

Chapter 34

Minority Germanic Languages

Mark L. Loudon

34.1 Introduction

34.1.1 Identifying Minority Germanic Languages

This chapter examines the sociolinguistic situation of Germanic languages that are spoken by a minority of residents of a given nation. While the definitions of the descriptors “minority” and “Germanic” are uncontroversial, the problem of distinguishing between “languages” and “dialects” is a familiar one. It is well-known that there are no absolute scientific criteria according to which linguistic systems may be labeled languages or dialects, rather it is the external, often political, situation of speaker groups that determines whether varieties sharing a common linguistic ancestor are sufficiently autonomous from one another as to be viewed as distinct languages or not.

The language-dialect question is a relevant one in this chapter. The standard reference work on the documentation of linguistic diversity worldwide, *Ethnologue* (Simons and Fennig 2017), lists 47 languages as belonging to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family, 6 of which are part of the North subgroup; the remaining 41 are in the West subgroup. These are listed below.

Germanic Languages Listed in *Ethnologue*

Underscored varieties are regarded as autonomous languages for the purpose of this chapter. The numbers in parentheses, which are given by *Ethnologue*, indicate the number of languages in a particular group.

(<https://www.ethnologue.com/subgroups/germanic>)

North (6)

East Scandinavian (4)

Övdalian (Elfdalian, Dalecarlian)

Danish-Swedish (3)

Danish-Bokmål (1)

Norwegian

Danish-Riksmål (1)

Danish (1)

Danish

Swedish (1)

Swedish

West Scandinavian (2)

Faroese

Icelandic

West (41)

English (2)

English

Scots

Frisian (3)

Frisian

Frisian, Northern

Saterfriesisch

High German (20)

German (18)

Hunsrik

Middle German (8)

East Middle German (4)

German, Standard

Saxon, Upper

Silesian, Lower

Wymysorys

West Middle German (4)

German, Pennsylvania

Palatinate Franconian

Ripuarian

Moselle Franconian (1)

Luxembourgish

Upper German (9)

Eastern Franconian

Alemannic (4)

German, Colonia Tovar

German, Swiss

Swabian

Walser

Bavarian-Austrian (4)

Bavarian

CimbrianHutterischMóchenoYiddish (2)

Yiddish, Eastern

Yiddish, Western

Low Saxon-Low Franconian (16)

Low Franconian (5)

AfrikaansDutchLimburgish

Vlaams

Zeeuws

Low Saxon (11)

Achterhoeks

Drents

Gronings

Plautdietsch

Sallands

Saxon, East Frisian Low

Saxon, Low

Stellingwerfs

Twents

Veluws

Westphali[a]n

There appears to be little if any disagreement that Danish, Övdalian (also Elfdalian, an endangered language spoken in Sweden), Faroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish should be regarded as languages. However, the status of most of the 41 West Germanic languages identified as such by *Ethnologue* is less clear. Just seven of these varieties are recognized as languages without debate either administratively or by

linguists: Afrikaans, Dutch, English, Frisian, (standard) German, Luxembourgish, and Yiddish. Three more varieties, Limburgish, Low Saxon (Low German), and Scots, are less readily identified as languages in their own right, but for reasons discussed below are included in this chapter. There are an additional four extraterritorial West Germanic varieties descended historically from German regional dialects that have enjoyed little official recognition but on structural and sociolinguistic grounds could well be argued to be as autonomous from German as, say, Yiddish is, namely Hutterisch, Pennsylvania German (henceforth, Pennsylvania Dutch), Plautdietsch (Mennonite Low German), and Wymysorys. As is the case with Yiddish, the speakers of these German-related varieties have for generations felt little or no sociolinguistic connection to German-speaking Central Europe. Three of these languages, Hutterisch, Pennsylvania Dutch, and Plautdietsch, are spoken by rapidly growing conservative Anabaptist Christian groups and are thus in a robust state of health. The fourth, Wymysorys, is a nearly extinct German-related language spoken in a single town in southern Poland.

A few remarks about Frisian and Yiddish are in order. *Ethnologue* divides each into sublanguages, namely Frisian, North Frisian, and Saterfriesisch; and Eastern and Western Yiddish, respectively. These subdivisions could be justified on linguistic, historical, and geographic grounds, as the varieties in question are structurally distinct from one another and their speakers have occupied noncontiguous regions for centuries. Nonetheless, I will follow the practice of linguists with special expertise in these languages and subsume the three and two varieties under Frisian and Yiddish, respectively.

Four additional German-related varieties, Cimbrian, Colonia Tovar German, Hunsrik, and Mócheno, are spoken in non-German-speaking countries, namely in Italy (Cimbrian and Mócheno), Venezuela (Colonia Tovar German), and Brazil (Hunsrik). All are endangered to varying degrees. As extraterritorial varieties spoken by people whose ancestors left German-speaking Europe generations ago (in the case of Cimbrian, over a millennium ago), one could argue that they are as autonomous from German as Hutterisch, Pennsylvania Dutch, and Plautdietsch, hence they are included in this chapter. However, their recognition in this chapter as minority Germanic languages raises the valid question whether other so-called colonial or heritage dialects of German – and also of Dutch, Frisian, and Scandinavian languages – spoken in speech islands around the globe by the descendants of immigrants should not also be included. If Cimbrian is treated here as a minority Germanic language, why not also Transylvania Saxon (spoken in Romania) or Pella Dutch (from the US state of Iowa)? The sheer numbers of such Germanic varieties, which can be found on every continent save Antarctica, preclude their all being treated in a chapter of this size. We will therefore limit the discussion here to varieties selected from the *Ethnologue* list (including Lower Silesian)

supplemented by two others that are not on the list for reasons that will be indicated below.

The editors of *Ethnologue* recognize the complexity of according certain linguistic varieties the status of languages. They follow three major criteria for language identification under what is known as the ISO 639-3 standard (www.ethnologue.com/about/problem-language-identification).

- (a) Two related varieties are normally considered varieties of the same language if speakers of each variety have inherent understanding of the other variety at a functional level (that is, can understand based on knowledge of their own variety without needing to learn the other variety).
- (b) Where spoken intelligibility between varieties is marginal, the existence of a common literature or of a common ethnolinguistic identity with a central variety that both understand can be a strong indicator that they should nevertheless be considered varieties of the same language.
- (c) Where there is enough intelligibility between varieties to enable communication, the existence of well-established distinct ethnolinguistic identities can be a strong indicator that they should nevertheless be considered to be different languages.

With regard to these three criteria, it seems reasonable to reconsider the language status accorded by *Ethnologue* to 19 West Germanic varieties, which are spoken in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland. These are: Bavarian, East Frisian Saxon, Eastern Franconian, Palatinate Franconian, Riparian, Swabian, Upper Saxon, and Westphalian (Germany); Achterhoeks, Drents, Gronings, Sallands, Stellingwerfs, Twents, Veluws, and Zeeuws (Netherlands); Vlaams (Belgium); and Swiss German and Walser (Switzerland). With regard to Vlaams (Flemish) and Swiss German, I am guided by the consensus of the speakers of these varieties themselves, who identify what they speak as dialects of Dutch and German, respectively, despite the considerable structural differences between Vlaams and standard Dutch and Swiss German and standard German, not to mention the sociolinguistic autonomy the speakers of these vernacular varieties enjoy as citizens of the countries of Belgium and France (for Vlaams) and Switzerland, as opposed to the Netherlands and Germany (and Austria).

I mentioned above that three West Germanic varieties identified by *Ethnologue* as languages, Low Saxon (henceforth referred to as Low Saxon / Low German), Limburgish, and Scots, are not universally regarded as such. Referring to the *Ethnologue* criteria for language identification above, it is an open question whether majorities of the speakers of Low Saxon / Low German, Limburgish, and Scots have “ethnolinguistic identities” that are strongly “distinct” from those of their immediate neighbors who do not speak Low Saxon / Low German, Limburgish, and Scots. Each

variety is endangered, with the practical consequence that the communities in which each is spoken include speakers and nonspeakers who at least share a common ethnolinguistic *heritage* if not a contemporary ethnolinguistic identity. It is safe to say that every active speaker of Low Saxon / Low German, Limburgish, and Scots has close relatives who speak German, Dutch, or English only. However, these three varieties are recognized as languages under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), a treaty to which most of the 47 current members of the Council of Europe (which includes all but three states in Europe, namely Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Vatican City) are signatories (<https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/minlang/>). Mainly for this reason I include Low Saxon / Low German, Limburgish, and Scots in this chapter.

To summarize, of the 47 Germanic varieties identified by *Ethnologue* as languages, I have decided to recognize just 25 as such for the purpose of this chapter. Four of these languages, Faroese, Icelandic, Luxembourgish, and Norwegian, will not figure into the discussion below as they were spoken as minority languages only in immigrant enclaves (e.g., in North America) that are today nearly nonexistent, the descendants of the original immigrants now having almost completely shifted to a majority language (in the US and Canada, English). I also do not discuss Dutch, which aside from its use in immigrant enclaves, could perhaps be considered a minority language in northern France (French Flemish). English is also excluded from this chapter due to the focus of this volume, despite the fact that it is a minority language in multiple nations across the globe (cf. World Englishes). To the 19 remaining languages (Afrikaans, Cimbrian, Colonia Tovar German, Danish, Frisian, German, Hunsrik, Hutterisch, Limburgish, Low Saxon / Low German, Lower Silesian, Mócheno, Övdalian, Pennsylvania Dutch, Plautdietsch, Scots, Swedish, Wymysorys, and Yiddish) I am adding two small but sociolinguistically healthy extra-territorial West Germanic languages that are not included in *Ethnologue*, both of which are spoken by subgroups of the Old Order Amish in the US, namely Amish Alsatian German and Amish Swiss German.

34.1.2 Sociolinguistic Typology of Minority Languages

We turn now to the question of how the 21 minority Germanic languages under discussion may be grouped together. John Roberts, a Canadian social psychologist with a special interest in multilingual societies, has advanced a descriptive typology for the classification of minority languages according to external criteria (e.g., Edwards 1992, 2004) that derives from the work of a British geographer, Paul White (White 1987). According to this typology, minority languages may be classified according to three sets of geographic criteria.

The first set of criteria has to do a language's minority status across one or more political states. If a minority language is spoken in a single state, it

is *unique*. An example of a unique minority language is Övdalian, which is spoken exclusively in Sweden. If a language is spoken in multiple states but is in all of them a minority language, it is *nonunique*, as, for example, Frisian vis-à-vis the Netherlands and Germany. Finally, if a language is a minority language in one country but spoken by a majority population in another, it is classified as *local-only*. German is an example of a *local-only* language, as it is a minority language in Belgium and Denmark, but a majority language elsewhere (e.g., Germany).

The second set of criteria in the White/Edwards typology classifies non-unique or local-only minority languages as either *adjoining* or *nonadjoining* if the regions of the states in which they are spoken are adjacent or not. Limburgish, which extends over the southeastern Netherlands, northeastern Belgium, and western Germany, is an adjoining minority language. Afrikaans, which is spoken across noncontiguous parts of South Africa and Namibia, is nonadjoining.

The final category refers to the “spatial cohesion” of the speakers of a given language. If a minority language is spoken by people who occupy a geographic space that is *cohesive* it is designated as such. Spatial cohesion should not be understood as strictly binary but as a matter of degree. For example, Wymysorys, the Germanic language of a single village in Poland, is a highly spatially cohesive minority language. Övdalian is spoken in multiple discrete communities in central Sweden; however, all are located in a single county, Dalarna, hence my decision to assign Övdalian to the category of cohesive minority languages. A clearly *noncohesive* minority language is Scots, which is spoken today in noncontiguous regions of Great Britain (Scotland and Northern Ireland).

Since the adjoining/nonadjoining dichotomy is by definition not applicable to unique minority languages, the total number of possible sociolinguistic types is ten. A further distinction between indigenous (autochthonous) and immigrant varieties doubles the number of logically possible minority language types. The 21 minority Germanic languages under discussion here fall into 10 of the 20 possible types under the White/Edwards model, as shown in Table 34.1. Examples for the ten other types not represented by minority Germanic languages, some of which are taken from Edwards 2004, are given in italics. The countries where various languages are spoken are indicated in parentheses by their respective ISO Alpha-2 codes. Not all of the assignments given here are clear-cut. For example, Edwards treats Romani as a language indigenous to Europe, even though it traces its origins to northwest India. Other ambiguous classifications will be discussed below.

In the remainder of this chapter, we present brief overviews of the 21 minority Germanic languages with an emphasis on basic sociolinguistic information justifying their assignment into the ten White/Edwards categories above. We will also consider the relative health of each minority language in the regions where they are spoken, that is, the degree to which

Table 34.1 *Classification of minority Germanic languages*

minority language type	indigenous	immigrant
1. unique, cohesive	Lower Silesian (PL) Övdalian (SE)	Colonia Tovar German (VE) Wymysorys (PL)
2. unique, noncohesive	Cimbrian (IT) Mócheno (IT) Scots (GB)	Amish Alsatian German (US) Amish Swiss German (US)
3. nonunique, adjoining, cohesive	Limburgish (NE, BE, DE) Low Saxon / Low German (NE, DE)	<i>Basque</i> (ES, FR)
4. nonunique, adjoining, noncohesive	<i>Sami</i> (FI, NO, SE, RU)	Hunsrik (BR, AR, PY) Hutterisch (CA, US) Pennsylvania Dutch (US, CA) Afrikaans (ZA, NA)
5. nonunique, nonadjoining, cohesive	Frisian (NE, DE)	
6. nonunique, nonadjoining, noncohesive	<i>Romani</i> (throughout Europe)	Plautdietsch (KZ, CA, BO, MX, PY, DE, US, BR) Yiddish (IL, throughout Europe and North and South America)
7. local-only, adjoining, cohesive	Danish (DE) German (BE, DK)	<i>Spanish in the US Southwest</i> (vis-à-vis Mexico)
8. local-only, adjoining, noncohesive	<i>German speakers in Italy living outside of enclaves</i> (vis-à-vis Switzerland and Austria)	Swedish (FI)
9. local-only, nonadjoining, cohesive	<i>French in the Apulia region of Italy</i> (vis-à-vis France)	German (NA)
10. local-only, nonadjoining, noncohesive	<i>Albanian in the Mezzogiorno region of Italy</i> (vis-à-vis Albania)	<i>German speakers in North America living outside of enclaves</i> (vis-à-vis Germany)

they are endangered or not. Where possible, we will refer to the *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* maintained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The UNESCO Atlas identifies five levels of endangerment: vulnerable, definitely endangered, severely endangered, critically endangered, and extinct (www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/index.php). In the concluding section of this chapter, we will consider to what extent factors promoting minority language maintenance versus shift to a majority language are associated with the ten minority language types discussed.

34.2 Minority Germanic Languages According to Type

34.2.1 Unique, Cohesive Indigenous Languages (Lower Silesian, Övdalian)

Lower Silesian refers to the indigenous varieties of German spoken historically in Lower Silesia, the western part of a region that is located today

mostly in southwestern Poland, extending into the Upper Lusatia (Oberlausitz) region of eastern Germany and a small part of the northeastern Czech Republic. Prior to World War II, Silesia was politically part of Germany, thus what is considered by *Ethnologue* as a distinct language was until 1945 a contiguous part of the east-central dialects of German. The justification for the designation of Lower Silesian as a language rather than a German dialect group is based mainly on the fact that its speakers have for the past two to three generations been citizens of a country, Poland, which did not officially recognize German as a minority language. Speakers of Lower Silesian and other German varieties in Poland experienced considerable discrimination in the postwar era, leading to a dramatic decline in their active use today. In 1991, Germans were officially designated a national minority under the Polish constitution, however most Polish ethnic Germans reside in historical Upper Silesia and speak not a form of German but Silesian, a West Slavic language related to but still distinct from Polish (www.ethnologue.com/16/show_language/sli/).

The UNESCO Atlas identifies eight endangered minority languages in Poland that include three Germanic varieties, though Lower Silesian is not one of them. The three Germanic languages are Low Saxon (Low German), Vilamovian (Wymysorys), and Yiddish, the first two of which are designated as critically endangered. (Yiddish is considered definitely endangered.) Were Lower Silesian to be included in the Atlas, it would almost certainly be identified as at least severely endangered, a direct result of the repression of ethnic Germans by the Polish state in the decades after World War II and its ongoing lack of official recognition (Lasatowicz and Weger 2008, Ammon 2015: 320–328).

A second unique and cohesive indigenous Germanic minority language is Övdalian (Elfdalian, Dalecarlian). Övdalian is spoken in the central Swedish province of Dalarna and in 2007 was estimated to have approximately 2,400 speakers, of whom 1,700 were concentrated in one community, Älvdalen (Zach 2013: 9). Linguists consider Övdalian a distinct North Germanic language as it is not mutually intelligible with Swedish; however, this view is not shared by the Swedish government, which under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages recognizes five other minority languages, Sami, Finnish, Meänkeli (a group of Finnish dialects), Romani, and Yiddish.

Övdalian is definitely endangered, according to UNESCO, since very few children speak it. Its decline is not due to the outright persecution of its speakers, as was the case for Lower Silesian. Rather, the shift from Övdalian to Swedish is largely a consequence of the increasing integration of Övdalian speakers into the larger society. In the early twentieth century, most speakers were farmer folk living in relative isolation from their fellow Swedes. Between 1920 and 1950, the Dalarna region became increasingly industrialized and urbanized, leading to both out-migration of Övdalians and in-migration of Swedish speakers. The use of Övdalian

was stigmatized, and speakers increasingly began to promote the use of Swedish among their children. Today, Övdalian enjoys a measure of overt prestige; however, since only a small fraction of children in Dalarna speak it, the long-term health of the language is in question (Zach 2013: 103–107). Also, numerous efforts in recent years to have the Swedish parliament formally recognize Övdalian as a regional or minority language have been unsuccessful. The Swedish government continues to insist that Övdalian is a dialect of Swedish and not a language in its own right (Zach 2013: 100–103).

34.2.2 Unique, Cohesive Immigrant Languages (Colonia Tovar German, Wymysorys)

The first of the two unique, cohesive immigrant Germanic languages under discussion here is the product of the immigration of German dialect speakers to South America in the nineteenth century. Colonia Tovar German is descended from varieties of Lower Alemannic (southern Baden) German spoken by people who settled in the community of Colonia Tovar in the northern Venezuelan state of Aragua. Structurally, the language still strongly resembles Lower Alemannic German. *Ethnologue* deems the status of the language as “shifting”; it is estimated that there are approximately 1,500 speakers today (www.ethnologue.com/language/gct). Although Colonia Tovar German is not formally recognized as a minority language by the Venezuelan government and Spanish is the sole language used in Tovar schools, there are concerted efforts on the part of Tovar Germans to maintain their language, and German-themed tourism is the main industry in their community. Nevertheless, the shift among youth toward dominance in Spanish is clear (Da Rin 1997).

Wymysorys (Vilamovian) is the most severely endangered of the minority languages discussed in this chapter. It is a Germanic language spoken today by fewer than 40 people in the town of Wilamowice in southern Poland in the far southeastern part of historic Silesia (Upper Silesia). The origins of the language are obscure. Wilamowice is believed to have been settled in the thirteenth century by Germanic speakers from Holland, Friesland, Germany, and Scotland. The language itself bears the greatest resemblance to East Central German dialects, which include varieties of Silesian German. Until World War II, the language was the dominant idiom of Wilamowice; however, the repressions of ethnic Germans in postwar Poland referred to above in the discussion of Lower Silesian advanced the shift among Wymysorys speakers, most of whom were bilingual, to using Polish only. The language has been moribund since the 1950s and has now become nearly extinct, though recent efforts have been undertaken to revive the language (Wicherkiewicz 2003).

34.2.3 Unique, Noncohesive Indigenous Languages (Cimbrian, Mócheno, Scots)

Cimbrian and Mócheno are Germanic linguistic isolates in northeastern Italy that are both classified by UNESCO as severely endangered, though *Ethnologue* identifies their status as “vigorous” (“used for face-to-face communication by all generations and the situation is sustainable”; www.ethnologue.com/about/language-status). Cimbrian is spoken today by around 2,300 people. In only one community in the Autonomous Province of Trento (Trentino), Lusern, a village of fewer than 300 people, is Cimbrian actively spoken (www.ethnologue.com/language/cim). Mócheno (known in German as Fersentalerisch) is also spoken in Trentino, mainly in the Bernstol valley, which is just north of Lusern. Arguably just as endangered as Cimbrian, the Mócheno-speaking population numbers around 1,900 (www.ethnologue.com/language/mhn). Both Cimbrian and Mócheno share structural similarities with Bavarian German dialects, which suggest the languages have their origins in immigration to the region from farther north. More speculative work posits that the languages are the modern descendants of Lombardic, the ancient Germanic language spoken in what is today northern Italy. For the purpose of this chapter, I choose to regard Cimbrian and Mócheno as indigenous languages since they have been spoken in this area for at least a millennium (Rowley 1996, Bidese 2004).

The sociolinguistic situation of Scots is considerably better than that of Cimbrian and Mócheno, yet it is still designated vulnerable by UNESCO. Spoken today across Lowland Scotland and parts of Ulster, Scots is considered by many of its speakers a dialect of English due in large measure to the fact that it has been in a diglossic relationship with English for hundreds of years. The closer genetic relationship between Scots and English versus that between both these languages and Scots Gaelic, an indigenous Celtic language, reinforces the popular view of Scots as being subordinate to English. The consensus among most linguists is that Scots is a distinct Germanic language that developed from Early Middle English varieties spoken in Scotland and diverged from the English spoken in England in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Today, *Ethnologue* gives a figure of 1,589,200 users of Scots, for most of whom (1,500,000) the language is not a mother tongue (www.ethnologue.com/language/sco). A 2010 study conducted by the Scottish government on popular attitudes toward the Scots language revealed a mixed picture. In general, Scots regard the language (which most in fact consider a dialect of English) as an important part of the cultural heritage of Scotland but with limited practical value in the present day (Scottish Government Social Research 2010).

34.2.4 Unique, Noncohesive Immigrant Languages (Amish Alsatian German, Amish Swiss German)

The highly traditional Anabaptist group known as the Old Order Amish is comprised mainly of speakers of Pennsylvania Dutch. There are subgroups of Amish, however, known collectively as “Swiss Amish,” who speak two other languages, Amish Alsatian German and Amish Swiss German. Living today mainly in the US state of Indiana but also in multiple other states, Swiss Amish are the descendants of immigrants to the American Midwest from Alsace and Switzerland in the first half of the nineteenth century. The larger of the two subgroups, whose largest settlement is near the town of Berne, in Adams County, Indiana, speak Amish Swiss German, which is descended from Bernese Swiss German. Their ancestors migrated from the Bern and Jura regions of Switzerland. The second group, who live mainly in an Indiana county adjacent to Adams, namely Allen County, are descended from Amish immigrants from Alsace and still speak a form of Alsatian Low Alemannic known as Amish Alsatian German.

As of 2017, the Adams and Allen County communities were the fifth and tenth largest Amish settlements in North America, with estimated populations of 8,595 and 3,190, respectively (<https://groups.etown.edu/amishstudies/statistics/largest-settlements/>). Considering that there are a number of other smaller settlements across the United States in which Swiss Amish live, one could conservatively estimate the number of Amish Swiss German speakers to be around at least 10,000 and Amish Alsatian German speakers to approach 4,000, or roughly 3 percent and 1 percent of the total Amish population in North America. Despite their small numbers relative to the Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking majority of Old Order Amish, all evidence points to a stable maintenance situation. Swiss Amish children continue to acquire the respective German-related language of their community, Amish Swiss or Amish Alsatian, and the overall growth rate is on par with that of the larger Amish community, which is doubling in size every 20 years due to an unusually high birth rate and low attrition. As such, Amish Alsatian German and Amish Swiss German are not endangered. (See Humpa 1996 and Fleischer and Loudon 2011 for Amish Swiss German, Thompson 1994 for Amish Alsatian German.)

34.2.5 Nonunique, Adjoining, Cohesive Indigenous Languages (Limburgish, Low Saxon / Low German)

Limburgish is a Germanic language descended from Low Franconian and thus related historically to both Dutch and German. It is spoken in a cohesive region where the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium meet by an estimated 1,300,000 people, according to *Ethnologue*, 700,000 of whom live in the Netherlands. Limburgish is still widely spoken by

children, though there is evidence to suggest some attrition due to generational differences in its use (www.ethnologue.com/language/lim). Recognized as a regional language under the European Charter by the Dutch government, Limburgish does not enjoy similar status in Germany and Belgium. UNESCO classifies it as a vulnerable language.

North of the region in which Limburgish is spoken is the Germanic minority language alternately called Low Saxon or Low German. Once used across a wide area that includes most of modern northern Germany and the eastern Netherlands, the number of native speakers is estimated at around 300,000, though with proportionally many fewer children than adults, an ominous sign that supports its classification by UNESCO as, like Limburgish, vulnerable (“shifting,” according to *Ethnologue*; www.ethnologue.com/language/nds). Although Low Saxon / Low German is historically distinct from both Dutch and standard German, these languages function as *Dachsprachen* for Low Saxon / Low German varieties in the Netherlands and Germany. The governments of both countries have formally recognized Low Saxon / Low German as a regional language under the European Charter. The medieval ancestor of the language, Middle Low German, was the main vehicle of communication of the Hanseatic League, whose decline in the fifteenth century contributed to the decline of the language. The popularity of an emerging East Central German-based standard variety through the northward spread of the Reformation in the sixteenth century likewise promoted attrition from Low Saxon / Low German in Germany. The decline of the language accelerated in the nineteenth century in the face of industrialization, urbanization, and an expanding educational system in which standard German was the sole medium. Large-scale emigration of Low Saxon / Low German speakers in the nineteenth century mainly to North and South America, but also to Australia and southern Africa, has made Low Saxon / Low German a truly global language, as documented in a popular television show produced by Norddeutscher Rundfunk in the 2000s, *Die Welt op Platt* (The World in Low Saxon / Low German).

34.2.6 Nonunique, Adjoining, Noncohesive Immigrant Languages (Hunsrik, Hutterisch, Pennsylvania Dutch)

The language known as Hunsrik is spoken predominantly in southern Brazil (especially the state of Rio Grande do Sul) and parts of Argentina and Paraguay by approximately 3,000,000 people, according to *Ethnologue*, which describes its maintenance status as “shifting” (www.ethnologue.com/language/hrx). As its name implies, Hunsrik has its origins in the Hunsrück region of central-western Germany, located within the West Central German dialect area, from which emigrants began settling in Brazil in 1824. Modern Hunsrik shows the effects of considerable contact with other European German dialects, notably Eastern Pomeranian and Westphalian varieties of Low German, as well other European immigrant

and languages and, of course, Portuguese. All German-related varieties spoken in Brazil have experienced attrition as younger speakers shift to Portuguese, yet Hunsrik has remained the strongest demographically, due in part to its use across multiple geographically separate rural communities in what Steffen and Altenhofen (2014) term a “language archipelago” that they compare to that of Plautdietsch-speaking Mennonites in the same region. Whereas a shared religious faith underlies the ties that bind Plautdietsch speakers to one another, the Hunsrik network is based primarily on ethnic and commercial ties. In both situations, an important factor that promotes language maintenance is endogamy (Altenhofen 1996, Ammon 2015: 369–380, Rosenberg 1998).

Hutterisch is the in-group language of a highly traditional Anabaptist group known as the Hutterites, who live in the United States and Canada. Although they share most of the same basic Christian beliefs as Amish and Mennonites, the Hutterites, unlike other Anabaptist groups, live in an archipelago of communal settlements called *Bruderhöfe* on both sides of the US-Canadian border. The origins of the Hutterite movement lie in early sixteenth-century Tyrol; however, the Hutterisch language is most closely related to the German dialects spoken in Austrian Carinthia (Rein 1977: 216–267). The migration history of Hutterites is a complicated one, similar to that of the Plautdietsch-speaking Mennonites, which is largely due to a legacy of religious persecution. In the 1870s, all Hutterites left Russia, into which they had moved a century prior, for the Dakota Territory in the United States. In the wake of severe repressions at the hands of the US government during World War I, most Hutterites relocated to Canada, where approximately three-quarters of their members live today. The most recent estimate of the total Hutterite population is 45,000. Their birth rate is comparable to that of the Amish, Old Order Mennonites, and Old Colony Mennonites, that is, very high, which, coupled with low attrition from the group, ensures the rapid growth of the number of speakers of Hutterisch (www.hutterites.org/the-leut/distribution/).

The demographic health of the Hutterites is an important part of the overall sociolinguistic stability of Hutterisch. The factors of endogamy and ruralness similarly promote heritage language maintenance. Hutterites are basically trilingual. Lorenz-Andreasch (2004), building on earlier work by Kurt Rein (1977), describes a stable diglossic relationship between Vernacular Hutterisch (*Alltagshutterisch*) and Church Hutterisch (*Kirchenhutterisch*), which differ from one another structurally and sociolinguistically, the latter used as the main vehicle for religious worship. In addition, all Hutterites are fluent in English, which is the dominant medium of instruction in their schools. Lorenz-Andreasch also notes the increasing importance of European Standard German among Hutterites, mainly through occasional contacts with German speakers from Europe.

Like Hutterisch, Pennsylvania Dutch (Pennsylvania German, as it is often referred to in scholarship, including *Ethnologue*) is a minority Germanic language spoken in the United States and Canada (plus a very small number in Belize) that is not endangered. It emerged in the eighteenth century through the immigration of German speakers from southwestern Germany, Alsace, and Switzerland to the colony of Pennsylvania, of whom a critical mass came from the Palatinate (Pfalz). Pennsylvania German is lexically and structurally very similar to modern Palatine German dialects, though not identical to any one of them. The bilingualism of Pennsylvania Dutch speakers in English has promoted the divergence from the language's Palatine German cousins, especially at the lexical and semantic levels. Historically, most speakers were members of Protestant churches, especially Lutheran and (German) Reformed; only a small fraction of the Pennsylvania Dutch founding population was part of Anabaptist and Pietist groups such as Mennonites and Amish. Today, nearly all active speakers are affiliated with the most traditional Amish and Mennonites, known as the Old Orders (Louden 2016). In 2017, the Amish population exceeded 318,000, distributed in yet another archipelago of communities across 31 US states and three Canadian provinces (<https://groups.etaown.edu/amishstudies/statistics/population-2017/>). Horse-and-buggy-driving Old Order ("Team") Mennonites live in 13 US states and the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Manitoba, as well as in Belize. Their total population was estimated at just under 40,000 in 2015 (Kraybill et al. 2017: 126–127).

There are a number of sociolinguistic parallels between Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking Amish and Mennonites and the Hutterites. Old Order communities are concentrated in rural areas and marriage within the faith is the norm as are exceptionally large family sizes and low attrition rates. Indeed, with populations doubling every 20 years, the Amish (including Swiss Amish), Old Order Mennonites, and Hutterites are the fastest-growing groups on the planet, meaning that their languages, though small, are growing exponentially. Also, as is the case among Hutterites, trilingualism is the norm for Amish and Old Order Mennonite adults. Pennsylvania Dutch is in a diglossic relationship with another German-related variety, which in the case of the Old Orders is an archaic form of standard German (*Hochdeutsch*), and all speak English. Old Order sectarians, like their Hutterite counterparts, value the continued use of forms of German as an essential symbol of their sociospiritual identity, a strong factor promoting the long-term health of Pennsylvania Dutch.

34.2.7 Nonunique, Nonadjoining, Cohesive Indigenous Languages (Frisian)

The Frisian group of West Germanic languages has three varieties, according to *Ethnologue*: Frisian (also known as West Frisian), which is spoken in

the Netherlands, mainly in the province of Friesland; and North(ern) Frisian and Saterland Frisian (Saterfriesisch in *Ethnologue*), which are both spoken in Germany. The linguistic distance between the three varieties is such that many people, including a number of Frisian speakers themselves, view them as distinct languages. Of the three varieties, (West) Frisian is the healthiest in terms of maintenance and shift, though it is still deemed vulnerable by UNESCO. In the Dutch province of Friesland it shares official status with Dutch, where it is spoken by approximately three-quarters of the population; most of the rest of Friesland's nearly 650,000 residents have receptive knowledge of Frisian. The official recognition of Frisian, combined with widespread positive attitudes toward the language and its use among Frieslanders, promotes its continued maintenance. However, the economic base of Friesland is agricultural, meaning that the province has experienced steady out-migration, which raises concerns about the long-term health of the language (Gorter et al. 2001).

In Germany, both North Frisian and Saterland Frisian are severely endangered. There are an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 speakers of North Frisian in the state of Schleswig-Holstein, with perhaps twice that number of people who have receptive knowledge of the language. Despite its recognition as a regional language by the German government under the European Charter and support for the language in education, North Frisian remains severely endangered (www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/M/minderheiten/minderheiten_friesen.html). The situation of Saterland Frisian is grimmer. It is spoken by an estimated 2,000 people, mostly elderly, or about one-quarter of the residents of the municipality of Saterland in the state of Lower Saxony (<https://www.ethnologue.com/language/stq>).

34.2.8 Nonunique, Nonadjoining, Cohesive Immigrant Languages (Afrikaans)

Afrikaans is the only (non-English) Germanic language with official status that is spoken exclusively outside of Europe. It is not endangered. It developed through the migration of Dutch dialect speakers during the eighteenth century to the Cape Colony at the southern tip of Africa in what today is the Republic of South Africa. Though quite similar in many respects to European Dutch dialects, Afrikaans diverged historically from European Dutch in large part due to contact with speakers of indigenous languages as well as Malay and Portuguese, which has led some to suggest that creolization was involved in its development (Roberge 2002, Deumert 2004). It is one of 11 official languages in South Africa and the third most commonly spoken as a first language by approximately 14 percent of the population, after Zulu (23 percent) and Xhosa (18 percent) (<https://apps.statssa.gov.za/census01/Census96/HTML/CIB/Population/28.htm>). A 2011 survey reported that 6,900,000 South Africans spoke Afrikaans at home, of whom 2,700,000 (nearly 40 percent) were white. The majority of Afrikaans speakers are Coloureds (of multiracial

background) and other nonwhites (<https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Minority-of-Afrikaans-speakers-white-20130422>). Although there is a well-established standard written variety of Afrikaans subject to prescriptive norms, there is considerable variation in vernacular varieties of the language that points to the role of creolization in its historical development. This aspect of the language's history has been embraced by some Coloured Afrikaans speakers in the postapartheid era (van der Waal 2012).

Afrikaans is also widely spoken as a second and third language in South Africa and enjoys considerable support in print and broadcast media. In neighboring Namibia, which as South West Africa was occupied by South Africa from 1915 until 1988, Afrikaans is not an official language, though it is also the third most common language of the country, used as a main language by approximately 10 percent of Namibians (Namibia 2011 Population and Housing Census Main Report). Along with English, the sole official language of Namibia, Afrikaans is an important lingua franca for speakers of diverse indigenous languages.

34.2.9 Nonunique, Nonadjoining, Noncohesive Immigrant Languages (Plautdietsch, Yiddish)

Plautdietsch is a language most closely related to East Low German dialects (part of the Low Saxon / Low German group of varieties) that is spoken by Mennonites who are ethnically distinct from Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking Mennonites. Most Plautdietsch speakers are descended from Netherlandic- and Frisian-speaking Anabaptists who migrated eastward from northwestern Europe beginning in the sixteenth century, eventually ending up in the Russian Empire (Moelleken 1987, 1992; Siemens 2012). At around the same time that the Hutterites left Russia, groups of Plautdietsch-speaking Mennonites also began coming to North America, mostly Canada, though unlike the Hutterites, many remained in Russia. Today, there are still Plautdietsch speakers in the Russian Federation and other nations of the former Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan, which according to *Ethnologue* may have as many as 100,000 speakers, over one-quarter of the total estimated Plautdietsch-speaking population. In the 1920s, Plautdietsch speakers began migrating to northern Mexico, and then into South America, where the largest communities are in Bolivia and Paraguay (Moelleken 1987, Krahn et al. 1989, www.ethnologue.com/language/pdt, <http://www.mhsc.ca/index.php?content=http://www.mhsc.ca/mennos/hcanada.html>).

The migration history of Plautdietsch-speaking Mennonites is more complex than that of the Anabaptist groups who use Hutterisch and Pennsylvania Dutch today. Consequently, the contemporary sociolinguistic situation of Plautdietsch speakers is more differentiated than what we find among Amish and Old Order Mennonites and Hutterites. Among these latter groups, heritage language maintenance correlates with active membership in Amish, Old Order Mennonite, and Hutterite churches. The most traditional

Anabaptist groups to maintain Plautdietsch (alongside a form of standard German known as *Hüagdietsch* ‘High German’) are the Old Colony Mennonites, who, like their Old Order and Hutterite counterparts, live at a distance, physically and spiritually, from the social mainstream. However, there are more progressive Mennonite churches, many of which are actively engaged in mission work, whose members continue to use Plautdietsch (see the Ekj Ran [‘I Run’] ministry, www.squareoneworldmedia.com/ministries/low-german/ekj-ran). This is a different situation than among Pennsylvania Dutch and Hutterisch speakers who choose not to join (or leave) Old Order or Hutterite churches and who then usually shift to speaking English predominantly or exclusively. Overall, Plautdietsch is in much the same robust state of sociolinguistic health as the languages of the Amish, Old Order Mennonites, and Hutterites due to rapid growth, low attrition, endogamy, and a measure of social separation. And as with other traditional Anabaptist groups, minority language maintenance has a symbolic importance as the conservation of a precious spiritual heritage.

There are a number of outward parallels between Yiddish and the languages of traditional Anabaptist groups. Structurally, it is descended from German dialects spoken by Ashkenazic Jews going back as far as the tenth century. Like their Anabaptist counterparts, Yiddish speakers, as members of a distinctive religious minority, experienced persecution that in the case of the Jews reached the level of genocide in the twentieth century. Although the Shoah dealt a critical blow to Yiddish, the language has not only endured but is thriving today as a vital vernacular in many so-called Haredi groups, highly traditional orthodox Jewish communities that include the Hasidim and are often compared in the US to the Amish. As was true of Pennsylvania Dutch historically, Yiddish was once widely spoken by Ashkenazic Jews who lived at less of a distance from the social mainstream. Active use of Yiddish among secular Jews is exceptional today – hence its UNESCO designation as “definitely endangered” (in Israel) – however, the growth rate among groups like the Hasidim is comparable to that of Amish, traditional Mennonites, and Hutterites, that is, exponential, thereby securing the future of the language. Endogamy is also a crucial factor in promoting the maintenance of Yiddish. Though most Haredi communities are urban, unlike the rural-dwelling traditional Anabaptists who maintain minority heritage languages, active Yiddish speakers still typically live in distinct enclaves, physically and spiritually, that support language maintenance (Isaacs 1999, Jacobs 2005, Katz 2007).

34.2.10 Local-only, Adjoining, Cohesive Indigenous Languages (Danish in Germany, German in Denmark and Belgium)

The Duchy of Schleswig was the political entity that for centuries existed in the territory where today Denmark and Germany meet. Historically, there were three main languages spoken in the duchy, Danish, North Frisian, and Low German. Until 1864, Schleswig was part of Denmark, at

which point it became Prussian. After World War I, two plebiscites were held on the political future of the territory, with North Schleswig joining Denmark and South Schleswig remaining German, eventually becoming part of the modern state of Schleswig-Holstein. North and South Schleswig were never linguistically homogeneous, thus the partition resulted in (Low) German- and Danish-speaking minorities in Denmark and Germany, respectively. (North Frisian speakers were concentrated in South Schleswig.) As signatories to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, both Germany and Denmark are committed to supporting the minority communities in their respective countries, including in schools and media. The Danish minority community in Germany is estimated at around 50,000, though *Ethnologue* estimates there were 20,800 speakers of Danish, likely South Jutish, the dialect of Danish indigenous to the Danish-German border region (www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/M/minderheiten/minderheiten_daenen.html; <https://www.ethnologue.com/language/dan>). One study (Pedersen 2002) suggests that the percentage of active Danish speakers among German citizens who identify as ethnic Danes is quite small, which supports the UNESCO assessment that South Jutish is definitely endangered.

The language maintenance situation among members of the ethnic German minority of the Danish-German border, in South Jutland, is considerably better. German is the only regional or minority language recognized by the Danish government under the European Charter. There are German-medium schools serving the German minority community, which numbers between 10,000 and 20,000, of whom one-third are estimated to have German as their mother tongue (Ammon 2015: 306). Despite their small numbers, the maintenance of German is supported institutionally by high-quality schools and through media and religious institutions. The importance of German as an international language relative to Danish likely makes the maintenance of the former additionally attractive (Pedersen 1996, 2000; Ammon 2015: 305–311).

As in southern Denmark, eastern Belgium is home to an autochthonous group of German speakers. The German-speaking Community of Belgium (*Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft Belgiens*) or East Belgium (*Ostbelgien*, www.ostbelgienlive.be) has a population of approximately 77,000. Although there are also small numbers of French and Flemish speakers in the community, German is its official language. Residents of East Belgium account for less than one percent of the total population of Belgium, nevertheless the maintenance of German there is secure. Bilingualism among German Belgians in French is widespread, as East Belgium is part of the region of Wallonia, though the majority French-speaking Walloons are less likely to speak German. The economic health of the region, a strong infrastructure, including in education, as well as its proximity to Germany, are all factors promoting the maintenance of German there (Ammon 2015: 232–240).

34.2.11 Local-only, Adjoining, Noncohesive Immigrant Languages (Swedish in Finland)

Until 1809, what is today the nation of Finland was part of the kingdom of Sweden. After another century as part of the Russian Empire, Finland finally gained its independence in 1917. Although Swedish speakers have never comprised more than a small minority of the Finnish population, since independence both Finnish and Swedish are officially national languages. Recent figures the number of Swedish speakers at 325,000, or 5.4 percent of the Finnish population (www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html). The Swedish presence in the country is an old one, due to migration from Sweden going back several centuries. *Svenskfinland* is non-cohesive, including four areas on the western coast of Finland. Owing largely to its official support, Swedish may be considered a safe language, despite a considerable number of bilingual families due to marriage across language communities (Østern 2001, Östman and Mattfolk 2011). The close genetic relationship of Swedish with other Scandinavian languages also makes its continued maintenance by Finnish citizens a communicative asset for them.

34.2.12 Local-only, Nonadjoining, Cohesive Immigrant Languages (German in Namibia)

The German presence in Namibia is a legacy of its status as the sole official language of the German imperial colony German Southwest Africa (*Deutsch-Südwestafrika*) between 1884 and 1915, at which point it fell under the administration of neighboring South Africa. German gained official recognition by South African authorities in 1984, but lost it again when Namibia became independent in 1990. Today, German speakers account for less than one percent (20,000–25,000) of the total Namibian population (Ammon 2015: 362); however, many thousands more speak it as a second language. Competition from English, the sole national language of Namibia, and Afrikaans do not strengthen the position of German in the country. Factors favorable to the long-term health of German in Namibia include economic and cultural ties to Germany and the support among German Namibians for German-medium schools, media, and cultural institutions. German's risk of endangerment in Namibia has not been formally assessed by UNESCO, however Ulrich Ammon has expressed skepticism about its future, hence one could deem it vulnerable (Ammon 2015: 359–369).

34.3 Minority Language Maintenance and Shift

By way of concluding this chapter, it is worth considering whether there is a correlation between the White/Edwards typology for the classification of minority languages and language endangerment. Is a language's health affected by whether it exists as a minority variety solely in one or more

states (i.e., whether it is unique or nonunique), or whether it has minority status in one state but is a majority language elsewhere (local-only)? For nonunique and nonlocal languages, does it matter whether the states in which they are spoken are adjoining or not? And does the spatial cohesion of a minority language region correlate in any way with the maintenance of that language? Finally, does a minority language’s status as an indigenous or immigrant variety promote or hinder maintenance or shift?

Let us begin by reminding ourselves which of the languages discussed above are not endangered. Of the 21 languages we examined, nine are in a good state of sociolinguistic health: Afrikaans, Amish Alsatian German, Amish Swiss German, German (in Denmark and Belgium), Hutterisch, Pennsylvania Dutch, Plautdietsch, Swedish (in Finland), and Yiddish. Interestingly, just one of these languages, German, is indigenous to the regions in which it is a minority language (except for in Namibia); the remaining eight languages are all the products of immigration at different points in world history, with Swedish and Yiddish being the oldest, followed by Afrikaans, Hutterisch, Plautdietsch, Pennsylvania Dutch, and finally, Amish Alsatian German and Amish Swiss German. The table of minority language types from Section 34.1.2 is reproduced in simplified form in Table 34.2, with the nine healthy languages in boldface. Languages

Table 34.2 *Classification of minority Germanic languages and language endangerment*

minority language type	indigenous	immigrant
1. unique, cohesive	<i>Lower Silesian</i> <i>Övdalian</i>	Colonia Tovar German <i>Wymysorys</i>
2. unique, noncohesive	<i>Cimbrian</i> <i>Mócheno</i> Scots	Amish Alsatian German Amish Swiss German
3. nonunique, adjoining, cohesive	Limburgish Low Saxon / Low German	
4. nonunique, adjoining, noncohesive		Hunsrik Hutterisch Pennsylvania Dutch Afrikaans
5. non-unique, nonadjoining, cohesive	Frisian	
6. nonunique, nonadjoining, noncohesive		Plautdietsch Yiddish
7. local-only, adjoining, cohesive	<i>Danish in Germany</i> German in Denmark, Belgium	
8. local-only, adjoining, noncohesive		Swedish in Finland
9. local-only, nonadjoining, cohesive		German in Namibia
10. local-only, nonadjoining, noncohesive		

deemed vulnerable to loss are in normal typeface and endangered languages are italicized.

Of the nine minority language types with Germanic examples, six are represented by healthy languages. There is no obvious correlation between minority language type and whether a given language is more or less likely to be endangered or not. Two languages (Amish Alsatian German and Amish Swiss German) are unique, while the remaining seven are not; three out of the nine (German, Hutterisch, and Pennsylvania Dutch) are adjoining; and four out of nine (German, Hutterisch, Swedish, and Pennsylvania Dutch) are spatially cohesive. The sociolinguistic correlates of minority language health must be sought elsewhere.

It is notable that six of the nine healthy minority languages (Amish Alsatian German, Amish Swiss German, Hutterisch, Pennsylvania Dutch, Plautdietsch, and Yiddish) are all associated with highly traditional religious groups who for spiritual reasons maintain clear boundaries between themselves and their neighbors through endogamy and a number of outward symbols, including distinctive dress and limitations on the use of technology. The languages they speak also have symbolic value as they are entirely their own, that is, unique to their communities. Although Amish, conservative Mennonites, Hutterites, and Haredim do not live in complete isolation from the larger world, they do very intentionally delineate physical and spiritual spaces within which they use languages that belong solely to them. In this way, the speakers of these six languages create a form of protective isolation around themselves and their languages that the endangered or vulnerable languages under discussion in this chapter either have lost or are likely to lose. It is no coincidence that these other languages in earlier times enjoyed stability when their speakers lived in relative geographic isolation in rural areas (like Friesland or the Brazilian countryside) or in small ethnolinguistically homogeneous communities (like Wilamowice or isolated villages in northern Italy) at a physical distance from others.

How is it that three other languages, Afrikaans, German in Denmark and Belgium, and Swedish in Finland, where social-religious isolation is not relevant, are not endangered? A combination of factors are at play, none of which is unique to each language. All are officially recognized by the governments of the nations in which they are located and have deep historic roots there: Afrikaans began emerging in southern Africa three hundred years ago, Scandinavian speakers have been in Finland for perhaps as long as a millennium, and German is effectively indigenous to the regions of Denmark and Belgium where it is spoken. Each of the three languages has a well-developed and -supported written standard variety, and each is used in a wide range of domains ranging from informal to formal, by both rural- and urban-dwellers. German in Denmark and Swedish in Finland have the added advantage of being languages that have wider international currency than their coterritorial majority

languages, Danish and Finnish. The economic health of the communities in question doubtless also plays a role, limiting the incentive or need for younger community members to migrate.

The Afrikaans situation is an interesting one. It shares all the positive factors relevant to German and Swedish as minority languages, with one exception: the scope of Afrikaans is limited to southern Africa. It is difficult to imagine that Afrikaans speakers in South Africa and Namibia would be inclined to shift to the most widely spoken languages in their respective countries, Zulu and Ovambo. A shift to English is more plausible; however, in South Africa, at least, Afrikaans is holding its own, due in part to a legacy of distance between English-speaking South Africans and Afrikaners going back at least as far as the Boer Wars at the turn of the twentieth century. The fact that nonwhites comprise the majority of Afrikaans speakers is important for the future language, as well: it is telling that the current directorship of the Afrikaans Language Council (Afrikaanse Taalraad, afrikaansetaalrad.co.za) is made up of three ethnic Afrikaners and three nonwhites.

In her monograph on language maintenance and shift, Anne Pauwels (2016) underscores the diversity of circumstances that render some minority language situations more stable than others and explores the important question whether the shift of speakers to a majority language can or even should be addressed. Do the Germanic languages situations above offer any prescriptions to those who would attempt to promote minority language revitalization? To be sure, the successes of the traditional Anabaptist and orthodox Jewish communities in maintaining their heritage languages without special effort (institutional support, use in schools and media, etc.) are not practical for, say, Frisians in the Netherlands or Germany, who are unlikely to choose intentionally to marry exclusively within their ethnic group, live in rural areas only, and have six or seven children whom they would raise to do likewise. However, what the Amish, Mennonite, Hutterite, and Haredi situations do show is that successful minority language maintenance “from below” is possible, even in the heart of industrialized societies like the United States whose majority populations are not inclined to promote linguistic diversity.

References

- Altenhofen, C. V. 1996. *Hunsrückisch im Rio Grande do Sul. Ein Beitrag zur Beschreibung einer deutschbrasilianischen Dialektvarietät im Kontakt mit dem Portugiesischen*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.
- Ammon, U. 2015. *Die Stellung der deutschen Sprache in der Welt*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Bidese, E. 2004. “Die Zimbern und ihre Sprache: geographische, historische und sprachwissenschaftlich relevante Aspekte.” In T. Stolz (ed.),

- Kolloquium über Alte Sprachen und Sprachstufen. Beiträge zum Bremer Kolloquium über "Alte Sprachen und Sprachstufen" (Diversitas Linguarum 8). Bochum: Brockmeyer: 3–42.
- Da Rin, D. 1997. *Das Deutsche in der Colonia Tovar (Venezuela)*. Munich: LINCOM Europa.
- Deumert, A. 2004. *Language Standardization and Language Change: The Dynamics of Cape Dutch*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Edwards, J. 1992. "Sociopolitical aspects of language maintenance and loss: towards a typology of ethnic minority language situations." In W. Fase, K. Jaspaert, and S. Kroon (eds.), *Maintenance and Loss of Ethnic Minority Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins: 37–54.
- Edwards, J. 2004. "Language minorities." In A. Davies and C. Elder (eds.), *The Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell: 451–475.
- Extra, G., and D. Gorter (eds.), 2001. *The Other Languages of Europe: Demographic, Sociolinguistic, and Educational Perspectives*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Fleischer, J., and M. L. Loudon. 2011. "Das Amish Swiss German im nordöstlichen Indiana: eine alemannisch-pfälzische Mischmundart." In H. Christen, S. Germann, W. Haas, N. Montefiori, and H. Ruef (eds.), *Alemannische Dialektologie: Wege in die Zukunft (ZDL-Beiheft 141)*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner: 231–244.
- Gorter, D., A. Riemersma, and J. Ytsma 2001. "The Frisian language in the Netherlands." In Extra and Gorter (eds.), pp. 103–118.
- Hinderling, R., and L. M. Eichinger (eds.). 1996. *Handbuch der mitteleuropäischen Sprachminderheiten*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Humpa, G. J. 1996. *Retention and Loss of Bernese Alemannic Traits in an Indiana Amish Dialect: A Comparative Historical Study*. Ph.D. dissertation, Purdue University.
- Isaacs, M. 1999. "Haredi, haymish, and frim: Yiddish vitality and language choice in a transnational multilingual community." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 138: 9–30.
- Jacobs, N. G. 2005. *Yiddish: A Linguistic Introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Katz, D. 2007. *Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish*. New York: Basic Books.
- Krahn, C., H. S. Bender, and J. J. Friesen 1989. "Migrations." In *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*. Retrieved 16 January 2017. <http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Migrations&oldid=143668>.
- Kraybill, D. B., S. M. Nolt, and E. Burge Jr. 2017. "Language use among Anabaptist groups." In S. J. Bronner and J. R. Brown (eds.), *Pennsylvania Germans: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press: 108–130.
- Lasatowicz, M. and T. Weger. 2008. "Polen." In L. Eichinger, A. Plewnia, and C. M. Riehl (eds.), *Handbuch der deutschen Sprachminderheiten in Mittel- und Osteuropa*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr: 145–169.

- Lorenz-Andreasch, H. 2004. "Mir sein já kolla Teitschverderber" *Die Sprache der Schmiedeleut-Hutterer in Manitoba/Kanada*. Wien: Edition Praesens.
- Louden, M. L. 2016. *Pennsylvania Dutch: The Story of an American Language*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Moelleken, W. W. 1987. "Die rußlanddeutschen Mennoniten in Kanada und Mexiko: Sprachliche Entwicklung und diglossische Situation," *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik* 54: 145–183.
- Moelleken, W. W. 1992. "The development of the linguistic repertoire of the Mennonites from Russia." In K. Burrige and W. Enninger (eds.), *Diachronic Studies on the Languages of the Anabaptists*. Bochum: Universitätsverlag D. N. Brockmeyer: 64–93.
- Namibia 2011 Population and Housing Census Main Report. [https://web.archive.org/web/20131002064316/](https://web.archive.org/web/20131002064316/http://www.nsa.org.na/files/downloads/Namibia%202011%20Population%20and%20Housing%20Census%20Main%20Report.pdf) <http://www.nsa.org.na/files/downloads/Namibia%202011%20Population%20and%20Housing%20Census%20Main%20Report.pdf>.
- Østern, A. 2001. "Swedish in Finland." In Extra and Gorter (eds.): 159–173.
- Östman, J.-O., and L. Mattfolk 2011. "Ideologies of standardisation: Finland Swedish and Swedish-language Finland." In T. Kristiansen and N. Coupland (eds.), *Standard Languages and Language Standards in a Changing Europe*. Oslo: Novus: 75–82.
- Pauwels, A. 2016. *Language Maintenance and Shift*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pedersen, K. M. 1996. "Die deutsche Minderheit in Dänemark." In Hinderling and Eichinger (eds.): 31–59.
- Pedersen, K. M. 2000. "A national minority with a transethnic identity – the German minority in Denmark." In S. Wolff (ed.), *German Minorities in Europe: Ethnic Identity and Cultural Belonging*. New York: Berghahn: 15–28.
- Pedersen, K. M. 2002. *Dansk sprog i Sydlesvig*. Aabenraa: Institut for Grænseregionsforskning.
- Rein, K. 1977. *Religiöse Minderheiten als Sprachgemeinschaftsmodelle. Deutsche Sprachinseln täuferischen Ursprungs in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*. ZDL Beihefte, Neue Folge, Nr. 15. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner.
- Roberge, P. T. 2002. "Afrikaans: considering origins." In R. Mesthrie (ed.), *Language in South Africa*. Cambridge University Press: 79–103.
- Rosenberg, P. 1998. "Deutsche Minderheiten in Lateinamerika." In T. Harden and E. Hentschel (eds.), *Particulae particularum. Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Harald Weydt*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg: 261–291.
- Rowley, A. 1996. "Die Sprachinseln der Fersentaler und Zimbern." In Hinderling and Eichinger (eds.): 263–285.
- Scottish Government Social Research 2010. *Public attitudes towards the Scots language*. Accessible at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/298037/0092859.pdf>.
- Siemens, H. 2012. *Plautdietsch. Grammatik, Geschichte, Perspektiven*. Bonn: tweedback verlag.

- Simons, G. F., and C. D. Fennig (eds.) 2017. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 20th edn. Dallas: SIL International. www.ethnologue.com
- Søndergaard, B. 1981. "The fight for survival: Danish as a living minority language south of the German border." In E. Haugen, J. D. McClure, and D. Thomson (eds.), *Minority Languages Today*. Edinburgh University Press: 138–143.
- Steffen, J., and C. V. Altenhofen 2014. "Spracharchipele des Deutschen in Lateinamerika: Dynamik der Sprachvernetzungen im mehrsprachigen Raum," *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik* 81: 34–60.
- Thompson, C. 1994. "The languages of the Amish of Allen County, Indiana: multilingualism and convergence," *Anthropological Linguistics* 36: 69–91.
- Waal, C. S. van der 2012. "Creolisation and purity: Afrikaans language politics in post-apartheid times," *African Studies* 71: 446–463.
- White, P. 1987. "Geographical aspects of minority language situations in Italy." Unpublished paper presented at the International Seminar on Geolinguistics, Stoke-on-Trent.
- Wicherkiewicz, T. 2003. *The Making of a Language: The Case of the Idiom of Wilamowice, Southern Poland*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Zach, K. 2013. *Das Älvdalische – Sprache oder Dialekt?* M.A. thesis, University of Vienna.