009).

While sociolinguistics as a concept had been explored in some ways prior, the field of social dialectology, that is, the concept of dialectal variation conditioned by social factors rather than geographic ones, did not emerge until the third quarter of the 20th century (Mesthrie et al. 2009; Meyerhoff 2006). Meyerhoff (2006) presents Labov (1963) study of diphthong variation in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts as the first research into social dialect variation. The study found that a resident of the island's (as opposed to a summer tourist's) use of the [aʊ] and [aɪ] was conditioned by the speaker's age, but also that this relationship was not linear. While, until the youngest generation, the regional pronunciation was shifting closer to the norm for the New England region, the youngest generation appeared to have shifted further away. Labov suggested that this was a result of an impetus to express regional identity against the tourist population on the island (Labov 1963).

Mesthrie *et al.* (2009), however, provide an earlier study, on the conclusions of which Labov undertook further investigation and built a wider framework. Fischer (1958) undertook a study of childrens' speech in a village in the New England region, specifically focussing on the usage of two forms of the present participle verb ending; *-in* or *-ing*. Most notably, he found that speakers did not have a single form that they consistently used, but rather would use either one. Fischer dismisses the usage of the term 'Free Variation', which would have previously been used to describe the phenomenon, saying that it is "a label, not an explanation", and that the term is "a way of excluding such questions [of where and why the variants are used] from the scope of immediate inquiry." (Fischer 1958: 48). By asking these questions, he found that some demographic factors such as gender and class, as well as the context of the speech and even the specific verb used all seemed to influence which variation was used. Fischer proposed the term "comparative idiolectology" for his proposed area of study, as he was proposing a detailed focus on the idiolect of single individual. This was expanded towards modern social dialectology initially in Labov (1963) and subsequent research.

In this subsequent research into the relationship between language and social factors, a number of phenomena have been identified that are particularly relevant to the description of relationships between German varieties.

Diglossia refers to a linguistic system where two language varieties are used in a society, each with specific domains, or situations, of use (Ferguson 1959). The two language varieties present in the system are typically labelled the H variety and the L variety (High and Low), the former marking the language form receiving overt social prestige, that is, the one seen socially as more proper, or perhaps associated with upper classes and higher formality situations. The H variety also typically has a wider literary history, a higher level of standardisation, and has grammatical categories not present in the L variety (for instance, more noun cases, verb inflections, or genders). The L variety, however, is typically learned by native speakers before the H variety (Ferguson 1959).

Since the term was coined by Ferguson (1959), its exact definition has been suggested to be wider than originally established. Ferguson defined diglossia to be between two closely related language varieties, though this definition has since been developed to what is now referred to as extended or broad diglossia. Fishman (1967) noted that the original definition of a relation between two closely related language varieties fails to account for the difference between two distinct systems of bilingualism:

- 1) Systems in which speakers speak one language in everyday life but are able to speak another (no diglossia), and

- 2) Systems in which speakers use two mutually unintelligible languages in different domains of everyday life (diglossia but with different languages).

System (1) characterises cases such as, for example, German speakers who have learned English as a skill and would perhaps use it when overseas but do not use it any set area of their day-to-day life, while system (2) characterises cases such as the joint use of Spanish and Guaraní in Paraguay (Fishman 1967), two unrelated languages that are used by most of the population in specific domains of everyday life. System (2) contains many functional similarities to Ferguson's diglossia, but with two different languages rather than related forms of the same language. This also begins to approach the challenge of defining language varieties as dialects of one language or two separate languages. Fishman suggests that diglossia and bilingualism are two separate features a speech environment can have, and that the example (1) given above can be described as bilingualism without diglossia, while (2) would exhibit both bilingualism and diglossia. The four possible situations these two binary distinctions create can be seen in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: The possible combinations of diglossia and bilingualism and examples (Fishman 1967)

	+ diglossia	- diglossia
+ bilingualism	All individuals in a society speak multiple languages, using both in daily life (Guaraní / Spanish, Colloquial Arabic / Modern Standard Arabic)	Individuals are able to speak multiple languages but do not use both in daily life (German / English as above)
- bilingualism	Different groups in society speak different languages with minimal interaction (Historical usage of Norman French by British nobility despite the continued use of English in the rest of the population.)	N/A ³

A lingua franca is defined by Mesthrie et al. (2009) as a language used for communication between communities that speak different first languages. These can exist on an international level, where for example English tends to act as a lingua franca on the internet or in business, or on a smaller scale, where neighbouring communities speaking different languages have a third language used for inter-community communication. In some situations, such as the international use of English, the lingua franca is the native language of some, but not necessarily all members of the relevant speech community. In other contexts, however, it is possible for none or very few of the groups who use the lingua franca to speak it natively. Pidgins are a possible cause for the lingua franca with no native speakers, where the lingua franca that develops is a mix of multiple languages, rather than one prestige language (Meyerhoff 2006). Situations can also arise where a lingua franca does have native speakers, but they are very few in number in the relevant communities, or non-existent. This situation can be seen in post-

³ Fishman (1967) suggests that a society totally lacking in diglossia, even the sense of differences in register or politeness, are more hypothesised than actually identified.

colonial societies, where the language of the colonisers is used as a lingua franca (Mesthrie et al. 2009), but is also possibly exhibited to some degree in Switzerland, where the lingua franca of Standard German is rarely learnt as a first language in the home (Siebenhaar and Wyler 1998).

1.2.3 SCHOLARSHIP OF SOCIAL DIALECTOLOGY IN GERMANY

The dialects of the German language have been investigated in detail since the late 19th century, with the pioneering work of Georg Wenker and his *Sprachatlas des deutschen Reichs* (Language Atlas of the German Empire, 1888-1923), a nation-wide survey of local dialectal variation based on local dialect equivalents of standard words, elicited via a questionnaire containing approximately 40 sentences. The data were collected by mail from 45,000 schoolmasters across Germany. Kürschner (2018) provides a summary of major research that has been conducted into the dialects since, with similar *Sprachatlant*en being built through various forms of survey and interview, each mapping regional dialect variation in varying detail.

Such *Sprachatlant*en are predominantly limited, however, to records of variations in vocabulary, producing sets of isoglosses to distinguish and identify dialectal boundaries (they are, after all, atlases). They are also limited by a demographically homogenous sample, that is, a focus on non-mobile, older, rural males. In addition to the wide-ranging *Sprachatlant*en is a body of more in-depth research into specific diachronic or synchronic features of singular dialects (Examples include Baechler 2018; Bohnacker 2013; Brandner and Bräuning 2013, investigating areas such as semantics in pronouns and syntactic phenomena).

Schönfeld (1990) suggests in reference to East Low German that while “regional, local, social and individual differences exist”, there was at the time no consensus and little research undertaken into the dialect’s usage. Only recently, Kürschner (2018) suggests, have the *Sprachatlant*en begun to take sociolinguistic variables into account, with the *Mittelrheinischer Sprachatlas*’s subsample of younger residents in its locations. Two further atlas projects within the *Bayerischer Sprachatlas* have included further social dimensions, but none seek to assess the nature of the dialect from a totally sociolinguistic standpoint as opposed a descriptive one. Notably also, none of these projects factoring in social dimensions cover the Lower Alemannic speaking region of Germany, covered by the *Südwestdeutscher Sprachatlas*.

Attention to social variables in speech is, however, by no means new to German dialectology. Leopold (1959) assesses the shift in usage of dialects following the Second World War, and investigates the possible causes for this shift. He identifies the large migration of individuals within the German-speaking world after the Second World War (predominantly refugees from the GDR) as a cause for a shift towards a standard lingua franca, noting how the fine-grained nature of this migration blocked dialect enclaves in migrant communities from forming. He also identifies an inversion of the transferral of language from village to city. As the power of cities grew, the lingua franca of the city began to spread outwards, as opposed to the speech of the city being influenced by the villages surrounding it. This article is, however, over 60 years old, and there seems to be very little reanalysis of the situation in current circumstances, aside from Bister-Broosen (1996), a survey comparing in brief the domains of usage of Alemannic in Freiburg and Alsace.

This contrasts somewhat with recent research done in Alemannic-speaking regions outside Germany, with Harrison’s (2016) investigation of the Alemannic dialect of Alsatian in French schools and the attitudes of parents and educators towards its continued presence in the education system. Philipp and Bothorel-Witz (1990) refer to a survey recent to their chapter’s publication into the usage of Alemannic in Alsace, but do not cite it. Rash (1998) also covers the

sociolinguistic environment throughout Switzerland in relation to variables such as generation, sex, and national identity, suggesting that a stable system of diglossia comprising local Alemannic dialects and a Swiss Standard German lingua franca has been present since at least 1791, when it was discussed in the writings of philosopher Christoph Meiners (Rash 1998: 265).

Fishman (1967) notably specifically describes the speakers of Swiss German (a common and unified term for the Alemannic dialects spoken in Switzerland) and Standard German as bilingual with diglossia, implying a foundational assessment of Standard German and Alemannic as separate languages. The boundary between dialects and languages is, of course, a blurred one at best, which can be influenced by linguistic, political, or sociocultural factors. For the sake of defining diglossia, a phenomenon that by definition applies to a single speech community, meaning they likely have unity in political and sociocultural distinctions, the definition seems best characterised by linguistic features alone. That is, in terms of diglossia, the lack of mutual intelligibility between Standard German and Alemannic would give justification for speakers of both to be considered bilingual, though for other purposes, such as a national census where the government is investigating speakers of foreign languages, this definition may well no longer be useful.

For the sake of simplicity in definition, all three cases (Switzerland, Germany, and France) will be considered as diglossia with bilingualism after Fishman (1967), though the different implications of the different nature of the bilingualism in the different speech communities, such as the closer genetic relationship between Alemannic and Standard German when compared to Alemannic and French, will be discussed in Chapter 5.

1.2.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCOPE

There has been little sociolinguistic research into more recent developments in Alemannic in Germany. There are, as such, three opportunities that present themselves in the current research situation, filling a gap in research in German sociolinguistics and subsequent broadening of the research to be more widely applicable in world sociolinguistics:

- 1) a detailed sociolinguistic analysis of Lower Alemannic-speaking Germany
- 2) a comparison of the conclusions drawn in (1) with similar research previously published on closely related dialects in Switzerland and France
- 3) a subsequent analysis of possible driving factors behind any shift in usage that may have occurred in Germany since Leopold (1959) and a comparison with influences in Switzerland and France

This comparison would allow an assessment of sociolinguistic divergence in the border region rather than dialectal divergence (the latter having been investigated in detail by Schrambke (1997)), with the specific advantage of the elimination of the linguistic variable. Such an approach would allow an examination of the sociolinguistic aspects of usage and attitudes towards Alemannic in the three different countries and the causes for any divergence.

The plausible scope of such a sociolinguistic analysis is very wide, though previous similar analyses have focussed on two primary areas: usage and attitudes (Dubois 1997; Harrison 2016; Lim and Ansaldo 2006; Mesthrie et al. 2009; Petzell 2012). This allows for a sort of two-tiered analysis, in which researchers can see both the surface usage, that is the result of decisions (conscious or otherwise) being made by speakers about which language or language form they will use, as well as a single speaker's attitudes and mindset surrounding the language, showing the influences on the usage decision made.

The social variables or demographics that ought to be collected in this study can be ascertained from investigating what variables have proven relevant and influential in previous research into sociolinguistics and more specifically social dialectology.

As discussed above, Fischer (1958) was one of, if not the first researcher to attribute language variation within a group to extra-linguistic factors as opposed to unpredictable Free Variation. He found that the speech of a sample of children in New England was conditioned by sex, class, personality, and mood (in the emotional sense rather than the linguistic sense). Labov (1963), in his foundational work on the Martha's Vineyard speech community, identified age as a further influence on sociolinguistic variation in a community (and therefore as a tool to identify language change), while his famous study on New York English further identified social class as an influencing factor (Labov 1966).

The varied usage of language, and in this case specifically the usage in a bilingual environment not dissimilar from that in South Baden, as conditioned by domains of use in everyday life was highlighted in a landmark study of language choice and language shift in the Austrian-Hungarian border town of Oberwart by Susan Gal (Gal 1979). Gal noted different distributions between the high prestige German and low prestige Hungarian in different age groups, with older generations using the low prestige form more widely, and younger generations limiting its use to more personal situations. This, among other observations, suggested that the prestige had shifted with time, and that German had gained popularity, reflected by its greater use in the younger generations. Gal also suggests that this stems from a historical class divide between the nobility in Oberwart, who traditionally spoke exclusively German, and the lower classes, who spoke Hungarian.

Since its introduction by Lave and Wenger (1991), the community of practice has grown to be a common framework for the analysis of the shared linguistic identity in a group unified by their joint participation in a common goal or shared enterprise (Davies 2005). This initially referred to the environment of a trade, with specific attention to the role of apprentices in a trade-based community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991), though can be further expanded to cover wider community activities that are not necessarily occupational, such as choirs, bands, and hunting groups. It is possible in the case of this study that these communities of practice, such as hunting clubs, musical ensembles, and walking groups would provide a platform for the transferral of Alemannic, or for its preservation. In these communities of practise, it might be the primary language of communication, even if it is that is not the case in the wider speech community. An individual's occupation is also a possible platform, not necessarily for initial teaching and learning of Alemannic, but influencing its preservation or loss. As a community of practice, different occupations may have influences on an individual's usage of Alemannic on a daily basis. Even if there is no clear influence on an individual's use of Alemannic, their membership of certain communities may have an influence at a lower level on their interest in the preservation of the dialect, or their impetus to use it in their wider lives outside the community setting.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PREAMBLE

This research was originally planned to constitute a round of face-to-face interviews in the Southern Black Forest, assessing usage and attitudes through semi-structured interviews over a two-week field trip. Participants were going to be contacted through existent community contacts as well as through cold-contacting community leaders such as mayors, priests, and leaders of community organisations. The global COVID-19 pandemic, however, meant that international travel would not be feasible for the foreseeable future, and the project had to be redesigned and ethics application rewritten for a COVID-safe, online platform.

2.2 PRELIMINARY CONTACT

Prior to beginning the process of survey development and ethical considerations and approval, it was important to assess the general feasibility of the study: would the proposed participants be able to complete online surveys, would a sufficient number of proposed participants be able to be found, what routes into the community could be established, and so on. Initial contact was made with a previous contact who lives in the region but does not qualify for participation in the study. This contact was able to confirm that:

- a) Internet access was stable and regular throughout more rural areas in the region, and
- b) The general level of computer literacy in the population (namely older community members) was high enough for the access and completion of a survey online.

This contact was also able to email acquaintances and gain permission from them to be contacted in regards to this study. Through this method, we were put in touch with the president of a local community organisation for the use of Lower Alemannic dialects. This *Muttersprache-Gesellschaft (de)/Muettersproch-Gsellschaft (al)* ('mother tongue organisation') was prepared to act as a community point of entry, and would promote the study.

2.3 DESIGN OF STUDY

The design of the study was strongly influenced by a number of factors of the online format. The shift towards online-only interaction along with time zone differences created an impetus to move away from one-on-one interviews as a centrepiece for the study, leading to the decision to run an online survey as a more time-flexible and less time-consuming alternative. This questionnaire subsequently became the primary mode of study, with the original interview plan complementing the survey.

Given that data for the study had to be collected remotely, two modes of data collection were decided on:

1. A survey delivered in an online format, which would be more easily distributed to a large number of possible respondents and could be completed by respondents at their own pace and within their own schedules in the local time zone; and
2. Follow-up, targeted, semi-structured interviews conducted with a small subset of survey respondents over Zoom or by email, which would allow more specific and in-depth discussion of topics covered in the survey, and to address any factors of the state of Alemannic in the region missed by the survey.

An initial estimate of 50 participants was arrived after consultations with researchers and community groups in order to find a balance between feasibility of finding participants and the

statistical significance or representativeness of the sample size. In this balance, a larger sample size would be statistically more representative of the region but would be harder to achieve.

This goal of 50 participants ended up being doubled, as is discussed below.

2.4 SURVEY

The survey sought to establish a profile of Alemannic usage covering the following areas:

- a) Proficiency of the informants in Alemannic,
- b) Alemannic speakers' use of the variety across different domains, and
- c) The attitudes towards the variety in the community.

An initial and primary consideration was as such the need for ease of completion and ease of distribution. As a survey, participation would be self-guided and self-motivated, meaning that in order to maximise participation and minimise impact on participants' lives, the survey would need to be designed to be easy to complete.

This ease of completion was achieved by minimizing open ended questions, and instead using predominantly multiple choice questions with some short answers, and having optional open ended "comments" sections in case the given options did not cover the respondent's desired response. This allowed both for ease of completion and minimised the required writing from respondents, as well as a preservation of the specificity of the data through the comments sections.

2.4.1 CONTENT

2.4.1.1 Proficiency Questions

In her study of Louisiana French Creole, Dubois (1997) introduces a framework in order to codify and measure proficiency in a reproducible format. Participants were asked to judge their ability to use the language in question (Louisiana French in Dubois (1997)) in each of a set of ten scenarios, ranging in complexity from "I can count to ten" to "I can give my opinion on a controversial subject (abortion, religion, pollution, nuclear safety) with native speakers" (p. 51). Based on their responses, Dubois was able to group participants into four levels of proficiency: able in 10/10 scenarios, able in 7/10 scenarios, able in 4-5/10, and able in 0/10.

With minor adaptations, this framework, subsequently referred to as the Dialect Proficiency Index (DPI), was used in the survey to facilitate more consistent judgements of dialect proficiency in a self-reporting environment. Given that there would not be an opportunity to speak face-to-face with all participants in the dialect, both due to the nature of a survey and the more central lack of dialect proficiency in the researcher, this method allows participants to self-report while limiting the inconsistencies that would arise if participants were simply asked to rate their proficiency out of ten without a standardised reference.

The wording of some of the situations was slightly adapted, namely, examples of controversial topics were removed to avoid projecting any particular political cultural bias. Other examples were added to clarify statements, however, where they were not seen to hold any bias or cultural implications (e.g. listing examples of biographical information). A full list of the ten statements and translations is attached with the full survey in Appendix I: Survey Questions. Error! Reference source not found..

2.4.1.2 Language Use and Attitudes Questions

In order to build a demographic profile of a respondent, and of the cohort of respondents overall, as is key to illustrating the *who, where and when* of Alemannic in Germany, the survey

had to ask personal questions, covering areas of age, education level, and cultural identity. In doing so, care had to be taken to ensure that the questions were phrased in such a way that possible offence or discomfort was avoided. In many cultures, German included, asking someone's age is considered rude or uncomfortably personal. While some of this sense is likely removed by the nature of the survey as formal research rather than small-talk, alternative wording was used to better fit within social norms. For example, respondents were asked for their birth year rather than their age.

In addition to avoiding discomfort, it was important to not make, or appear to make, any judgements about respondents and their demographics. Questions about education are at risk of this, due to the possible imbalance between the education level of researchers and respondents. In order to avoid any appearance of judgement, the question on access to formal education was phrased to avoid it being understood as "did you choose education": *Did you have the chance to attend formal education when you were young?* Similar precautions were taken when asking about the respondent's highest level of education, as well as when modifying the Dialect Proficiency Index as discussed above.

Language use prompts allowed respondents to mark 'Yes' or 'No' to a series of possible situations in their day-to-day life in which they might use Alemannic. These included various parts of the community, such as church or the market, different age groups, and people higher or lower in the social hierarchy, such as an employer or an assistant. Attitudes were assessed through the use of a Likert scale, in which respondents could mark a statement about Alemannic from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". These prompts covered areas such as the respondent's own satisfaction with their Alemannic proficiency, the respondent's opinions on the transmission of Alemannic to children, and the relationship between Alemannic and a regional identity. The full survey and translation is attached in Appendix I: Survey Questions.

2.4.2 STRUCTURE

The first and foremost consideration when planning the structure of the survey was conformity with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), a set of guidelines established by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the Australian Research Council (ARC), and Universities Australia as a basic framework for the undertaking of ethical research with humans. The Participant Information Statement (PIS) covers key information regarding the contents of the study and the participants' interaction with it. For an in-person interview, this information as standard would be given in printed form for the participant to keep. Due to the online nature of the survey, however, this could not be done in the standard format. While all the information of the PIS could have been displayed on the opening page of the survey, the document was four A4 pages and too long to display on a single webpage without being overwhelming for the reader, and would in turn unnecessarily discourage participation. Participants would also not be able to save the PIS for personal reference. As such, a brief summary of the study from the introduction to the PIS was displayed on the opening page, along with a brief description of why reading the PIS was important, and the PIS itself as an attachment. This meant that the full information of the PIS was available to participants in both a form they could save, and one that was more easily accessible for reading and navigating.

The second key part of informed consent, after the provision of information discussed above, is the clear confirmation of consent. This is typically acquired in writing through a standard form. Much like the PIS, the online format prevented consent from being collected in

the standard fashion, however, unlike the PIS, the necessity of interaction with the consent form meant that the standard format could not be simply attached to the survey as the PIS was. The National Statement gives a number of options for collecting consent from potential participants:

Consent may be expressed orally, in writing or by some other means (for example, return of a survey, or conduct implying consent), depending on:

- (a) the nature, complexity and level of risk of the research; and
- (b) the participant's personal and cultural circumstances.

(National Statement, 2007, paragraph 2.2.5)

Notably here, the National Statement (2007) specifically suggests that, where suitable given conditions (a) and (b), consent can be given in the act of completing the survey itself. This, while convenient and far simpler than any alternative for the respondent, comes with a number of caveats to ensure that respondents are still sufficiently informed that this process is being used, as well as exactly what they are consenting to. With the low-risk nature of the study, along with no cultural reasons that such an approach would not be viable, and higher levels of technical literacy, this method was deemed suitable.

Despite the survey officially being anonymous or anonymised in terms of ethical considerations, some contextually or directly identifiable information was collected. There is the unavoidable problem that even anonymous data, where there is enough of it, could be used to identify an individual. In addition to this, however, contact information was required for those who wished to volunteer for interviews, and contact information was also collected in order to send a summary of the study's findings where respondents indicated that they wished to receive this.

Where contact information was collected, it was stored separately in order to maintain anonymity in the research data and ensure the privacy of respondents. In order to facilitate this, and to avoid confusion regarding the end of the survey, these questions were placed last in the survey.

There are arguments both for and against placing demographics questions at the beginning or the end of a survey (Dobosh 2006). Justifications for including questions at the end of a survey include psychological motivations such as a sense of sunken costs and fatigue encouraging a respondent to answer more invasive demographic questions, which they may not be so comfortable answering at the beginning of the survey. Placing the questions at the beginning of a survey, however, may help to prime or prepare respondents for the topic of the survey, where questions are less invasive. The questions in the survey here are not considered to be particularly private or invasive, but some questions, such as the higher level questions about what the respondent speaks and what they call their dialects (q. 8-9), both prime the respondent to think about their dialect usage, and is used to populate the rest of the survey. As such, the demographic questions were placed at the beginning of the survey as an introduction.

2.4.3 DISTRIBUTION

2.4.3.1 Platform

University guidelines recommended that the data collected in this survey would be classified as "Protected", the middle tier of classification, meaning it contains personal and confidential information and unpublished research data, but not data containing culturally sensitive material, or health information, among other things. As such, the university's REDCap platform was the most suitable service to build and host the survey. The system allowed for a number of

ease of use features, such as a single distribution link, and the ability to save progress on the survey and complete it at a later time.

2.4.3.2 Practical Distribution Remarks

The survey was distributed through a number of different channels. The initial plan was to use solely previously established contacts (through family and friends in the region) and to use snowball recruitment (Milroy and Gordon 2003) to gain a cross-section of the region. With the move to the online survey format however, distribution was instead achieved with the assistance of the *Muettersproch-Gsellschaft*. The organisation was willing to assist in advertising across a number of platforms, namely their website, their newsletter, and in an Alemannic column *Lueginland* in the regional newspaper⁴ the *Badische Zeitung*. With access to the membership of the *Gsellschaft*, more than twice the initially expected responses were received, to a total of 105.

After a number of weeks of the survey being open, new responses to the survey had slowed significantly and a large number of responses had been received, to a point where it was deemed suitable to close the survey and begin analysis. This was not done on any pre-determined criteria, but at the point that we felt the few extra responses we might get with time would not outweigh the less time we would have for analysis. Upon closing the survey, there were a total of 101 completed and valid responses (some respondents did not fulfil the requirements of living and having grown up in the region).

2.5 FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

2.5.1 INTERVIEW DESIGN AND SCHEDULE

Interviews were undertaken as a secondary mode of investigation in the study, being conducted with a small number of survey respondents who volunteered to take part further in the study.

In order to streamline the interview process while maintaining the structural flexibility of interviews, a semi-structured format was selected as the best method of interviewing. This approach uses a number of lead-in questions in different areas, while avoiding a single list of compulsory questions (which would essentially negate the advantages of an interview over the survey).

The interview comprised three main topic or modules, adapted from (Seidman 2006). The first module investigates the background of the interviewee's relationship with their Alemannic dialect, allowing the interviewer to frame the remainder of the interview and the interviewee's experiences within the context of their greater life. This section focusses less on the interviewee's opinions or judgements, but rather on their recollection, asking 'how' something happened rather than 'why'.

The second investigates the interviewee's "present lived experience" (Seidman 2006: 18), investigating their current relationship with Alemannic in a descriptive sense, building on the usage section of the survey. It also asked some questions regarding the interviewee's subjective relationship with their dialect, such as "If you could only choose one type of German (Alemannic or Standard), which type would you choose? Why?"

⁴ <https://www.badische-zeitung.de/lueginland-auschtralische-wunderfitz> (accessed 21/8/2020)

The third module focusses on the meaning gained from the interviewee's relationship with Alemannic and the impact this has had on their identity, as well as their opinions on the current state of the dialect, such as its (lack of) use in schools.

Seidman (2006) presented a structure over three interviews, which was here reduced to three modules of a single interview. These modules were less strict in their domains than the three interviews described by Seidman (2006), as much of the contents of his second interview were covered by the survey; the second module discusses both some comments on their current relationship with Alemannic descriptively, but also asks for their opinions surrounding their dialect and its place in their life. These topics are then further investigated in the third module, which aims to explore the relationship between Alemannic and the interviewee on a wider scale.

Guide questions to begin discussion within these modules were either written for this study or adapted from Lay (2004), a study into the motivations of language learners in Taipei, Taiwan. While Lay (2004)'s interview did not investigate the exact same topics as here, the focus on interviewees' experience with language creates a level of overlap such that a number of questions could be readily adapted.

The full layout of the structured interview with prompt questions can be found in Appendix II: Interview Structure.

2.5.2 INTERVIEWEE SELECTION

Interviewees were selected from the pool of respondents who opted in based on a number of criteria. Because the number of interviews that could feasibly be conducted was small (one per 10 survey responses to a maximum of five), it was decided to select interview candidates manually and based on their survey responses, rather than at random. Initially, a short-list of respondents that either gave a number of extra notes in their survey that suggested they were in a position to give further insights, or were in a demographic group that was underrepresented in the survey was created. From this shortlist, a final list of seven respondents to be contacted was compiled to be balanced for demographics, i.e., a spread of ages, education level, participation in community activities, and whether they grew up in a city or in a rural setting.

This allowed for a cross-section of the demographics of the main cohort of respondents to be interviewed, while ensuring that particular niche cases that could have been of specific interest were not omitted. The balancing of demographics in the final list of interviewees attempted to eliminate bias that might arise or be perceived to have arisen in any resultant data if all interviewees were, for example, older university graduates who had lived all their lives in Freiburg, the region's largest city, as opposed to a younger person who had a trade qualification and lived in a small village.

Interviews were either conducted through audio-visual media, or through email correspondences, wherein initial questions were sent and answered, and follow up questions for sent in subsequent emails based on initial responses.

2.6 OVERVIEW OF ANALYSIS

There are a number of fundamental and well documented issues with a self-report-based methodology (Fielding 2006). By relying on respondents to report their own experience, the accuracy of results relies on most centrally their honesty, but also at a level less obvious to the respondent, the accuracy of their observations. While it would be difficult to gain insights into a

respondent's attitudes towards the dialect without asking them to self-report (one could theoretically observe their behaviour and make a judgement from that, though that would then be beholden to the bias of the researcher), assessment of usage can be far more accurately assessed through observation.

Having a respondent self-report usage relies on the accuracy of their awareness of their own usage, which can be problematic if the conditions of their usage are sociocultural and come to the respondent with a degree of instinctiveness. Similarly, if there is a wide-reaching cultural norm governing usage in a community where diglossia is present, respondents may not think to report usage they deem normal or expected. They might also seek to relate what they expect the researcher wants to hear, or to present a positive image of the language situation.

A solution to this, as was introduced in Gal (1979)'s landmark study on a bilingual German/Hungarian community in Austria and has been used in many studies since, is extensive observation of the community in order to measure usage as it happens and as a third party, or for respondents to note down their usage as they go throughout the day, to remove the inaccuracies of self-reporting after the fact.

Both of these methods, while far more robust in terms of data collected, encounter issues of feasibility for smaller studies, such as this one. Susan Gal spent a year in the community in Oberwart acting as a community member while observing this usage (Mesthrie et al. 2009: 195), which is unsuitable for an honours project. Asking respondents to self-report throughout the day for more objective and accurate data would also be too onerous on respondents (at least without compensation). As such, the methodological concerns with self-reporting as outlined above cannot be solved in research for an honours project, but by maintaining awareness of them, they can be taken into account where necessary during analysis. Additionally, respondents were judged to have responded sincerely to the survey.

Another general issue identified with self-reporting in linguistics is that of difficulty in identifying what is correct or incorrect in a given language variety when not seeing it in actual usage. As the current study's focus is an investigation of the language's usage rather than its structure or phonology etc., this issue is less relevant.

3 STUDY – ALEMANNIC IN GERMANY

This chapter will present the results of the study conducted into the position of Alemannic in Germany, looking into demographics, domains of usage, along with attitudes towards Alemannic and its place in the community of the Alemannic-speaking population. This comprises the first of the three research questions presented in Chapter 1.2.3. Later, in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively, the discussions regarding the latter two research questions, that is, a comparison with Alemannic in France and Switzerland and an investigation of the extra-linguistic factors influencing these similarities and differences, will be presented.

3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

Overall, the results of the initial survey section of the study were very homogenous, with all 101 respondents reporting similar experiences across the topics examined. As was discussed in Chapter 2, due to the nature of the survey's distribution, the vast majority of respondents rated high proficiency in the dialect within the Dialect Proficiency Index (DPI), to the extent that only 17.8% of respondents reported lower than the maximum DPI of 10, and the overall average of the cohort was 9.5. Of the respondents who reported lower than total proficiency, the average DPI was still 7.5, suggesting that within the cohort of respondents, even in those who would not report a complete level of fluency, proficiency was still fairly high.

A number of respondents (8) specifically reported in addition to the DPI measurement that they considered the dialect (most broadly referred to as Alemannic) their first language or mother tongue, and that they speak it more comfortably than they do Standard German.

The overwhelming trend towards high proficiency is a clear result of a selection bias as a result of the association with the *Muettersproch-Gsellschaft*, in that when asking a community group interested in the preservation of dialects, their attitudes and usage will likely be skewed to a more positive standpoint. Similarly, more publicly available information such as the newspaper column were written in Alemannic, meaning that any new respondents gained would have a high proficiency by virtue of being able to understand the column. This bias will be addressed in greater detail later. This meant that conclusions as to the demographic nature of the dialect-speaking population in South Baden could not directly be drawn.

That said, by comparing the demographics of the data collected with general demographics from the region, conclusions can be drawn about the demographic makeup of respondents in contrast to the wider population. Again, while there is no guarantee that the respondents are representative of dialect speakers as a whole, they are representative of at the very least a subset of the *Gsellschaft's* membership that is interested enough in their use of the dialect to take part in the study. Even with this limited view of the representativeness of the data pool collected, the any statistically significant similarities or differences between the data pool and the wider region would still be meaningful for an assessment of the demographics of people with a higher interest in the dialect.

For this comparison, data were collected from the Baden-Württemberg state government statistics department (*Statistisches Landesamt*)⁵. The statistics department publishes data on age distribution, education level, employment etc. either at a state level, or on a much more fine-grained level of detail.

⁵ <https://www.statistik-bw.de/>

At a general level, there was a high degree of agreement across the majority of questions regarding respondents' attitudes towards Alemannic in their everyday lives. Eight out of the nine statements had an agreement rate of over 50% (that is, over half of the cohort responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with these statements), while five of these eight had agreement rates of over 70%. There was no correlation identified between any demographic features and attitudes, though some correlation was identified between respondents' responses to certain attitude statements.

The majority of respondents also either indicated that they would use Alemannic across the domains listed on the survey, or specifically stated that they would use it wherever possible. Some respondents, however, did indicate marginally more limited usage, broadly speaking following a pattern in the decline of their usage. That is, usage of Alemannic was more commonly avoided in certain areas than others.

3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted over a number of different platforms, depending on what was most comfortable and accessible for the interviewee. While it would have been optimal to use audio/visual platforms for all interviews, time zone differences, as well as lower levels of technological literacy than were initially expected, made this challenging. As such, while some interviews were still conducted over Zoom, other were conducted asynchronously via E-Mail or Facebook. In these asynchronous cases, the initial questions were sent to the interviewee as part of the initial enquiry as to their interest in taking part, and the interviewees provided written responses to the questions. Follow up questions were then sent where further questions arose, or where questions arose from responses given by the interviewees in the survey. This process continued where further questions arose in their subsequent responses. This asynchronous approach greatly limited the rapport or trust that could be built between the interviewer and the interviewee, as the conversation was much more limited to the topic and more formal than when the interviews were conducted on Zoom in real time. Similarly, the wording of questions could not be restructured or clarified where something either had already been discussed by the interviewee, or was unclear to them. It was also much harder to elicit anecdotes or stories from interviewees over the asynchronous platforms. The flexibility of time, however, did allow questions to be more in-depth and thought through than follow-up questions in the live interviews. This benefit was largely overshadowed by the aforementioned issues, but unfortunately these interviews proved unavoidable due to the logistical challenges of timing and technology.

3.3 DEMOGRAPHICS COMPARISON

The dramatic bias in the results towards high proficiency speakers is a clear result of the methodological bias discussed in Section 3.1, and as such, the demographic spread of respondents to this study cannot in isolation demonstrate any trends in the usage of Alemannic in comparison to the wider population. The data, can however, be regarded as a representation of the demographic makeup of the Alemannic-speaking population in South Baden, which, when compared to demographic measurements of the population as a whole, could demonstrate some trends.

This data is available from to varying levels of specificity from the Baden-Württemberg *Statistisches Landesamt* as described above. Some summaries are only available at a full state level, while others are available for specific administrative areas across a number of levels of

government, namely at the state level, by the four high level *Regierungsbezirke* (governmental districts), one of two regional levels *Regionverbände* (regional associations) or *Landkreise* (districts), or the local *Gemeinde* (municipalities).

The survey region most closely covered the *Südlicher Oberrhein* (Southern Upper Rhine) and *Hochrhein-Bodensee* (High Rhine-Lake Constance) *Regionverbände*. The age data for these two regions correlated to a degree of 98.9% (Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient), and as such, for the sake of simplicity, only the age distribution of the *Südlicher Oberrhein* was used for comparison, along with the age distribution of the survey data and the state-level data. The state-level data was added as an extra reference for the general population in case it was different to the regional level data, though this proved to not be the case.

In the three data sources, ages were grouped into 10-year age brackets, starting from 20-29 years old (the bracket of the youngest survey respondent), and extending to 80-89 years old (the age bracket of the oldest respondent). In order to scale these three sources to a similar range, each age bracket was calculated as the percentage of the total population in the data source. With the data sources scaled to a percentage measurement as opposed to raw numbers (which, given their different scopes, had wildly different ranges), they could be accurately compared to determine similarities or differences. This comparison is shown in Figure 3.1.

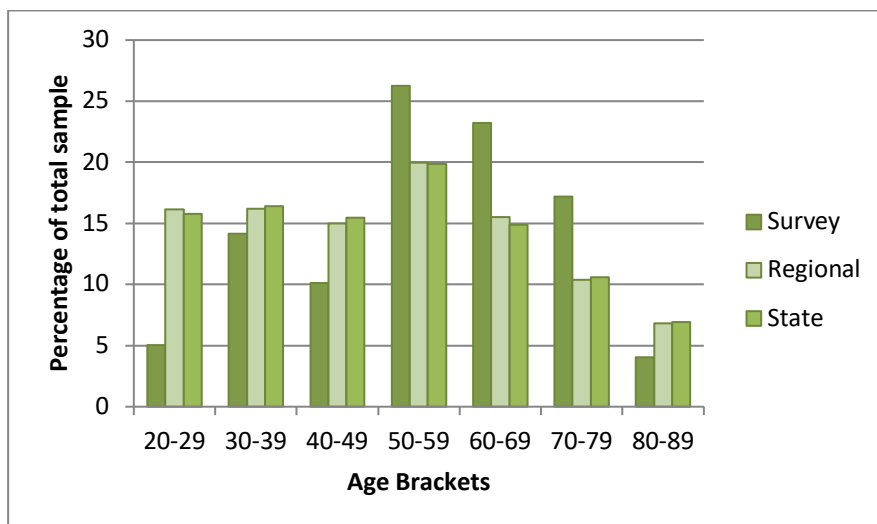


Figure 3.1: Age distribution of survey respondents, compared to age distributions of the general population from regional and state demographic data

From the data shown in Figure 3.1, namely the similarity between the state and regional data, along with the aforementioned close correlation between the *Südlicher Oberrhein* and *Hochrhein-Bodensee* regions, it is clear that there is no meaningful difference between the age distributions in the general population. Of far greater note, however, is the clear difference between the age distribution of the general population measures and the distribution of survey respondents. While there is an overall similarity between the trends of slightly higher proportions of older people, the difference is far stronger in the survey data. Figure 3.2 highlights this more clearly, showing only the difference between survey data and the regional age distribution. While in both cases, there was a higher proportion of older people, this lean was much stronger in the survey data, with the 60-69 age bracket making up about 23% of the

survey data, compared to about 15.5% regionally, for a difference of almost 8% between the two measures.

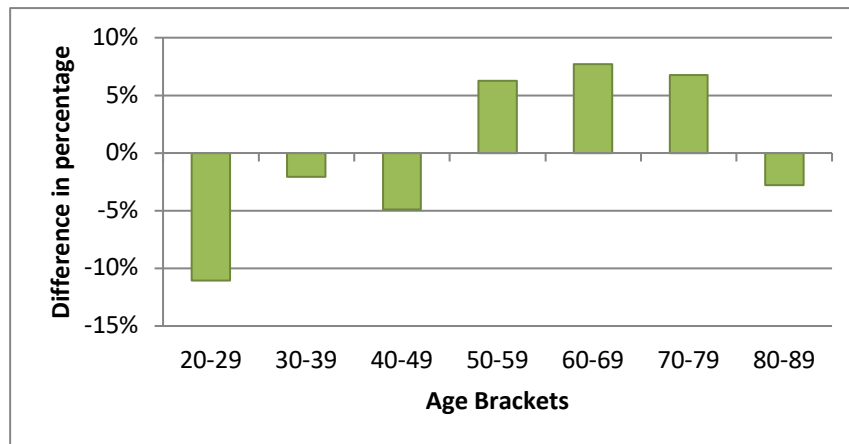


Figure 3.2: Over and underrepresentation of age groups in the survey respondents compared to overall regional data

Assuming that the data collected is a representative cross-section of the Alemannic-speaking population in South Baden, this suggests that the younger generations are either a) speaking the dialect less, or b) less interested in preservation than older generations, by virtue of not taking part in the survey or not being members of the *Muettersproch-Gsellschaft*, when compared to older generations. Regardless, this suggests a diachronic shift in the position of Alemannic in South Baden, with its usage declining in the last 30 years.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to quantify this decline with the data acquired, in the same sense that it is not possible to measure what proportion of the population speak Alemannic. That is, it can be seen above that the Alemannic-speaking community is likely proportionally skewed towards older generations, but what proportion this community makes up of the general population cannot be determined.

The interview process, however, did allow some observations on the wider distribution of Alemannic in the general population to be made, as well as on its usage in cities compared to smaller towns. One interviewee in the 20-29 age bracket who grew up in a smaller town (Interviewee A) felt that, even though it would have been unusual or unprofessional to use Alemannic in the workplace, most of their co-workers would be able to speak it. They felt that, even though there were fewer opportunities for younger people to speak Alemannic, namely in the workplace or at university, they would still have decent levels of proficiency, assuming they were from an Alemannic-speaking region. Interviewee B is a second interviewee from the same age bracket, but who came from Freiburg, the main city in the region. The interviewee notably cannot speak any Alemannic. Interviewee B reported that, south of Freiburg in the Upper Rhine corridor to Basel, young people do still speak Alemannic “at home or with their grandparents, or with their friend circles at home”. In Freiburg, however, this is not the case, where the interviewee reported that young people much more rarely use it in everyday life.

An older interviewee in the 70-79 age bracket from outside a mid-sized town (Interviewee C) reported that they felt their town was still a “dialectal or colloquial city” (Interviewee C), and that while most people (they suggest a figure of 80% for their village on the outskirts of the main town) there would speak Alemannic, that might not be the case in the

university cities such as Freiburg. This seems to agree with the experiences reported by Interviewees A and B, that in a larger university city such as Freiburg there are lower rates of Alemannic proficiency than in smaller towns and villages.

Of the survey respondents, 16% reported having grown up in a city (Freiburg, Konstanz, Villingen-Schwenningen, Offenburg, or Lörrach, all with a population of around or above 50,000). This, when compared to the general demographics, in which approximately 40% of people live in these cities (compared to the total population of the Regierungsbezirk Freiburg), suggests also that Alemannic speakers more commonly come from smaller towns or villages, and that Alemannic is less common in the region’s major cities, as shown in Figure 3.3(a). In fact, 29% of the population of the Regierungsbezirk Freiburg live in the city of Freiburg itself, which is the largest city in the region by a large margin. Despite this, only 7% of the survey respondents reported having grown up there. While this is a higher percentage than most other towns, as there are many small towns only reported once or twice, the proportion of respondents who grew up outside the city is still much higher than it would be if the Alemannic-speaking population was evenly spread throughout the region. This disparity is shown in Figure 3.3(b).

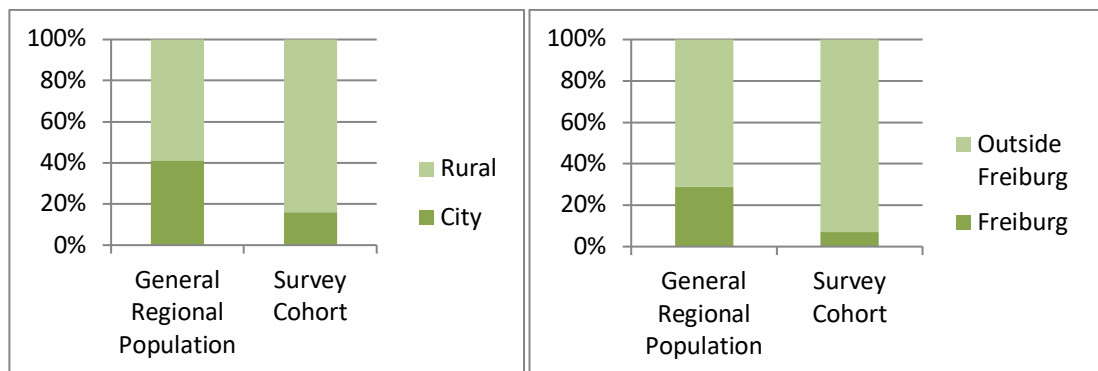


Figure 3.3: Comparison between the distribution of population between (a) rural vs city, and (b) Freiburg vs outside Freiburg in the general population and the survey cohort.

3.4 USAGE

Survey respondents were presented with fourteen statements of situations in their daily lives they might or might not use Alemannic, to which they were asked to respond with either Yes or No. These prompts were grouped into three sections: locations, age, and status. The full set of prompts are available in Appendix I: Survey Questions.

Analysis of responses to these prompts was either done by Pearson Correlation Coefficient calculations, manual calculations of percentages, or manual observation using conditional formatting. This analysis was all undertaken using Microsoft Excel. For the Pearson Correlation Coefficient calculations, numerical data was needed. As such, the “Yes” and “No” responses were converted into 1 and 2 respectively, allowing the formula to interpret the responses. Correlation coefficients of above 0.5 (50%) were taken to be significant.

Overall, general levels of usage were very high across all areas. 61% of respondents answered “Yes” to all 14 prompts, indicated that they would use Alemannic across their daily lives in any context. It should be noted that these prompts were limited to situations where the respondent’s conversation partner also spoke Alemannic. As such, while a respondent might

have reported being prepared to use Alemannic in all domains of their everyday life, if they do not interact with many other Alemannic speakers, their actual usage of the dialect may prove to be substantially lower. Very few proficient participants reported anything less than 50% of the prompts; while 61% of respondents reported “Yes” to all 14 prompts, 93% of respondents reported “Yes” to at least half of the prompts. This rapid drop-off is shown in Figure 3.4.

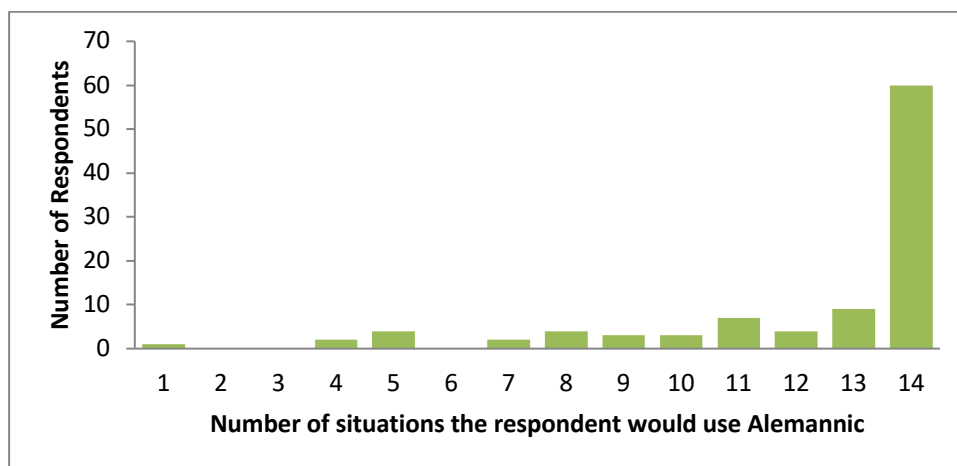


Figure 3.4: Number of respondents who reported a given number of situations in which they would use Alemannic

Where a respondent reported that they did not use Alemannic in every domain of everyday life, there was a pattern as to where they were more likely to avoid using it. If a respondent reported only 13 domains, the one domain they would not use Alemannic was consistently either with an employer or a stranger. This was followed by further formal situations such as the wider workplace, and then shop assistants and public servants. This is reminiscent of the implication scale described by Gal (1979), whereby speakers who use the L variety in fewer situations can be predicted to avoid it in the same situations, following a regular pattern of domains avoided as level of avoidance increases.

No clear correlation between age and amount of usage was identified, with a correlation coefficient of only 0.15 when the age brackets and numbers of “Yes” responses of respondents were compared. However, there appears to be some correlation between amount of usage and whether or not the respondent is retired. Of the survey cohort, 31% respondents reported that they were retired, of which 74% reported widespread usage of Alemannic (answered “Yes” to all 14 prompts). Of the non-retirees, however, only 54% reported a similar level of usage, while the remaining 46% reported at least one situation where they would not feel comfortable or would not be prepared to speak Alemannic. Figure 3.5 shows this imbalance.

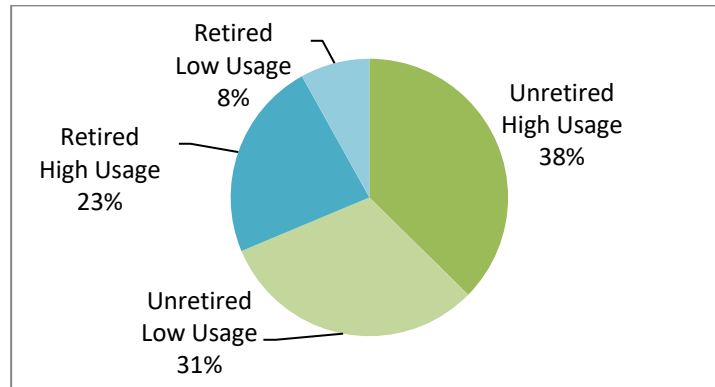


Figure 3.5: The survey cohort split by retirement status and usage level (usage across all areas vs usage across some areas). Note the comparatively small segment of Retired Low Usage.

The least common reported environment for usage was with employers, which still had a rate of “Yes” responses of 69%. This was further reflected in the interviews undertaken. As noted above, Interviewee A felt that, even though they and a number of their co-workers could speak Alemannic, it would be unprofessional, or, at the very least, strange to do so in the workplace. They also reported that they felt it might prove challenging to use Alemannic there, as there would be an amount of field-specific vocabulary that doesn’t necessarily exist in Alemannic. As a result, it is usual for workplace interactions to be conducted entirely in Standard German. In addition to this, Interviewee A reported an expectation that, when they retired in however many years, they would likely use Alemannic much more exclusively. This reflects the trend mentioned above, in which retirees were more likely to use Alemannic across all domains of everyday life.

Speaking with strangers on the street was another domain that was often reported as a situation where the use of Alemannic would be more commonly avoided. Further insights into this were also gained from the interviews; as previously mentioned, Interviewee C suggested that, in their village, some 80% of the population would speak Alemannic, but that this wouldn’t be the case in larger cities. As such, it is understandable that one would be less able to speak Alemannic with strangers in a larger city, where one is less able to be confident that others will speak it. It difficult to determine with confidence if this is reflected by the data; of the subset of respondents who grew up in cities, 28% reported that they would not use Alemannic with strangers. In respondents who grew up in smaller towns, however, 23% reported this. While this seems to agree with the observations of Interviewee C, the difference is not enormously strong.

To sum up thus far, it appears that Alemannic speakers use their dialect quite broadly in everyday life, but that there are a number of factors that influence how widely this is applicable. While no strong correlation with age was specifically identified, a tendency for retirees to use Alemannic more widely was observed, as was a tendency for speakers from outside the region’s major cities (though this was predominantly noted qualitatively). Similarly, the domains where Alemannic is least likely to be used include the workplace, where co-workers might not be local and there is jargon used that only exists in Standard German, and with strangers, especially where it is less likely that they speak Alemannic. It seems as such, that the usage of Alemannic by its speakers is governed predominantly by possibility, that is, if it is likely or known that an individual’s conversation partner has a level of proficiency in Alemannic, and if Alemannic has

the vocabulary necessary for the conversation topic, they will use it. Otherwise, Standard German will be used.

3.5 ATTITUDES

The attitudes of respondents towards the current state of Alemannic and their usage of it was measured through a set of nine or ten statements, to which respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a Likert scale of five options, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. These ratings were then converted to numerical values from one to five, in order to complete similar mathematical analyses as described with regards to the usage above.

It does not come as a surprise, given the selection bias, that respondents generally speaking had favourable attitudes towards Alemannic in their everyday lives. All but one statement had greater than 50% of respondents responding with either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”, as is shown in Figure 3.6. Aside from this general positivity, few correlations could be found between either attitudes and demographics, or between responses to the various attitude statements.

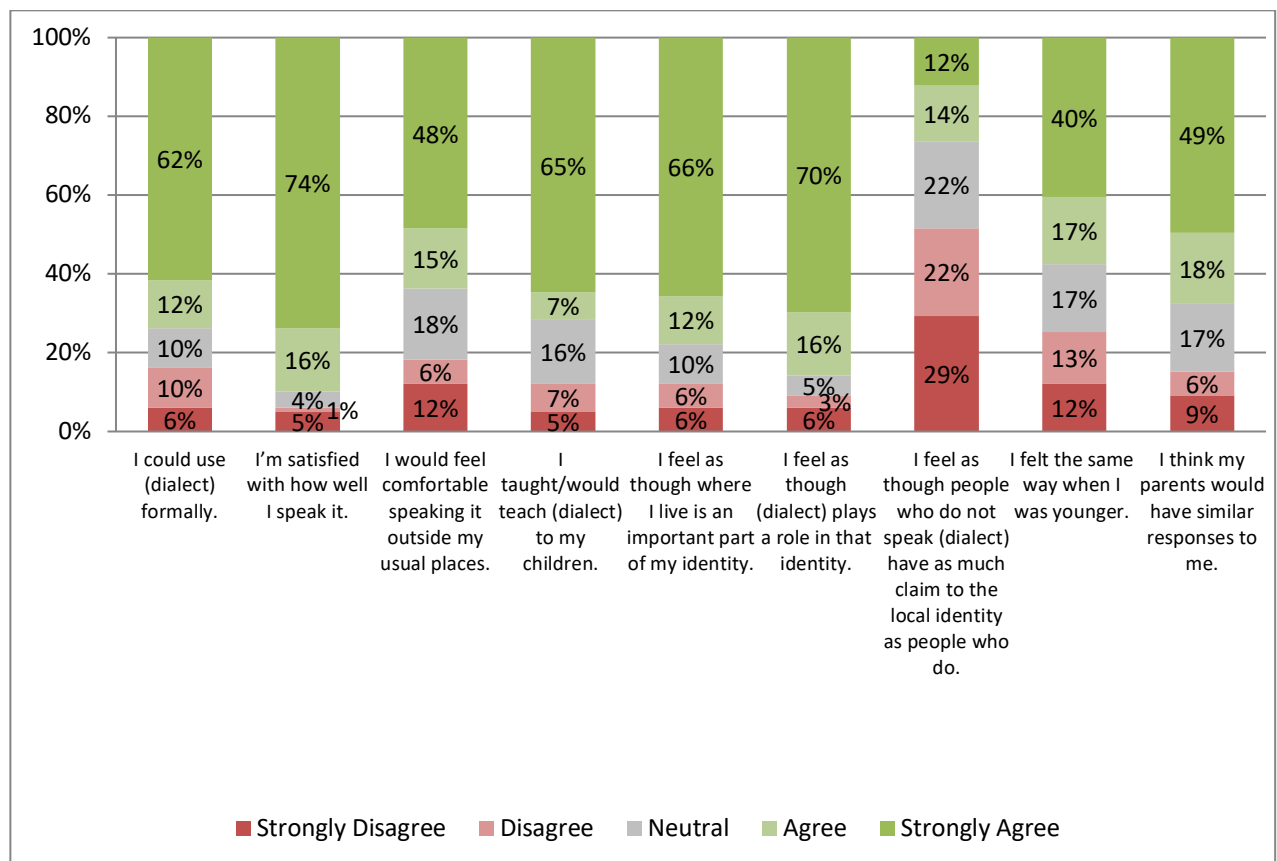


Figure 3.6: Division of each attitudes statement between the five possible responses

Prior to the survey section on attitudes, respondents were asked whether or not they had children. This was in order to show them appropriate questions regarding the intergenerational transmission of Alemannic; those who did not have children were asked if they *would* teach Alemannic to their children, while those who did were asked both if they previously had, as well as if they still would today.

Correlation was measured both between responses to the statements and respondents' age and proficiency level. No correlation was identified between age and proficiency, and any of the attitude statements. This suggests that, regardless of age and proficiency level, Alemannic speakers have a generally high opinion of their dialect with regards to its role in their life and identity, as well as a level of support for its preservation. It also suggests that none of the specific statements were more or less likely to apply to a certain group.

Despite the low correlation between who was giving each what response to each statement, there was a remarkable level of similarity between the distributions of responses for each statement. While the higher responses (Neutral to Strongly Agree) were fairly mixed, in the sense that it was not the same set of people responding the same way to each statement, the lower responses seemed to be from a set of people who responded with lower levels of agreement to all statements.

One statement, however, was substantially more controversial. Statement (g) asked respondents if they felt that community members who did not speak Alemannic had less claim over or right to the local identity than those who did speak it (See Figure 3.6 for the precise wording of the question in English). This statement directly followed two statements establishing the how the respondent felt their hometown and Alemannic played a role in their identity. While both of the preceding statements were, broadly speaking, agreed on (78% and 86% agreement respectively), statement (g) had only 26% agreement, while 22% were neutral and 52% disagreed. This suggests that the majority of Alemannic speakers (by a small margin) feel both that their hometown and use of Alemannic play part of their identity, but at the same time that this does not constitute a requirement for personal association with the region. Of further interest here, however, is the fairly drastic split in responses. A majority of 52% of respondents hold this stance, and the other 48% either agree with the statement, or hold a neutral opinion on the statement. Further, there appears to be a small tendency for Alemannic-speakers from cities to agree with this statement to a greater degree: 33% of respondents from cities reported agreement (strongly or otherwise) with the statement, while, on the other hand, only 25% of respondents from towns and villages reported agreement. This could reflect that in larger cities, the low level of Alemannic proficiency surrounding Alemannic speakers in life has encouraged them to consider Alemannic more important in their own identity. Measuring average response strength, however, seems to minimise this trend, with an average rating of 2.5 (where 1 is "Strongly Disagree", 3 is "Neutral", and 5 is "Strongly Agree") in respondents from more rural areas, compared to 2.6 in respondents from cities. This seems to suggest that, while there is a higher level of agreement with the statement in cities, the disagreement is conversely also stronger, bringing the average back down.

As previously mentioned, there was some amount of internal correlation within the attitude statements. For example, respondents who reported that their identity was tied to their hometown also reported that Alemannic played a large role in this identity (correlation coefficient 0.66). Similarly, respondents who reported that they either had or would teach Alemannic to their children also reported that Alemannic played a role in their identity (correlation coefficient 0.62).

Reports from interviewees agreed with the conclusions drawn from the survey, especially with regard to the place of Alemannic in speakers' identities. One interviewee reported that they felt Alemannic was a connection to their home, and subsequently their identity. Given that Alemannic is a section of a dialect continuum, there is dialectal variation on a very small geographic scale, from village to village. According to this interviewee, they felt that

their personal form of Alemannic tied them not only to the South Baden region, but to their home town. They told a story of a time they were on a work trip in northern Germany, where a stranger overheard their Alemannic and recognised it. In the subsequent conversation, a connection that the interviewee felt only occurred because of their shared knowledge of Alemannic, it turned out the stranger was from a village very near to the interviewee's hometown.

Much like its usage, the attitudes held by Alemannic speakers towards their language are generally very favourable. They tend to support its continued transmission to younger generations, and feel that it forms part of their identity by tying them to their hometown. The respondents had a very even mix of opinions on whether or not they felt that their knowledge of Alemannic entitled them to any exclusivity of access to this local identity. Despite the overall agreement, there were a small number of respondents to all statements (other than the controversial (g)) who did not agree with the majority, though there did not appear to be any demographic patterns in these respondents.

3.6 SUMMARY

From the data collected in the survey and the interviews, along with comparisons to wider demographic data, a number of conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Alemannic-speaking population is, on average, older than the general population
2. Alemannic is more commonly learnt and used in smaller towns and villages than in cities
3. Alemannic is used by its speakers wherever possible in everyday life
 - a. Its use is only avoided when other might not speak it or when necessary vocabulary exists only in Standard German
4. Alemannic speakers see their language as a part of their identity
 - a. This identity is closely tied to the individual's hometown and the geographical identifiability of the forms of Alemannic
 - b. There are mixed opinions about whether or not Alemannic proficiency is a requirement for claim to regional identity
5. Alemannic speakers generally support the transmission of their language to new generations
 - a. This support is tied to their sense of identity with the dialect and their hometown

These conclusions carry a number of implications. The aging Alemannic-speaking demographic suggests that, although the community currently supports the transmission of the language, there has been a decline in its transmission over the past few generations. That said, some of the age distribution could also be explained by the fewer opportunities to use Alemannic presented to younger people; not only is there a large amount of technical language covered in universities, limiting the use of Alemannic, but universities are restricted to larger cities with smaller Alemannic-speaking populations, further limiting the use of the language. There is also a possible self-sustaining loop of declining usage surrounding the usage of Alemannic in cities. That is, Alemannic speakers use the language where their counterpart also likely speaks it, so the less likely it is that a stranger will speak Alemannic, the less likely it is that an individual will use it. As the likelihood of an Alemannic-speaker using the language drops, so too does a) the likelihood that another Alemannic speaker will be aware that they can speak it and b) the likelihood that it will be passed on to their children, as it not used in their

everyday life. Both of these events decrease the likelihood that a stranger would speak Alemannic, or that an Alemannic-speaker would recognise that a stranger could speak Alemannic, creating a cycle of decreasing usage. This process would require the starting level of usage to be fairly low in the first place, limiting it to cities, where usage has been reported in interviews to be low.

A similar pattern of usage in the Alemannic community in Baden was found by Bister-Broosen (1996), though with a more limited scope in terms of the domains of use than what has been identified in the current study 25 years later. She suggests that this follows a “typical” pattern of dialect loss’ (Bister-Broosen 1996: 153), though makes no comment on the subjective attitudes of the Alemannic-speaking population in Baden.

4 OVERVIEW OF ALEMANNIC IN FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND

In order to further investigate the implications of the findings in Chapter 3, and to expand them into a more widely applicable case study, it is useful to examine previous research into the usage of and attitudes towards Alemannic in the other major Alemannic-speaking regions: Alsace, France, and German-speaking Switzerland, and to compare and contrast these descriptions of dialect usage, as per research question (2) outlined in Chapter 1.2.3. As such, this chapter will provide brief introductory overviews of the regions in question to better appreciate the sociohistorical and political contexts of the countries, and will summarise the usage and attitudes towards Alemannic in these two regions in other countries. Chapter 5 will examine the possible causes of any divergence or convergence identified here.

4.1 ALSACE

4.1.1 REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Alsace is a historic region situated in far north-eastern France, comprising a large section of the border region between France and Germany. Throughout history, the region has changed hands between German and French powers numerous times, though historically a large proportion of its inhabitants have been Alemannic-speaking. The local form of Alemannic, today notably differentiated from Alemannic in Germany by its French loanwords and influences, is referred to as Alsatian (*Elsässisch* (al, de), *Alsacien* (fr)) (Harrison 2016).

Alsace is predominantly a flat region, lying on the plain of the Rhine river, the river forming the French/German border to the region's east.

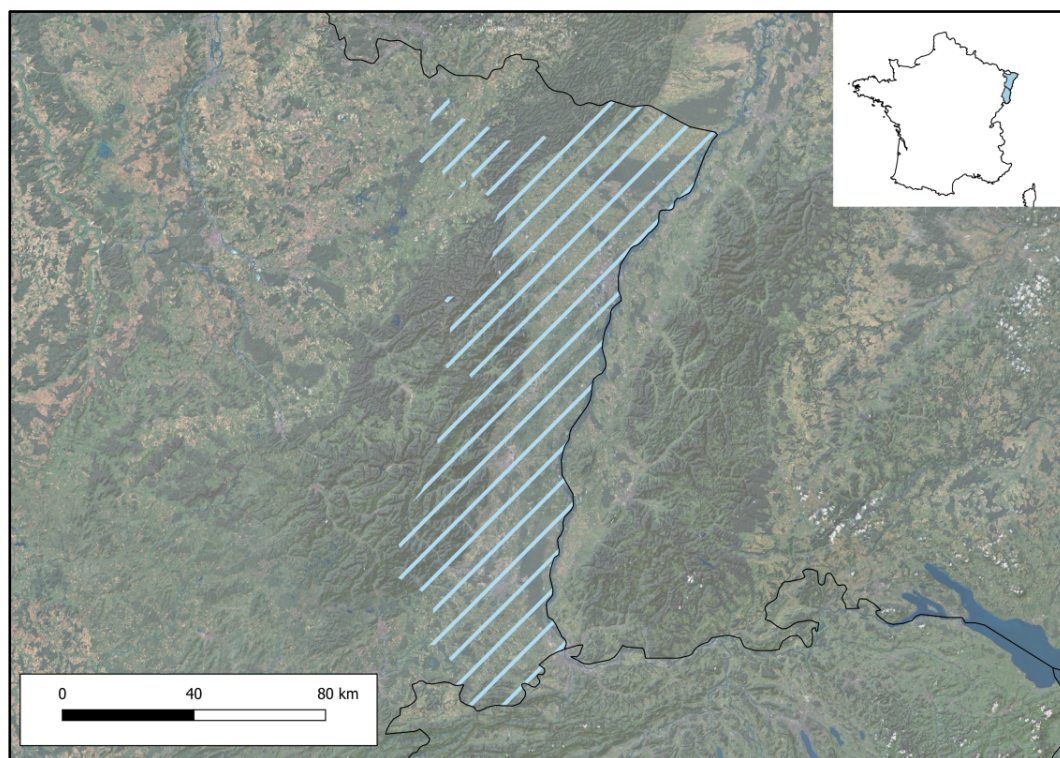


Figure 4.1: The French departments of Haut-Rhin and Bas-Rhin are highlighted in blue

Administratively, the region is split between two departments Haut-Rhin (Upper Rhine) and Bas-Rhin (Lower Rhine). The terms *upper* and *lower* here refer to their position in relation to the flow of the Rhine River, meaning Bas-Rhin sits directly to the north of Haut-Rhin. These departments, the middle of three levels of regional government in France, currently fall under the newly created Grand Est region. They are, however, set to gain special status as the newly formed European Collectivity of Alsace from the beginning of 2021. The politics surrounding these changes will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

The economic and political centre of Alsace is the city of Strasbourg, located in the Bas-Rhin department. Strasbourg, being home to the European Parliament headquarters, and, as such, to a number of other international institutions, is a political centre on a European scale, as well as being the capital of the Grand Est region. The city also forms a centre of the transnational Strasbourg-Ortenau metropolitan area, an area with a total population of just shy of 1 million (Eurodistrict 2017).

The capital of the Haut-Rhin department is the city of Colmar, though the largest city (and second largest in Alsace) is Mulhouse. Aside from a smaller international airport outside Strasbourg, much of Alsace, especially the Haut-Rhin, as well as the Swiss city of Basel and the German city of Freiburg, are served by the transnationally administered Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg airport outside Mulhouse (Union des Aéroports Français 2018).

Alsace is one of the wealthiest regions in France per capita. In 2017, it had France's third highest GDP per capita, comprising 2.6% of the total national GDP (Palen 2019). The Grand Est region has a higher level of industrialisation than the average in France, especially in the area surrounding Colmar in Haut-Rhin (Manné and Vuillier-Deviller 2020). This higher level of industrialisation (though by no means is the region totally industrialised) is reflected in the Peugeot factory in Mulhouse, as well as the city's two industrial museums, the Cité de l'Automobile and the Cité du Train. Other major employers in the region include business and government in Strasbourg, along with wine growing and beer brewing (Ray 2017).

4.1.2 DIALECT SITUATION

4.1.2.1 Usage

In 2012 the Office for the Language and Culture of Alsace⁶ (OLCA) conducted a study on the vitality and usage of Alsatian in Alsace at the time. The study comprised a telephone survey to 801 people over the age of 18, balanced for gender, age and profession, as well as geographical features such as region and size of town.

The study reported that 43% of the population still had high levels of proficiency in Alsatian, while 32% could speak or understand it to varying degrees, with 25% having no proficiency in the language (OLCA 2012). The same report found that older generations had much higher levels of proficiency than younger generations, as illustrated by Figure 4.2.

⁶ L'Office pour la Langue et les Cultures d'Alsace et de Moselle (fr), Das Amt für Sprache und Kultur im Elsass (de), Elsassisches Sprochàmt (al)

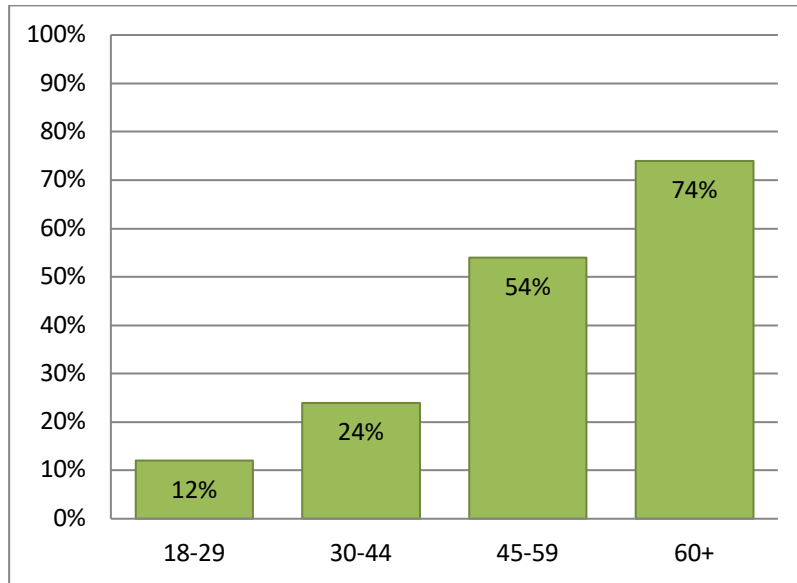


Figure 4.2: Alsatian-speaking proportion of each age group (adapted from OLCA 2012: 8)

Only 12% of people from 18-29 can speak Alsatian, while 74% of people 60 and over reported proficiency in the language. The rate at which proficiency dropped off has slowed in younger people; there is a difference of 30% between the proportion of speakers in the 45-59 age bracket and the 30-44, however there is only a difference of 12% between the youngest two brackets.

Geographically, there is a higher rate of usage reported in the northern department of Alsace, Bas-Rhin (*Unterelsàss* (al)), than in the southern Haut-Rhin (*Owerelsàss* (al)), with 46% and 38% of the regional populations respectively. Proficiency is also reported to be higher in small towns than in large towns, with a rate of 54% in small towns, compared to only 21% in large towns or cities⁷ (OLCA 2012), as illustrated in Figure 4.3. The study also reports that 95% of speakers learnt the language through their family, while small numbers reported learning the language through school or from neighbours or friends.

⁷ The source uses the French *commune*, an administrative district typically encompassing a single settlement regardless of size, rather than distinguishing towns, villages, or cities.

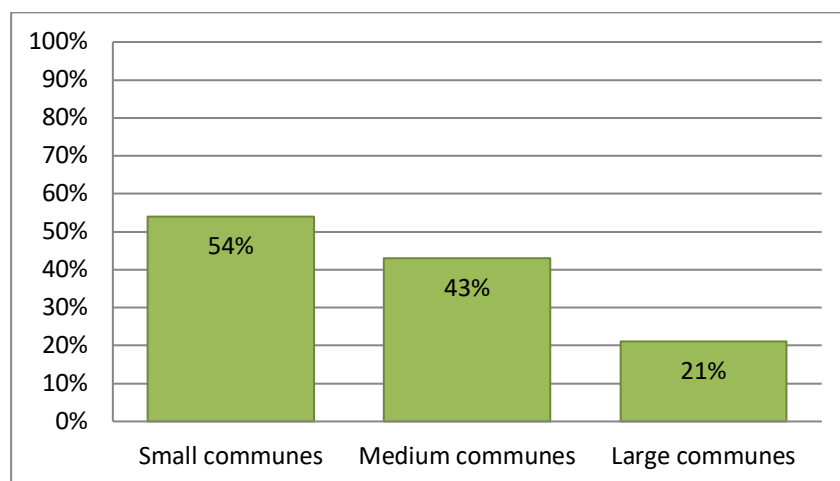


Figure 4.3: Alsatian-speaking proportion of towns by population (adapted from OLCA 2012: 9)

4.1.2.2 Attitudes

Harrison (2016) investigates the relationship of Alsatian and Standard German in schools in Alsace, contrasting the attitudes of parents of children enrolled in various schools. The study surveys two types of schools across three regions. ABCM schools, compared to standard public schools in the study, are special ‘associative schools’⁸ run by the *Association pour le bilinguisme dès la classe de maternelle* (Association for bilingualism from pre-school), of which there are a total of 10 across Alsace and Moselle. These schools, importantly, teach bilingually in French and Standard German, with Alsatian taking a more informal role in the classroom. Schools of these types from Strasbourg, the largest city of the region and centre of government, along with two smaller towns, Saverne and Haguenau, were compared on topics such as the importance of Alsatian and its role in schooling.

The study reports that parents across all schools felt that Alsatian is still important for regional culture (average 89.8% agreement), though agreement was highest in ABCM schools and lowest in public schools in Strasbourg. A parallel to the question asked in the survey on South Baden in this thesis, parents were also asked whether they felt that Alsatian proficiency was necessary for feeling Alsatian. An overall average of 67.7% of respondents did not think that language proficiency was a requirement for association with the Alsatian identity. This sentiment was highest in the ABCM schools in Strasbourg and Saverne, while being lowest in the ABCM school in Haguenau.

The OLCA study also asked a number of questions regarding the attitudes of Alsations towards the language, with general results being broadly positive. There was, however, a consistent trend for respondents in the 18-29 age bracket to rate the language less highly. This appeared to varying degrees across each prompt; the percentage of agreement was only 2% higher in young people than overall when asked if it was embarrassing to have an Alsatian accent in French (34% vs 36%), whereas there was a difference of 11% between young people and overall when commenting on whether or not proficiency in Alsatian was a professional asset (79% agreement vs 68%).

⁸ *Écoles associatives*, translation from Harrison (2016: 284), are “a network of private regional language schools” that exist across France and teach regional languages such as Basque, Catalan, and here Alsatian.

These surveys suggest an overall positive attitude towards the use and preservation of Alsatian, which reflects the history and complexity of the Alsatian identity as separate to that of both France and Germany. The long-lasting regionalist movement, which has seen recent political success in the greater autonomy to be granted to Alsace from the beginning of 2021, is likely a major force behind this positivity, and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

4.2 SWITZERLAND

4.2.1 REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Switzerland is an officially multilingual nation, with four languages holding position as official languages; German, French, Italian, and Romansch. This does not mean, however, that these four languages are spoken equally throughout the country. German is the sole official language in central, northern, and eastern Switzerland, and one of multiple official languages in Cantons on the border region (see Figure 4.4). Despite the officially multilingual status of Switzerland, German is spoken by over 60% of the population, while French, Italian and Romansch are spoken by 23%, 8% and 0.5% of the population respectively (Bundesamt für Statistik 2020).

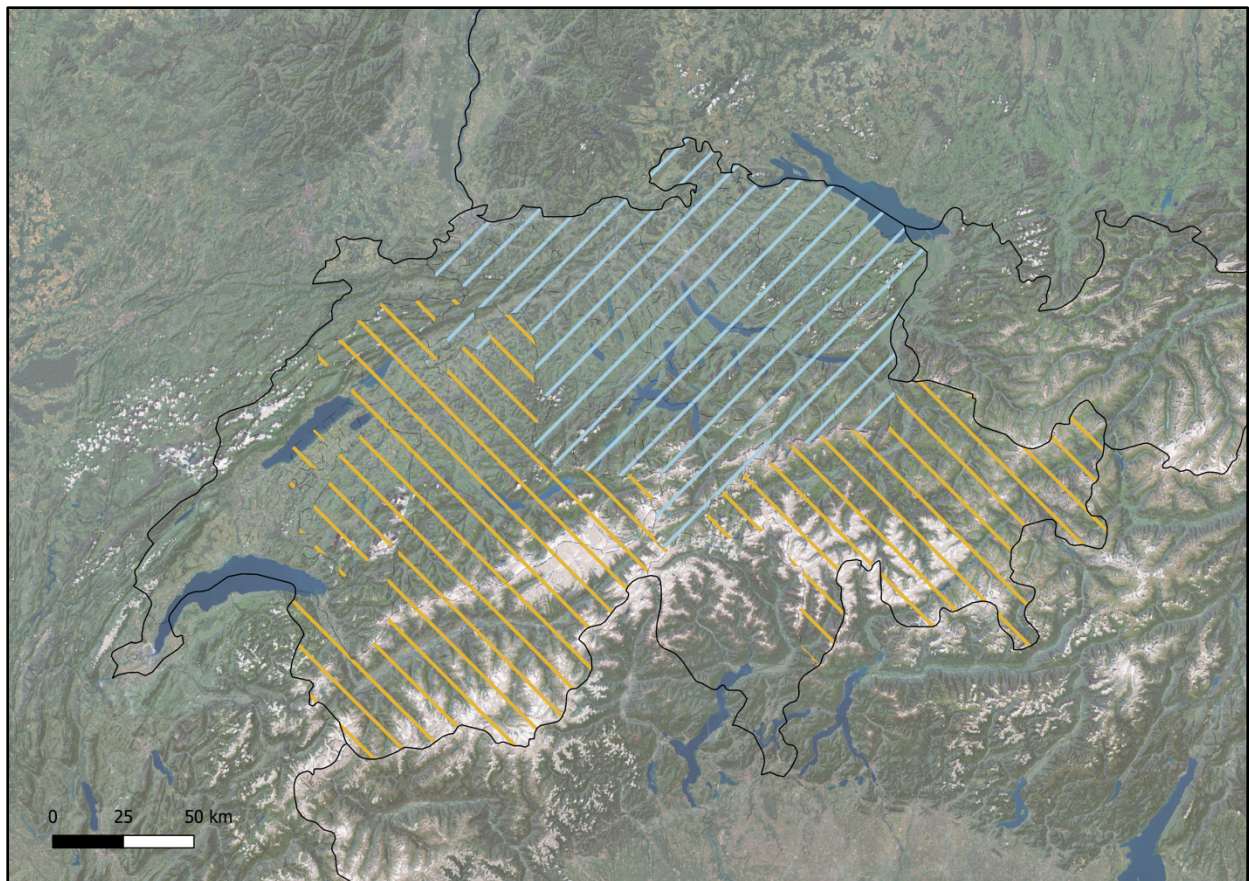


Figure 4.4: Swiss Cantons with only German as an official language, indicated with blue, and cantons with German as an official language alongside other language(s), indicated with orange

The languages spoken in Switzerland for the most part reflect languages spoken in bordering countries. That is, with the exception of Romansch, spoken endemically in the canton of Graubünden in South-Eastern Switzerland, the languages of Switzerland reflect the majority language of (approximately) the nearest foreign country. This multilingualism is in part a

reflection of the nation's history as a confederation of historically independent states that grew over a period of several hundred years (Fahrni 1997).

Switzerland initially formed, at least in legend, as an alliance in the late 13th century between three rural localities, Uri, Schwyz (whence modern Swiss), and Unterwalden, in an attempt to exercise greater independence and autonomy from Hapsburg rule (Fahrni 1997). Over time this union grew and spread, with more regional powers joining. The neutrality of Switzerland stems from this history of independence and sentiments of autonomy, and was recognised in its current form after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, when Napoleonic rule in the Cantons was ended and the confederation reverted to its historical, highly feudal structure. The contemporary federal state, however, did not come about until major political unrest led to the creation and implementation of a new constitution creating a more powerful federal government and providing more equal governmental representation, as well as providing a unified currency, and freedom of movement within the confederation (Fahrni 1997).

Switzerland, predominantly in the country's southern half, is dominated by the Swiss Alps, among the highest mountains in Europe. The range is predominantly German-speaking, with the Italian-speaking regions on the southern side, and Romansch communities spread through the east. North of the Alps lies the Swiss Plateau, running from the South-West around Geneva to the North-East and Lake Constance (visible running through the upper central part of the country in Figure 4.4). The French-speaking regions, broadly, cover the far western part of this plateau, the Jura Mountains visible on the northern section of the border with France, and the far western section of the Swiss Alps, also on the border with France.

With this wide variation in landscapes, ranging from the generally flat but hilly plateau to the deep valleys of the Alps, there is a dense amount of dialectal variation in the Alemannic used throughout German-speaking Switzerland. Colloquially, Alemannic spoken in German-speaking Switzerland is referred to as Swiss German (*Schweizerdeutsch (de)*, *Schwiizerdütsch (al)* among other variations), as differentiated from Swiss Standard German. Linguistically, as discussed in Chapter 1.2, the Alemannic varieties in Switzerland are grouped into three subgroups, Lower Alemannic, spoken around the tri-border area under investigation here, Higher Alemannic, spoken throughout the Swiss Plateau and the northern skirts of the Alps, and Highest Alemannic, spoken deeper in the valleys of the Alps (Russ 1990a).

4.2.2 DIALECT SITUATION

The linguistic situation in German-speaking Switzerland is archetypally diglossic, and has been stably so for at least the past 50 years. Fishman (1967) gives the relationship between Standard German and Alemannic in Switzerland as an example of a society in which both diglossia and bilingualism occur, suggesting that the two varieties (classified by Fishman as separate languages through this classification) have established domains of use and functions, where Standard German is the H variety and Alemannic the L. This diglossic situation does not exist, however, for a small subset of the population, but rather is universal across the population of German-speaking Switzerland.

Alemannic dialects are used in German-speaking Switzerland in all day-to-day spoken communication regardless of the status or age of a speaker's conversation partner, while Standard German is used primarily for written communication. With the rise of internet communication and instant messaging, and the rise in written informal language it brought, written Alemannic is growing in usage in younger people (Siebenhaar 2006). There are,

however, some situations where the use of Standard German is either expected or specifically mandated.

The status of Alemannic and the extent to which it is used in contemporary Switzerland can be immediately seen in the citizenship requirements for German-speaking Switzerland. Siebenhaar and Wyler (1998) state that citizenship in the Canton of Zürich is, among other things, conditional on an individual's ability to understand and speak Alemannic to some extent. They also note that this requirement can be waived where a candidate otherwise meets all criteria for citizenship. While it is, as such, perhaps seen as less important than proficiency in Swiss Standard German, it is still clearly a salient enough part of German-speaking Switzerland's language use as to afford such a requirement.

In federal government, the use of Standard German over Alemannic is a requirement; and important government announcements such as the results of votes (Switzerland is a direct democracy as opposed to a representative democracy), are announced in Standard German along with French (Siebenhaar and Wyler 1998). Cantonal parliaments are inconsistent in their language requirements. Of the officially multilingual cantons, all except Bern require High German to be spoken. In Bern, Alemannic has a much higher status socially, and as such, German-speaking members of the parliament speak Alemannic. The monolingual cantons are similarly divided – larger cantons tend to require Standard German while smaller ones tend to allow Alemannic (Siebenhaar and Wyler 1998). Siebenhaar and Wyler (1998) also report that private media tends to use Alemannic for broadcasts with a local scope but Standard German for national broadcasts (written media is all in Standard German). Public broadcasts, at least in 1998, were split between Standard German official announcements and news, and more discursive broadcasting in Alemannic, but Siebenhaar and Wyler (1998) report a trend towards greater use of Alemannic in the media. National coverage remains, for reasons of intelligibility and clarity, in Standard German. As Alemannic is spoken in the home, children typically do not begin to learn Standard German until school, the first year or so of which is taught in Alemannic before transitioning to Standard German for the rest of the education system.

4.3 CROSS-BORDER COMPARISON

Table 4.1 shows the main similarities and differences between the usage situations of Alemannic in the three countries where it is predominantly spoken.

Table 4.1: Summary of similarities and differences in usage of Alemannic in the three countries

	South Baden, Germany	Alsace, France	German-speaking Switzerland
	Diglossia in Alemannic-speaking population (GSGerman/Alemannic)	Diglossia in Alemannic-speaking population (SFrench/Alemannic)	Diglossia in whole population (SSGerman/Alemannic)
Schooling	Alemannic not used in school or university	Standard German taught as a foreign language, bilingual private schools teach in Standard French, Standard German and some Alsatian	Alemannic only used in earliest years of schooling
Speaker Demographics	Spoken by (unmeasured) subset of the population	Spoken fluently by 43% of the population	Spoken by the whole population
	Spoken more in older generations	Spoken more in older generations	
	Spoken less in cities	Spoken less in cities	

It is immediately clear that there are a number of similarities between Alemannic in Germany and France, while Switzerland is largely divergent. In both Germany and France, Alemannic is only spoken by a subset of the population. In France, this is 43% of the population, while in Germany this study was unable to provide a precise number. The distribution of this Alemannic-speaking population within the general regional population is also very similar in France and Germany. In both cases, older generations speak Alemannic more than younger generations. While this decline in usage seems to have slowed in the youngest generation in France, it is difficult to say for sure if this is a continuing trend. On the other hand, no such trend appears to be present in Germany at all, with the youngest age bracket being the most underrepresented in the Alemannic-speaking cohort. In addition, both countries show higher levels of Alemannic proficiency in smaller towns and villages, with much lower levels in major cities. While attitudes towards Alemannic were high in both France and Germany, and both felt that Alemannic formed a part of their identity while for the most part maintaining that Alemannic proficiency was not a necessary part of the region identity, these feelings of exclusivity of identity were higher in German cities than in rural areas, but were lowest in cities in France.

These similarities are not seen in Switzerland for the clear reason that Alemannic proficiency is widespread across the entire native population of German-speaking Switzerland, and as such the Alemannic-speaking population and the general population are the same cohort.

This situation is drastically different to the fairly similar situation in France and Germany. It should be noted that in Switzerland, Alemannic proficiency is not consistently a requirement for naturalisation (though it sometimes is (Rash 1998)), so non-German-speaking Swiss or immigrants to Switzerland will not necessarily speak Alemannic.

In none of the three countries does Alemannic have any major role in schooling. All schooling in Germany is in Standard German, with Alemannic only existing outside the classroom and at home. Swiss schools conduct the vast majority of teaching and learning in Standard German, however, as Alemannic is the primary language of home life, students in their first year of schooling will not necessarily speak Standard German, so school begins in Alemannic. Some schools in France offer bilingual education, primarily offering Standard German, but with some Alemannic in younger years. The following chapters will take these similarities and differences and assess what differences in social or political environments in the countries have caused this sociolinguistic variation.

5 EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON ALEMANNIC

5.1 SOUTH BADEN, GERMANY

5.1.1 DEVELOPMENT OF WRITTEN STANDARD GERMAN

The various factors leading to the sociolinguistic state of Alemannic in Germany, as investigated in Chapter 3 have been mentioned in passing, but a fuller discussion and description is in order, to better compare it to the external influences on the dialects in Alsace and Switzerland. A major, if not the primary cause of the shift away from the Spoken Alemannic/Written Standard situation today seen in Switzerland and to some extent in the Alemannic-speaking populations in Germany and France, was major population movement and change throughout Germany, and especially movement into Germany's South-West.

Standard German arose gradually after the development of the printing press in the 15th century, though as a number of smaller, regional written varieties. Martin Luther's reformation acted as a major push for the East Middle German print language to take precedence as the general standard form in the Protestant northern regions, while the Catholic regions in the south maintained an Upper German standard. It took until the late 18th century for the East Middle German standard to be selected over the Catholic standard throughout German-speaking Europe (Mattheier 2003). By a similar time, literacy in the general population had grown to the point that it was commonplace for everyone to use the standardised language in writing and their own dialect in speaking, and Standard German remained a strictly written, unspoken language until much later (Elspaß 2002).

This remained almost exclusively the case until the middle of the 20th century; all writing was in the standardised form (though with some local idiosyncrasies; Elspaß 2002), and all spoken language was in the local Germanic dialect. While these local dialects were not always mutually intelligible, especially not between northern and southern Germany, or between western Germany and eastern Austria, low rates of population movement meant that this did not cause any hindrance to day-to-day communication (Mattheier 2003).

5.1.2 DEVELOPMENT OF SPOKEN STANDARD GERMAN

At the end of the Second World War, however, large German-speaking populations were displaced from the eastern parts of the German-speaking world with the major post-war government changes (Leopold 1959). Throughout Germany, this meant that there were suddenly substantial proportions of regional populations who could not speak the local dialect. While this alone would not necessarily have had such a strong influence against the widespread everyday usage of the old dialects, the formation of "foreign" dialect-speaking enclaves within the West German regional dialect areas was greatly limited, if not totally prevented, by the fine-grained nature of this population movement. That is, whole towns or dialect communities did not leave, move, and settle together, but were spread out individually or in small groups. As these enclaves could not form, communities of speakers of the original and immigrant dialects (of which there were typically a wide variety) had to mix, and in need of a lingua franca to facilitate general communication, Standard German began to be used for spoken language as a more widely understood alternative to the dialects (Leopold 1959). With its usage in schools and more commonly in young people, the usage of Standard German steadily increased over the coming decades.

The impact of any subsequent migration on Alemannic is hard to measure. Anecdotally, Interviewee C reported they felt that the main influence had come from this first wave, and that subsequent waves of guest workers into the region from Southern and Eastern Europe had less of an influence on local dialects, as the lingua franca had already been established. Unlike earlier migration events, these later immigration waves instead prompted the evolution of multicultural urban vernaculars (e.g. Kiezdeutsch in Berlin; Bork-Goldfield 2013) that are developing into systems of diglossia in some younger Berliner communities.

The ongoing decline of Alemannic in Germany was likely further influenced by these immigration events, along with the current refugee crisis in Europe and the increase in interregional and international communications with the rise of the internet. It is, however, possible that the decline trajectory was already established and would have continued as it has even without these further population and communication changes.

5.2 ALSACE, FRANCE

5.2.1 HISTORICAL SHIFTS

Alsace has a long and complicated relationship with France and Germany, having changed hands a number of times over the last two centuries, with each nation attempting to claim the Alsatian people as their own at each stage. Since 1945, the region has been undisputed French territory, however this was not the case in the years prior. The region was annexed by the German Empire in 1871 from the Kingdom of France, but was returned to a now republican France after Germany's defeat in 1918. This remained until its occupation in the Second World War by Nazi Germany, after which it was once again returned to France.

The region historically had a strong class divide between the French-speaking upper class, who controlled industry and culture in the region, and an Alsatian-speaking lower class. Much of this French-speaking upper class left the region after the 1871 annexation of the region by the German Empire, though still remained to a great enough extent that they maintained substantial economic power in the region, allowing them to maintain ties to France (Fisher 2010).

Attempts by the French government after 1918 to create a single, centralised and standardised language across the nation were built out of an overall effort by the post-Revolution government to centralise power and standardise administration. Primary schools teaching in a standard French were established across the country in 1832 (at which time Alsace was under French control), but the schools were neither compulsory nor free. As such, they had little effect on the Alemannic-speaking working classes in Alsace, though they did trigger the start of a major decline in the usage of dialects of French across the country. It was not until 1881-1882 that the government-sponsored primary schools became both free and secular, by which time Alsace was under German control, and therefore did not see this change which all but eliminated the use of dialects of French in France, and may have had a similar effect on the use of Alsatian (Rickard 1989), were the region still under French control.

5.2.2 RISE OF FRENCH IN ALSACE

A shift towards Standard French in Alsace only began in 1918 with the transferral of the territory to France following the German defeat in WWI. At the time, Alsatians predominantly spoke Alsatian, an Alemannic dialect, with Standard German being used in the press, schools, and some parts of everyday life such as cinemas, where regional variation in Alsatian created a

need for the use of Standard German as a lingua franca (Carrol 2018). Prior to this shift, only 6.1% of the Haut-Rhin and 3.8% of the Bas-Rhin population spoke French (Carrol 2018).

These attempts were grounded in the new found need in the wake of the First World War to diminish any German claim to Alsace and integrate its population into France, both of which would be achieved by minimising the usage of Alsatian in the region. The administration introduced French schooling, judiciary, press, and street signage in order to effect this shift. This sudden shift, however, did not run as smoothly as the French administration had perhaps hoped, but rather progressed slowly as the French proficiency of younger people increased much faster than it did in older people, who were both less physically capable at learning a new language at their age, as well as not in active education (Carrol 2018).

By 1931, Alsatian was still very much alive in the region, but the growth of French had been significant: just over half the population spoke French to some degree, with 5.6% being monolingual francophone. 43.9% however, were still monolingual in German/Alemannic. The press was still overwhelmingly in German as well; in 1932 it was reported that 80% of the population still read German press. As late as 1938, some French news publications were still being translated into German as levels of proficiency in French were too low (Carrol 2018).

5.2.3 ALSATIAN REGIONALIST AUTONOMY MOVEMENT

Previously its own *region*, the highest level of administrative division in France, Alsace was combined with the regions of Lorraine and Champagne-Ardenne in 2016 into a single region, the Grand Est. This move was very unpopular in Alsace, with a 2018 poll reporting a rate of support of 83% for the reinstatement of Alsace as a separate region (IFOP 2018). In response to this public pushback on the union of the regions into the Grand Est, a vote passed French parliament in August 2019 to grant Alsace a greater level of autonomy, by designating the region the European Collectivity of Alsace (*Collectivité européenne d'Alsace (fr)*, *D'Europäischa Gebiatskärwerschäft Elsàss (al)*). The Collectivity will come into existence at the beginning of 2021, and will be granted control of the powers currently held by the two departments, as well as areas such as tourism, cross-border relations, and most relevantly bilingualism (Nationalia 2019; Ouest-France 2018). Many groups, such as the regionalist political party Unser Land (*Our Land*, German), do not see this move as far enough, as Alsace is still under the control of the Grand Est region.

This movement calling for autonomy in Alsace is in no way new. Fisher (2010) discusses the German and French authorities making similar mistakes when trying to integrate the Alsatian people after 1871 and 1918. Nationalists from both nations tried to force the population to remove any cultural ties to the other nation in favour of their own, “even when Alsace was foreign territory” (p. 6). This led Alsatians to grow weary of the control of both France and Germany throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Prior to the late 19th century, the regionalist movement was not nearly as widespread as it later grew to be, in reaction to the attempts of Germany and France to nationalise and integrate the region, as this push against Alsace caused the cultural specificities and regional identity of the border area to be placed in the public spotlight.

It seems possible, then, that this autonomy movement has underlyingly worked against the efforts of the French government throughout the 20th century to shift Alsatian culture and language away from Germany and to integrate it more completely into France. OLCA (2012) makes no suggestion of any monolingual Alsatian speakers in France, and Bister-Broosen (1996) reports that 25 years ago, Alsatian was limited in usage to the home, and even then

predominantly with parents or grandparents rather than with siblings. Additionally, although it is reported that almost half of the population still has some level of proficiency in Alsatian, this number is heavily skewed towards the older generations, and is reported to have fallen from 61% in 1997 to the aforementioned 43% in 2012. As such, the goals of the French government were, at least in terms of ensuring that French was the region's majority language, well achieved, but it took almost a century from when France gained control of the region until OLCA (2012) for this shift to be achieved.

It is possible that the autonomy movement may have more recently had some resurgence, and further slowed this progression. The age distribution of Alsatian speakers highlighted in Chapter 4 shows a continuing fall in Alsatian usage in young people, but the rate of loss has slowed between the youngest and second-youngest generations. Similarly, the ABCM schools discussed in Harrison (2016) were first opened in 1991, and in 1992, equal immersion bilingual primary schools were opened in the public education system. Both of these school systems, while likely reflecting support in the population at the time for the Alsatian regionalist movement, predominantly use Standard German as the second language in bilingual environments, rather than Alsatian. In the 2011-2012 school year, it is reported that 10.5% of Alsatian primary students were enrolled in such a program. While the use of Alsatian in schools today is encouraged by regional authorities, it is neither compulsory, nor are there standardised frameworks for its introduction. Knowledge of Alsatian is also not a criterion for the selection of bilingual teachers in these public schools (Harrison 2016). As such, while it would seem that, combined with upcoming political changes, there is a strong level of support today for this historical regionalist movement, this support is reflected, at least in public education, by institutional support for Standard German rather than Alsatian.

As mentioned above, the creation of the European Collectivity of Alsace from the beginning of 2021 will give the Alsatian government autonomous control of, among other things, policy regarding bilingualism in the region. This increased control will likely have some impact on the relationship between French, Alsatian, and Standard German, but it is difficult to predict the exact nature of this. If the government maintains its current stance of supporting Standard German as a second primary language in school, it seems more likely that the trajectory of the usage of Alsatian will continue as it has for the past century, whereas if Alsatian is mandated in some form in government policy, the slight shift seen towards an increase of usage (or rather a slowed rate of loss) might continue.

5.3 SWITZERLAND

5.3.1 *ADOPTION OF STANDARD GERMAN*

A central part of the relationship between Alemannic dialects in Switzerland and the nation itself is the relationship in the country between Alemannic and Swiss Standard German. Standard German is, as has been discussed, widely classified as a pluricentric language, with different standard varieties in each of the three largest German-speaking countries (Germany, Austria, and Switzerland).

The development or adoption of a standard form of German did not begin in Switzerland until much later than it did in Germany. Martin Luther's publication of the Bible in the 16th century began a shift from written language being a close reflection of spoken to instead being modelled on a more central variety. The shift in printing to the written norms of courts in the east of the German-speaking world occurred slowly, progressing feature by feature and town by

town throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. By the beginning of the 18th century then, written German (at least in the officialdom of printers and chanceries) was almost identical with the standard form developed in Germany (Rash 1998).

The diglossia seen today was reported as early as 1919. Rash (1998) quotes Eduard Blocher in a publication of the then newly formed *Schweizerischer Verein für die deutsche Sprache* (Swiss Association for the German Language, SVDS)⁹, saying that “High German is a part of our native language, it is one of the two forms of our language” (Rash 1998: 87, quoting Blocher 1919), and that a standardised written language was necessary in some parts of everyday life as a lingua franca in order to avoid isolating Switzerland from its neighbours. It is worth taking into account the context and bias of Eduard Blocher in writing this. Blocher, as president of the SVDS for the entire interwar period, believed in maintaining the purity and usage of Swiss Standard German against “overuse” of Alemannic or incursion of foreign, namely French, loanwords. As such, it is possible that he is either overstating the presence of Standard German in everyday Swiss life, or is overstating its necessity.

5.3.2 MAINTENANCE OF ALEMANNIC IN SPEAKING

The shift from a widespread use of Alemannic to the systems of unstable diglossia we see today in Germany and France was punctuated by major regional events that created an impetus to shift away from Alemannic in everyday life and towards the more widespread form seen today. In Germany, this was the population shift creating a need for a lingua franca, while in France this was the government change and the subsequent change in official language in the region creating economic and social incentive to move away from Alemannic. Swiss history, at least in regards to Alemannic usage, seems noteworthy instead for its lack of these types of events. While Switzerland has, at various points in its history, been under the control of other European political powers, none have sought cultural and linguistic integration in the sense of the French efforts in Alsace in the 20th century. Similarly, Switzerland’s long-term neutrality has seen it miss out on the influx of post-war refugees and subsequent *Gastarbeiter* or short-term migrant workers.

Discussions into nationalism and the nature of the sentiment in a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic state such as Switzerland are contentious in the literature (Helbling and Stojanović 2011). Does the nationhood of Switzerland extend to all four ethnic or linguistic groups in the state as a single, multi-ethnic unit, or should it instead be considered a multi-national state with four distinct national identities? In our case, this poses the question of where to draw the boundaries on the sense of national identity held by Swiss citizens in order to consider its influences on language use in the country. The outspoken opinions of Blocher, discussed above, seem to, in his efforts to promote German as a primary, if not supreme, language of Switzerland at the exclusion of French, separate the linguistic part of the German-speaking national identity from the others.

Blocher’s stance on Germanic supremacism is not, however, limited to language. Rash (1998) notes that he saw German heritage as also inherently better than others, and while conceding that few in Switzerland could be seen to be purely German by the early 20th century, claimed that “the German portion of our blood is the best that we have”(Rash 1998: 94). This is a sentiment that was at the time (and unfortunately is again today) of course not limited to Switzerland, but is reflective of the development and growth of Nazism throughout German-

⁹ A publication which is widely referenced, but one which I cannot find myself.

speaking Europe. The impact of this Germanic supremacism is difficult to assess in the wider community, and a full discussion into the presence of the ideologies of the Nazis in Switzerland would veer far outside the scope of this research. That said, Blocher did support the separation and maintenance of 'purity' between Alemannic and Standard German in Switzerland (Rash 1998).

On the other hand, Rash (1998: 72) suggests that it was an active desire in the German-speaking Swiss population to distance themselves from Germany and the Nazis that encouraged the persistence of Alemannic as the general spoken language. She suggests that the negative opinions of the Nazis around the world created an impetus for German-speaking Swiss to carve out a linguistic identity that further separated them from Germany such that they, internally and externally, would not be either mistaken to be German, or seen as a German diaspora community. This created an active effort to maintain the use of Alemannic, typically unintelligible with Standard German when spoken, which, along with the lack of the major events seen in the other countries, allowed Alemannic to maintain its vitality in contrast to France and Germany.

5.3.3 SUMMARY

The Alemannic-speaking regions in Germany, France, and Switzerland have, despite their close geographic proximity and linguistic relation, had very different histories. Divergences in political and social structures at a national level had led to different paths in the maintenance or loss of Alemannic, with national borders, while not necessarily limiting interaction between communities across the borders, limiting the spread of language and immigration policy, which can be seen in this chapter to have had a major effect on the usage of and attitudes towards Alemannic. The next chapter will summarise these findings into a more generalised set of conclusions that could be applied to research into diglossia outside the Alemannic-speaking region of Europe.

6 CONCLUSION – EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON DIGLOSSIA

Using a comparison of the external factors seen to be driving the cross-border divergence in the usage of Alemannic dialects seen in the German/French/Swiss tri-border area as a case study, some conclusions and predictions can be made about the nature of communities exhibiting diglossia. These include the extra-linguistic forces that can shape the population's usage of the H and L varieties, their attitudes towards the diglossic relationship, and how these factors can influence the stability of the diglossia in the long term.

These influences can be grouped into three main categories: major socio-political events, government policy, and social and cultural attitudes. In each of these categories, we can see a number of factors that do have an influence over the stability of diglossic environments, as well as some that have seemingly less impact than what might have originally been expected.

6.1 MAJOR SOCIO-POLITICAL EVENTS

Firstly, it can be seen that a major event such as a regime change or the annexation of a region by a new government does not, in isolation, have any necessary or inherent impact on language use in a community. While this government change might seek to actively promote, or even enforce, such a shift, this active effort is necessary over an extended period of time to bring about any cultural or linguistic change. With the French gain of Alsace following the First World War, the government sought to assimilate its new population and remove the Germanic aspects of the culture, including the language. This effort, while being realistically successful in shifting the majority language of the region to French, took multiple generations to take effect throughout the population. Even a century later, just over one tenth of the youngest generation in Alsace speaks Alemannic. This shift, while undeniable, was not the inherent result of the government change, but rather the result of sustained and active intervention in the region.

While change in governance does not necessarily have any inherent impact on diglossia, major population shift and change does. Immigration into a region can, at a large enough scale and in a certain nature, create major shifts in demographics and in the usage of language varieties in diglossic environments. This perhaps does not come as a surprise; if a large enough wave of immigration is seen in a short time period (or even within a single generation), and if the new community members speak a different language or language variety to the existent population, the general language used in the community will shift. This is exemplified by the shift seen in Germany after the Second World War, where speakers of other German dialects settled in new communities, meaning the H variety had to act as a *lingua franca*. A key point in this population shift was the fact that the new community members were not all from the same linguistic background, preventing a separate community of the new variety from forming; the new community members shifted away from their original L varieties and used solely the H variety in the region, while the existent community members maintained their L variety but used the shared H variety more widely in daily life and education (Leopold 1959). It is noteworthy, and will be discussed further in Section 6.4, that the results of this study as presented in Chapter 3, with specific regards to the age distribution discussion, suggest that this decline is still ongoing, despite this major event being triggered circa 70 years ago. The inverse to this is visible in Switzerland, where no such demographic change occurred (and has since then been prevented by cantonal immigration laws requiring, in some cases, knowledge of Alemannic; Rash 1998), and equally no such usage shift can be seen to have occurred in the past decades.

6.2 GOVERNMENT LANGUAGE POLICY

Similarly to the change in governance discussed above, it appears that language in education is not an inherently positive or negative factor in the ongoing stability of a system of diglossia. That is, while education can and does act as a domain of usage for a certain variety, its contribution to the overall vitality of a language is a result of the opportunity for language usage it provides; it acts as a reliable domain of usage, but does not appear to have any inherent features that make it a different or specifically important domain when compared to other domains where usage might be expected or mandated, such as the workplace, government, or in the media. As such, it appears that it is regular usage of a language in general, regardless of domain, that supports ongoing vitality, and that education is just one opportunity for usage. This can be seen simply in the fact that none of the three countries investigated use Alemannic to any major degree in their school systems. While Swiss schools use Alemannic in the first year as a language through which to introduce Standard German, and some private French schools have limited instruction in Alemannic, no country uses Alemannic as a central part of their school system, and yet there are drastically different levels of usage seen in all three countries.

Though, as above, education itself is not a compulsory requirement in the preservation of a language's vitality, in that it would act as a contributing part of a language's overall usage, this overall usage can be shifted, schools included, by government policy and intervention, and can, at this larger scale, have major impacts on language use in the community. The aforementioned strategy of the French government throughout the 20th century is solid evidence of this. The shift in dialect usage closely reflected a shift in government policy surrounding the judiciary, the press, and even street signage. The official shift from Alsatian to French meant that people working in, or associated with the judiciary had to learn French, and knowledge of French became more useful in everyday life with the changes to the press and street signage. The impacts of this on the social attitudes in the region have already been discussed, but it is important to note again that these policy changes, despite eventually bringing about major change, took decades to see any impact and multiple generations to shift the main language of the region from Alsatian to French. On the other hand, policy in Switzerland that supports the use of Alemannic in the press and in some Cantonal Government debates and discussions reflects the continued stability of diglossia in the German-speaking community (Siebenhaar and Wyler 1998).

6.3 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ATTITUDES

The impact of social and cultural attitudes on dialect usage is harder to precisely quantify, and is often intertwined with the other two areas. The positive attitudes towards Alsatian visible through the long-lasting Alsatian autonomy movement may well have slowed the efforts of the French government to shift language use, but more visibly and in a much more contemporary setting, the autonomy movement has given rise to the upcoming European Collectivity designation, which will give Alsace autonomous control of bilingualism in the region. In this sense, the positive attitudes towards Alsatian have influenced the ability of the region to control language policy, and, while it remains to be seen what the actual impact of this will be on Alsatian, it is highly possible that the culture surrounding Alsatian will cause policy change as discussed above that will, in turn, influence the usage of Alsatian. This is of course, at least until 2021, if not later to see intergenerational impacts, merely informed speculation.

Similarly, positive attitudes towards Alemannic in Germany and France have led to the creation of community or education organisations with the goal of further preserving the

dialect. Two examples of this, both previously discussed, are the Muettersproch-Gsellschaft in Germany, through whom the survey was distributed, and the ABCM Zweisprachigkeit schools in France, where some teaching in younger years is provided in Alemannic and extra-curricular interaction such as during breaks is encouraged to be in Alemannic. Much like the above, it is difficult to measure, quantitatively or otherwise, the success of these organisations in their goals of Alemannic preservation, although their strategies can be compared to those discussed above as being effective or neutral in maintaining the L varieties. The Muettersproch-Gsellschaft¹⁰ offers community activities and writing in Alemannic, as well as a platform for Alemannic speakers to use the variety where they might otherwise not be part of an Alemannic-speaking community (e.g. living in a city). This, we can predict, would help maintain levels of usage in the Alemannic-speaking population and would encourage higher levels of intergenerational transmission of Alemannic by ensuring that it continues to be used on a regular basis by its speakers, though would not necessarily increase usage in the wider community.

ABCM Zweisprachigkeit seeks to support the vitality of Alsatian by giving it, along with Standard German, a role in the classroom. As has been discussed, the time spent teaching in Alsatian is far less than Standard German and French, and it does not appear that classroom presence will necessarily bring about an increase in vitality. That said, the combination of some classroom use and of casual use outside class by teachers and students (Harrison 2016) does constitute, for a child, a substantial portion of their daily interaction, and could prove effective in supporting intergeneration transmission and subsequent retention of Alsatian when combined with home use of the language variety. The challenge faced in Alsace, however, is the mixed opinions on the necessity or importance of Standard German over Alsatian, and a justifiable sense of care to ensure that children receive a balance of cultural education of Alsatian, the necessary education of French, as well as the more internationally useful education of German.

The influence of attitudes on diglossia and its maintenance has also been discussed in Switzerland, where an urge to distance themselves from Germany in the wake of the Second World War and the atrocities of the Nazi party led German-speaking Swiss to seek to build a more distinct cultural identity as actively Swiss, as opposed to simply Germans who lived in Switzerland. This encouraged the German-speaking Swiss population to actively move in the opposite direction to Germany linguistically, maintaining the widespread use of Alemannic. Again, it is difficult to measure how much influence this had – we do not have a clear control case – but it is highly likely that it, along with a lack of other major forces, contributed to the stability of the diglossia we see today.

6.4 THE STABILITY OF DIGLOSSIA AND THE FUTURE OF ALEMANNIC

These influences lead us to a number of wider conclusions about the nature of diglossia and the interactions it has with external social factors.¹¹ Primarily, and while this is by no means new (it was, in fact, suggested to be the case in Ferguson 1959), we can see that diglossia is not inherently unstable. That said, the bilingualism needs to be widespread throughout the community for this diglossia with bilingualism to remain stable. This can be viewed as a balance, whereby there is a tipping point of usage being skewed to one variety or the other (in

¹⁰ www.alemannisch.de

¹¹ While not used in this thesis, the framework of Ethnolinguistic Vitality (Giles et al. 1977) could be similarly useful in this analysis.

Germany and France the H variety), after which the bilingual population will begin to slide towards monolingualism in the community, and the diglossia will no longer be present. We can imagine a speaker of Alemannic in this environment: While, when they were young, everyone around them spoke Alemannic, today it is less common. It is less common, in fact, to the point that our speaker cannot be certain while out and about that someone they interact with will speak Alemannic (e.g. bus drivers, shop assistants). As a result, they must default to speaking Standard German where once they might have spoken Alemannic. In speaking Standard German, other Alemannic speakers who are similarly out and about will also assume that the first Alemannic speaker only speaks Standard German, creating a cycle in which the everyday usage of Alemannic by its speakers begins to decline in a sort of snowball effect after that initial tipping point or Threshold of Stability is reached.

Shifts in usage can manually push a community towards or away from this threshold, such as the external influences addressed above, but it remains to be seen if a community can move from this beyond this threshold and back into a stable diglossia. As above, it is possible that such a shift will be seen in Alsace, depending on the decisions made by the new semi-autonomous government, but such effects will not be measurable for years if not decades.

With this in mind, it is possible to make some predictions about the future of Alemannic dialects. In France and Germany, the steadily decreasing usage of Alemannic is likely to continue, and as such, the diglossia, which is no longer present in the general society of both regions, but rather in an Alemannic-speaking community within the general society, will likely leak domains from the L variety to the H variety. That is, the H variety will be used in situations where the L variety was previously used. Both communities have seen rapid declines in usage over the past 50-60 years and are, at least in larger cities, well past this Threshold of Stability, and as such will decline in usage even without the previously discussed external factors. Larger cities in South Baden such as Freiburg continue to see high levels of refugee immigration, pushing the community further past a stable diglossia and further weakening the vitality of Alemannic in the communities. Society in South Baden as a whole, in all reality, no longer exhibits diglossia, but rather the small Alemannic-speaking community within the region, which is centred on rural areas, does. Smaller towns in both countries have either only just crossed the Threshold of Stability, or are yet to do so, at least in Germany due to lower levels of immigration. This suggests that these areas will see a slower decline in Alemannic usage, but it is difficult to predict if the diglossia within these communities will remain stable or not. This predicted growing disparity between the vitality of Alemannic in cities versus smaller towns is in fact already visible, reported in Chapter 3 as a higher general level of Alemannic proficiency in smaller towns and rural areas. In France, it is possible that the decline of usage is slowing in the youngest generation, as seen in Chapter 4.1.2, and may well continue to slow. This will be dependent on the decision made by the new Alsatian government between supporting the widespread use of Standard German or Alsatian. In Switzerland, however, due to its very widespread (and in some cases government sanctioned) usage, there is no reason to that there would be any decline in the usage of Alemannic – as predicted by Ferguson (1959), the high rates of usage of Alemannic, and the widespread nature of the diglossia mean that it is far from the Threshold of Stability and is, barring any major events to push it one way or another, self-stable.

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APPENDIX I: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Where (dialect) is used, it is a placeholder for the name provided by the participant in Question (9).

Demographics:

1. What year were you born? *In welchem Jahr sind Sie geboren?*
2. Are you retired? (Y/N) *Sind Sie im Ruhestand?*
 - 2a. Y: What was your occupation before retirement? *Was war Ihr Beruf vor Ihrem Ruhestand?*
 - 2b. N: What is your occupation? *Was ist Ihr Beruf?*
3. Did you have the chance to attend formal schooling when you were younger? *Hatten Sie die Chance, die Schule zu besuchen, als Sie jung waren?*
 - 3a. Y: What is the highest level of education you received or are currently undertaking? *Welches Bildungsniveau haben Sie erreicht oder welche Weiterbildung führen Sie gegenwärtig durch?*
 - 3b. N: Did you have any informal education? *Haben Sie informale Bildung bekommen? Haben Sie eine Bildung außer der Schule bekommen (z.B. Handwerkslehre)*
4. Where were you born? *Wo sind Sie geboren?*
5. Where did you grow up? *Wo sind Sie aufgewachsen?*
6. Where do you currently live? *Wo wohnen Sie momentan?*
7. Do you take part in any community hobbies or activities (e.g. Wind Band, Hunting, etc.)? *Nehmen Sie an irgendeinem Gemeinschaftshobby oder einer Aktivität teil? (z.B. Blasorchester, Jagd, usw.)*

Dialect Proficiency Index:

8. Do you speak any sort of German other than Standard German? *Sprechen Sie irgendein Art des Deutschen außer Hochdeutsch?*
9. What do you call this sort of German?¹² *Wie nennen Sie diesen Art des Deutschen?*
10. Do you know enough (dialect) to speak only it in the situations given below, regardless of whether or not you actually would? (Y/N Matrix) *Sprechen Sie genug (Dialekt), um ihn nur in den unten angegebenen Situationen zu benutzen, unabhängig davon, ob Sie dies tatsächlich tun würden oder nicht?*
 - I can count to ten
Ich kann bis Zehn zählen
 - I can name the days of the week
Ich kann die Wochentage nennen
 - I can give the date
Ich kann das Datum geben
 - I can order a meal in a restaurant
Ich kann Essen in einem Restaurant bestellen
 - I can give biographical information (date of birth, family information, description of your studies)
Ich kann biografische Informationen geben (Geburtsdatum, Familieninformationen, Beschreibung des Studiums)

¹² The term “Lower Alemannic” or its German equivalent *Niederalemannisch* aren’t used in everyday speech, and opinions on which dialect one speaks or what it should be called are varied among speakers. In order to maintain clarity in the interview, the name given by the participant will be used throughout.

- I can speak to people in social situations (for example, church, meeting, party, wedding, funeral)
Ich kann mit Leuten in sozialen Situationen sprechen (zum Beispiel Kirche, Versammlung, Party/Feier, Hochzeit, Beerdigung)
- I can describe my hobbies in detail using appropriate vocabulary
Ich kann meine Hobbys mit einem angemessenen Vokabular beschreiben
- I can describe my present employment, my studies, and my main social activities in detail purely in (Dialect) with people who speak it
Ich kann meine aktuelle Arbeit, meine Studien und meine gemeinschaftlichen Aktivitäten auf (Dialekt) beschreiben, wenn mein Gegenüber es auch spricht.
- I can describe what I hope to achieve in the next five years using future tense verbs purely in (Dialect) with people who speak it
Ich kann zukunftsbezogene Angaben (z. B. beschreiben, was ich gern in den nächsten fünf Jahren erreichen würde) ausschließlich auf (Dialekt) machen, wenn mein Gegenüber es auch spricht.
- I can give my opinion on a controversial subject purely in (Dialect) with people who speak it
Ich kann meine Meinung über umstrittene Themen nur auf (Dialekt) tiefgründig diskutieren, wenn mein Gegenüber es auch spricht.

Usage:

11. Would you feel comfortable speaking (dialect) with your peers in the following places in your daily life? *Würden Sie sich wohl fühlen, wenn Sie mit Ihren Kollegen an folgenden Stellen in Ihrem täglichen Leben (Dialekt) sprechen?*
At home (Y/N) *Zuhause*
At work with colleagues (Y/N) *Bei der Arbeit mit Kollegen*
At church with the community (Y/N) *in der Kirche mit der Gemeinschaft*
At the market (Y/N) *Auf dem Markt*
Passing by a friend in the street (Y/N) *Auf der Straße mit einem Freund*
Passing by a stranger in the street (Y/N) *Wenn Sie an einem Fremden vorbeigehen*
Others? *Andere?*
Comments: *Notizen:*
12. Would you feel comfortable speaking (dialect) with people: *Würden Sie sich wohl fühlen, (Dialekt) mit Leuten zu sprechen, die aus einer:*
From an older generation to you? (Y/N) *älteren Generation stammen?*
From a younger generation? (Y/N) *jüngeren Generation stammen?*
Comments: *Notizen:*
13. Would you feel comfortable speaking (dialect) with people: *Würden Sie sich wohl fühlen, (Dialekt) mit folgenden Personen zu sprechen:*
With city or town officials? (Y/N) *Stadt- oder Bürgerbeamte*
With a priest? (Y/N) *einem Geistlichen?*
With an employer? (Y/N) *ArbeitgeberInnen?*
With an employee? (Y/N) *ArbeitnehmerInnen?*
With an assistant? (Y/N) *einem Assistent?*
With a retail worker or service person? (Y/N) *VerkäuferInnen oder DienstleisterInnen?*
Other? *Andere?*
Comments: *Notizen:*

14. Do you have much contact with (dialect) in traditional media (print/television)? (Y/N)
Haben Sie viele Kontakt mit (Dialekt) in traditionellen Medien? (Zeitung, Fernsehen)
Do you have much contact with (dialect) in social media (Facebook groups, Twitter, Youtube)? (Y/N)
Haben Sie viele Kontakt mit (Dialekt) bei Sozialmedia? (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube)
Comments:

Attitudes:

*This section will use a Likert scale with five selections ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Some statements marked with * will only be shown to participants with high proficiency as established by question (10).*

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? *Inwiefern stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu?*

I could use (dialect) formally. * *Ich könnte (Dialekt) förmlich benutzen.*

I'm satisfied with how well I speak it. * *Ich bin zufrieden mit meinem Beherrschungsgrad.*

I would feel comfortable speaking it outside my usual places. * *Ich würde mich wohl fühlen, (Dialekt) auch in ungewohnten Situationen und Orten zu sprechen.*

(If the participant's proficiency is low) I think I would feel comfortable speaking it if I could. *Ich denke, ich würde mich wohl fühlen, (Dialekt) in außergewöhnlichen Situationen zu sprechen, wenn ich könnte.*

(Do you have children? *Haben Sie Kinder?* Y/N, for choosing the appropriate wording of the next statement)

Y: I taught (dialect) to my children. *Ich habe meinen Kindern (Dialekt) beigebracht.*

I would still teach it to them today. *Ich würde es Ihnen noch heutzutage beibringen.*

N: I would teach it to my children. *Ich würde es meinen Kindern beibringen, wenn ich welche hätte.*

I feel as though where I live is an important part of my identity. *Ich meine, dass mein Wohnort ein wichtiger Teil meiner Identität ist.*

I feel as though (Dialect) plays a role in that identity. *Ich meine, dass (Dialekt) eine Rolle in dieser Identität spielt.*

I feel as though people who do not speak (dialect) have as much claim to the local identity as people who do. *Ich meine, dass Leute, die (Dialekt) nicht sprechen können, weniger Anspruch auf die lokale Identität haben wie Menschen, die es beherrschen.*

I felt the same way when I was younger. *Ich fühlte ebenso, als ich jünger war.*

I think my parents would have similar responses to me. *Ich denke, dass meine Eltern ähnliche geantwortet hätten.*

(Space for optional comments)

Other:

16. This project contains an optional interview component. If you opt in, you might be contacted to organise a video call with the researchers, in which they will ask you further questions about the topics covered in this survey. This component will likely take half an hour and is totally voluntary. Your survey will not be treated any differently if you choose not to take part. If you opt in now you may change your mind later at any point, including during the interview. Do you wish to opt in to this optional interview component? (Y/N + Contact information)

Dieses Projekt beinhaltet einen freiwilligen Interviewteil. Wenn Sie dafür zur Verfügung stehen, werden Sie vielleicht kontaktiert, um einen Videoanruf zu organisieren, in dem ich Ihnen weitere Fragen über die Themen dieser Studie stellen werden. Dieser Teil wird voraussichtlich eine halbe Stunde dauern und ist freiwillig. Ihr Fragebogen wird nicht anders behandelt, wenn Sie nicht am Interview teilnehmen wollen. Falls Sie jetzt "Ja" antworten, können Sie noch später Ihre Meinung ändern, auch während des Interviews. Wollen Sie dieser freiwilligen Interviewkomponente beitreten?

17. Do you wish to receive a summary of the results of this research when it is completed? Any contact information you provide for this purpose will be stored separately until the results are sent, at which point they will be deleted. (Y/N + Contact information)

Wollen Sie eine Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse der Studie erhalten, wenn sie fertiggestellt ist? Jede Kontaktinformation, die Sie für diese Rückmeldung angeben, wird getrennt gespeichert, bis die Ergebnisse gesendet sind. Danach wird sie entfernt werden.

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

Background

How did you learn (dialect)? *Wie haben Sie (Dialekt) gelernt?*

Did a lot of your peers also speak it? *Haben viele in Ihrem Freundeskreis ihn auch gesprochen?*

What about other people around you? *Und wie sieht es bei anderen Leuten in Ihrem Leben aus?*

Have you ever used the wrong dialect with someone by accident? What happened? Did you get in trouble? How would that go today? *Haben Sie einmal im Dialekt mit jemandem gesprochen, der ihn nicht beherrscht? Was ist passiert? Haben Sie Ärger bekommen? Was würde heutzutage passieren?*

Do you think there was anything going on in German society when you were growing up that might have changed how the people around you spoke? (eg. Migration, the internet, refugees) *Denken Sie, dass es irgendwas in Deutschland gab, als Sie jung waren, das die Art und Weise, wie die Menschen um Sie herum sprachen, verändert haben könnte (z.B. Migration, Internet, Flüchtlinge)*

Other questions about specific responses given in the survey.

Present Lived Experience

What do you like about your dialect? What about standard German? *Was gefällt Ihnen an Ihrem Dialekt? Was gefällt Ihnen an Hochdeutsch?*

If you could only choose one type of German, which type would you choose? Why? *Wenn Sie nur ein Art des Deutschen wählen könnten, welchen würden Sie wählen?*

How has (hometown) changed from when you were younger? *Wie hat sich Ihre Heimatstadt im Vergleich dazu geändert, als Sie jünger waren?*

Do you think there are any dimensions of the usage of (dialect) that you didn't get the chance to reference in the survey? *Denken Sie, dass es Aspekte der Dialektnutzung gibt, wo Sie im Fragebogen keine Chance hatten, diese zu diskutieren?*

Meaning

In the survey you were asked if you thought your dialect played a role in your identity. Are there certain areas of your life where this feels like it is more or less the case? *Im Fragebogen wurden Sie gefragt, ob Sie denken, dass Ihr Dialekt eine Rolle in Ihrer Identitätsbildung spielt. Gibt es spezifische Teile Ihres Leben, in denen es scheint, dass dies mehr oder weniger der Fall ist?*

Who or where do you think you would be if today you only spoke Standard German? Would your life be different? In what ways? *Wer oder wo wären Sie Ihrer Meinung nach heutzutage, wenn Sie nur Hochdeutsch sprechen könnten? Wäre Ihr Leben anders? Inwiefern?*

How do you feel about the fact that (dialect) is/isn't taught in schools? *Wie denken Sie darüber, dass Dialekte nicht in Schulen unterrichtet werden.*