4 Legitimating Limburgish

The Reproduction of Heritage

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1. Introduction

A 2016 column in a Dutch regional newspaper, *De Limburger*, touted the following heading: "*Limburgse taal: de verwarring blijft*" (Limburgian language: the confusion remains). In its introduction, Geertjan Claessens, a journalist, points to the fact that it has been nearly 20 years since Limburgish was recognized as a regional language under the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML[2]) but asks "which language is recognized?" (Claessens 2016). In 1997, Limburgish, formerly considered a dialect of Dutch, was acknowledged by local and national authorities as a regional language under the ECRML. In his editorial, Claessens points to the multiplicity of dialects that constitute Limburgish as a regional language, each with their own unique elements and nuances. As such, expert opinions about how to conceptualize Limburgish as a "language" still widely differ, and negotiations and tensions about how to write Limburgish continue. Despite the creation of an official spelling standard in 2003, Claessens asserts that these discussions about spelling norms will not see an end any time soon.

Spelling was also highlighted in a Limburgian classroom I observed in 2014, where nearly a dozen adult students focused on the reading and writing of their local Limburgian dialect. Rather than framing spelling as a potential point of debate, however, the teacher presents an instrumentalist view, stating:

> dit is een spelling en dat is als 't ware een technisch apparaat om de klanken zichtbaar te maken want dao geit 't om [. . .]en dat is 'T grote idee van de spelling [pause] de herkenbaarheid

> this is a spelling and that is in essence a technical device to make the sounds visible because that is what it is about [. . .] and that is THE big idea about the spelling [pause] the recognizability.

These two short vignettes exemplify how various discourses come into play to frame conversations about language and spelling. This instrumental

view on spelling is not uncommon in Limburg and has been one of the recurring elements in ongoing debates. The teacher describes spelling as a technical device, implying notions of neutrality. As will be shown in the analysis below, this technical view of spelling ties in closely with expertise discourses the teacher mobilizes in the classroom. Recognizing that tensions often arise between the prescriptive nature of orthographic standards, in which certain elements are accepted and others are rejected, and social actors' varied language practices, this chapter wishes to ask how legitimacy is constructed once a language has been recognized as such by regional, national, and European authorities. As such, this investigation draws attention to the development of a writing standard and the interrelated processes that continue to redefine Limburgish as a language rather than as a dialect of Dutch. I consider the notions of discourses, ideology, and the production of knowledge central to this analysis of language legitimation in a regional/ minority language context. I focus in particular on developments in recent years, following the protection of Limburgish as cultural heritage under the ECRML as a form of status planning.

According to the Council of Europe (henceforth CoE), the ECRML serves as an instrument of protection and promotion of the wealth and diversity of Europe's cultural heritage and as a means for enabling the use of a regional or minority language in private and public life (Council of Europe 2014). The inclusion of Limburgish under the ECRML directed renewed focus on establishing and promoting spelling norms applicable to the various Limburgish dialects, as will be discussed in section 3. Although the ECRML does not explicitly require standardization for languages protected under level II,[3] such as Limburgish, this has been an area of significant activity, suggesting that it plays a role in the local processes of language legitimation.

Taking a discourse analytic approach, I first examine the framing of Limburgish as cultural heritage in policy texts related to the ECRML and spelling reforms at international, national, and regional scales. Secondly, drawing on data gathered through classroom observation, I show how the notion of cultural heritage is taken up at the local level and is variously constructed through articulating a discourse of historicity with a discourse of linguistic expertise.

2.   Limburgish

Limburg is the southeasternmost province in the Netherlands bordering Belgium and Germany. According to a 2003 State report, the province of (Dutch) Limburg is home to approximately 1.1 million residents with an estimated 70–75% of its inhabitants considered "speakers" of Limburgish (Council of Europe 2003, 203, also see Belemans 2002). The official languages in the Netherlands are Standard Dutch (Algemeen Nederlands [AN]) and Frisian (in the province of Fryslân [Friesland]). Limburgish became the fifth recognized regional language in the Netherlands in 1997 when it was

recognized under the ECRML, a move previously completed in 1996 by the Dutch parliament for Frisian, Low Saxon, Romani (Roma and Sinti), and Yiddish.[4] Language experts commonly portray Limburgish as consisting of six main variants (Keulen and Van de Wijngaard 2007). These variants entail significant dialectal differences, primarily with respect to the lexicon. This is evident in the number of *leesplankjes* (reading boards) that have been developed in various Limburgian dialects over the last three decades (Robroek 2013). In Limburg, these differences in word choices and pronunciation easily distinguish speakers as being from a particular area, for example, the Dutch word *"dat"* (that) might be pronounced as *"det"* or *"deh"* in middle and north Limburg and as *"dat"* in south Limburg.[5] Lexical variation includes words such as *"petat"* or *"aerpel"* for the Dutch word *"aardappel"* (potato) and *"zwaevelstekske"* or *"zjwaegel"* for the Dutch word *"lucifer"*(match).

   Despite this regional linguistic diversity and pride in local dialects and culture, residents of Limburg also recognize a common Limburgian identity (Belemans 2002; Cornips, de Rooij, and Stengs 2012; Cornips and Knotter 2016; Thissen 2013). For centuries, Limburgish has been closely linked with the annual traditions and festivities of carnival or *"vastelaovend"* (Mardi Gras) held the three days preceding Ash Wednesday, marking both the advent of the fasting period before Easter (within Roman Catholic tradition) and the nearing of spring. Limburgian communities take great pride in their local carnival associations and activities, and the celebration is regarded as an important event closely tied to a Limburgian identity and culture (Cornips and de Rooij 2015; Cornips et al. 2012). The Limburgian dialects have been part and parcel of the carnival festivities and can be observed everywhere, from parade floats, to newsletters and programs, to music. In recent years, the role of writing Limburgish has increased to more domains, now widely used on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media for personal communication.

   The Limburgian dialects also extend across national borders into Belgium and Germany, but from a language policy perspective, the Netherlands is the only territory where Limburgish has the status of a language, rather than a dialect. Limburgish is not covered by the ECRML in Germany and also has a different status in Belgium (Belemans 2002), which has not ratified the ECRML. The categorization of "language" is based, in part, on a strong association of the language and a bounded administrative area, i.e. the Dutch province of Limburg. The ECRML explicitly excludes the dialects of a State's official language(s), as well as the languages of migrant. Thus, the classification of Limburgish as a dialect in other administrative areas highlights how the notion of language is socially and discursively constructed, as discussed further below.

   The status of Limburgish as a regional language under the ECRML has not been without debate or contestation, including objections from the *NederlandseTaalunie (NTU)* or Dutch Language Union.[6] In a

letter (05.07.1999) addressed to Mrs. D. Verstraeten, *Directeur-generaal*, Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap (Director General, Ministry of the Flemish Community),[7] Koen Jaspaert, the General Secretary of the Dutch Language Union, expressed his disapproval of the inclusion of Limburgish under the ECRML. Jaspaert's justification for his negative view was that the text of the ECRML explicitly excludes dialects of Dutch, and in his opinion, scientific literature had always considered Limburgish as a dialect of Dutch and not a separate language. He went on to say that he had determined that the ECRML was meant to protect languages such as Frisian in the Netherland, Breton and Corsican in France, and Albanian or German in Italy. Furthermore, Jaspaert noted that the inclusion of Limburgish under the ECRML could have consequences for the status and use of Dutch, given that speakers of recognized regional languages could not be regarded as "*moedertaalsprekers*" (mother tongue speakers) of Dutch. Jaspaert's statements reflect ideological conceptions of what real languages are, the type of protection they are entitled to, and attitudes towards bilingualism/multilingualism. His declarations also highlight why processes of legitimation are vital within a regional language context, and particularly within the multidialectal space of Limburg.

3.   Legitimation at International, National, and Regional Scales

In this section, I wish to show how policy texts at the European and national levels establish the status of Limburgish through the promotion of cultural heritage and an inclusive discourse around the right to identify with and participate in that heritage. Despite its protection under the ECRML, legitimizing the status and use of Limburgish remains an issue of concern for language activists and policy makers. The Dutch Charter texts explicitly delegate policymaking for the protection and promotion of Limburgish to the local and provincial authorities, further reinforcing the significance of local actors. I will show how the heritage discourse is taken up by regional organizations and in the local classroom and how it is articulated with other discourses to valorize and legitimate Limburgian varieties locally as a regional language. The reframing of Limburgish from a dialect to a regional language entails allocating new values and the creation of new norms. One way of navigating the fuzzy boundaries between dialect and language has been to consider dialects as primarily oral varieties, while languages are closely tied to literacy and writing (Goody and Watt 1963). This tendency can be observed in the case of Limburgish, where heritage discourses and writing norms have received attention from language planners and activists in the pursuit of linguistic legitimacy.

Commenting on the nature of heritage discourses and social differentiation, the Icelandic folklore and heritage anthropologist Valdimar Hafstein (2012) notes that heritage is not merely a description, but rather an

intervention, in that it reorders relations between persons and objects, even intangible ones such as language, potentially along hierarchical lines. He states:

> [h]eritage assembles previously unrelated [objects], and it constitutes these as something to be safeguarded, that is, acted upon through programs, schemes, and strategies carried out and evaluated by experts whose operations connect the calculations of authorities with the desires and ambitions of citizens.
>
> (Hafstein 2012, 508)

This is true for many of the languages protected by the ECRML, including Limburgish, that now strive to be recognized as "a real language". Given the role of written languages in the creation of nation-states, it is not surprising that the cultural heritage framework also mobilizes efforts to homogenize a common way of writing as a means of language preservation. The ideology which constructs languages as bounded, autonomous entities and places value on formal properties pervades both dominant and minority language communities in present-day standardized regimes (Gal 2006; this volume). Despite the idea of linguistic unity embodied in the nation-state ideology and in writing norms, standards nevertheless corral feelings of belonging and legitimacy.

3.1   *Legitimation Through Heritage*

In this section, I explore the discursive legitimation of Limburgish in policy documents related to the ECRML and the spelling norms. I use the term "Charter texts" to refer to the documents entailed in the ECRML monitoring process, such as State Periodical Reports, evaluation reports from the Committee of Experts, and recommendations from the Committee of Ministers.[8] Policy texts produced by individual states in relation to the ECRML provide important insights into how minority languages are being legitimated. As such, I have selected these Charter reports to show how Limburgish is legitimized at European, national, and regional scales, as they entail both European and national discourses of Limburgish, as well as regional voices from activists and policy makers.

   Charter texts describe Europe's historical regional and minority languages as *cultural heritage* and *wealth*. In its introduction to the ECRML, the Council of Europe (henceforth CoE) states: "[a]mong the fundamental aims of the Council of Europe today are the protection and promotion of the wealth and diversity of Europe's cultural heritage. Regional or minority languages are very much part of this heritage" (Council of Europe 2014, par. 1). The CoE outlines the purpose of the Charter as "a convention designed on the one hand to protect and promote regional and minority languages as a threatened aspect of Europe's cultural heritage and on the

other hand to enable speakers of a regional or minority language to use it in private and public life" (Council of Europe 2014, par. 4).

Given that the protection of Limburgish as a regional language is framed in this particular manner, it is important to understand what is entailed in the notion of cultural heritage. The very broad CoE's definition of cultural heritage is defined in the *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (2005). It recognizes heritage as a social construct shaped not only by the past but by the present:

> The definition of "cultural heritage" is the broadest proposed by any international instrument to date. It pays particular attention to the inter-active nature of the cultural heritage, recognising that it is defined and redefined by human actions and that it must not be perceived as either static or immutable. [. . .] The definition does not require action. One can be a member of a heritage community simply by valuing a cultural heritage or wishing to pass it on". (Council of Europe—Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society.
>
> (CETS no. 199)

At the State level, Charter-related texts iterate European discourses that frame the protection of regional/minority languages as cultural wealth or cultural heritage and recognize the role of local social actors in constructing this heritage. The following excerpt is an example from the 2011 Periodical Report the Netherlands submitted to the CoE, highlighting the link between heritage and a moral imperative for language preservation:

> 2.4 Article 7, paragraph 1.d (the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of such languages in speech and writing, in public and private life)
>
> 2.4.1 The province of Limburg encourages the use of the Limburger language in speech and writing, in both public and private life. It does this partly by supporting the activities of the Raod veur 't Limburgs and *Veldeke Limburg Association, both of which seek to keep alive the Limburger language in all its diversity as a valuable repository of regional and provincial identity (original emphasis)*. It is hoped that raising the profile of the Limburger language, particularly among young people, will be an effective way to ensure its survival among future generations.
>
> (Fourth Periodical Report to the Council of Europe 2011)

These policy texts evoke discourses of shared cultural heritage and language endangerment as a means to valorize Limburgish. This is evident in lexical choices such as *keep alive*, *survival*, and *diversity*. As such, endangerment discourses legitimize Limburgish through promoting the maintenance of (linguistic) diversity as a common good. In effect, Cameron (2007) ties

the preservation arguments embedded in cultural heritage discourses to discourses of endangerment: such discourses espouse a moral obligation to preserve diversity, often relying on ecological metaphors that compare languages to biological species on the verge of extinction.

In the excerpt above, the importance of social actors is acknowledged through a discussion of young people whose uptake of the language in the future will be requisite to its survival. In this Charter report and others, the agency to promote Limburgish is granted to local organizations, which are tasked with maintaining Limburgish "in all its diversity" (Fourth Periodical Report to the Council of Europe 2011). How the imperative to maintain diversity within the confines of standardization initiatives is realized at the local level will be developed further below.

3.2   *Legitimation Through Standardization*

Activities aimed at standardization, such as the development of spelling standards, dictionaries, and grammars, are part of corpus planning and an integral component of language policy and planning or language management (Cooper 1989). In Limburg, the development of spelling norms has not been a linear process. Some activists claim a rich literary tradition dating back to the second half of the twelfth century, with activities aimed at providing norms for usage taking place long before the implementation of the ECRML. A range of social actors have been involved in the spelling standardization of Limburgish. Notten (1974) refers to a comment made by Dr. E. Jaspar in 1929 about the importance of spelling rules as a solid basis for language maintenance and further alludes to subsequent spelling controversies concerning the creation of acceptable spelling norms (60). The literature points to spelling norms dating back to 1932 and 1941 (Notten 1974). The introduction to the current spelling guidelines considers the first "Veldeke" spelling developed in 1952. The term "Veldeke spelling" stems from *Veldeke Limburg*, a language advocacy organization[9] established in 1926, generally accepted to be the oldest and largest language association in Limburg. The 1952 spelling was followed by a revision in 1983 by Jan G. M. Notten.[10] Notten is known for his book *De Chinezen van Nederland* (1974) (The Chinese of the Netherlands), in which he sketches the distinctive features of the Limburgian dialects, includes an overview of spelling rules, and a bibliography of research activity concerning the dialects in Dutch Limburg.

The spelling reform efforts gained momentum following the protection of Limburgish under the ECRML in 1997. In 2003, the "*Raod veur 't Limburgs*" (Council for Limburgish), a provincial advisory body, appointed a special committee to extend the work of Notten. Veldeke Limburg played a prominent role in the creation of the officially[11] accepted spelling norms, *Spelling 2003 voor de Limburgse dialecten* (Spelling 2003 for the Limburgian dialects). Notten took part in this collaboration with Dr. Pierre Bakkes, Dr. Herman Crompvoets, and Frans Walraven. The authors hold

prominence in Limburg through positions of leadership within Veldeke and as the first Regional Language Officer (*Bakkes*), scientific contributions in dialectology, and publications in Limburgish. Except for Notten, each of the actors were members of the committee responsible for devising the formal request to the CoE for the recognition of Limburgish under the ECRML.

In order to make the spelling more accessible to a broader audience, a new spelling website was launched in 2013.[12] This initiative was led by the Regional Language Officer, a consultant, and the *Raod veur 't Limburgs*. These entities also work in close cooperation with Veldeke-Limburg and the *Huis voor de Kunsten*, the official entity responsible for the cultural sector in Limburg, including the arts and (intangible) heritage. The project received support from the provincial government.

Beyond the creation of norms, language planners and activists are also interested in how people are writing Limburgish in practice. As previously mentioned, Limburgish is common on social media and other cultural domains and exists in a diglossic context with standard Dutch. The interest in dialect usage and language variation in social media is illustrated in a recent example of a regional language conference[13] wholly dedicated to this particular topic. Interestingly, an editorial summarizing the conference, featured on the front page of the regional newspaper, *De Limburger*, reported that digital spelling usage for the Limburgian dialects often does not align with the province's official spelling norms (Urlings 2016).[14] Following a lecture about spelling on Twitter, Leonie Cornips, a prominent researcher at the Meertens Instituut, Amsterdam, and Maastricht University, was quoted as saying that language users display a mixture of language forms, i.e. combining Dutch and regional variants. While absent from the discourses of ECRML policy texts, this interest in language forms, and the categorization of such forms, repeatedly appears among speakers and Limburgish promoters at the local level.

The introduction to the 2003 spelling norms, written by Roeland van Hout, a Dutch sociolinguist and former chairman of the *Raod veur 't Limburgs*, recounts the motivations for supporting and promoting a spelling norm for the Limburgian dialects. Van Hout states that support for Limburgish and its dialects also means paying attention to its written form and that therefore the adoption of a spelling scheme was given high priority on the agenda of the *Raod veur 't Limburgs*. Emphasizing the role of a standard, he writes (in Standard Dutch):

> De gedachte achter de nieuwe spelling is niet alleen het gebruik ervan voor teksten van expressief-literaire aard. De doelstelling is veel breder. Een officieel standaardpakket spellingsregels voor de Limburgse dialecten leidt tot een groter gewicht van het geschreven Limburgs in al zijn vormen, vooral ook in de educatieve sector. De Spelling 2003 wil voorzien in die doelstelling. [. . .] De Spelling 2003 moet onder de aandacht van de Limburgers gebracht worden. Het is van groot belang dat ze er

aan gewend raken. In de moderne tijd zal het dialect ook geschreven moeten worden wil het overleven.

                        (Bakkes, Crompvoets, Notten, and Walraven 2003, 5)

The idea behind the new spelling is not only for the use of texts of expressive literary nature. The objective is much broader. Official standard spelling rules for the Limburgian dialects lead to a greater weight of written Limburgish in all its forms, also especially in the educational sector. Spelling 2003 wants to provide for this objective. [. . .] Spelling 2003 must be brought to the attention of Limburgers. It is of great importance that they become accustomed to it. In modern times, a dialect must also be written in order to survive.

Activities aimed at standardization are, however, not limited to spelling reforms, but can also be observed in offerings of local adult literacy courses for several Limburgish varieties, numerous dictionaries and grammars, periodic spelling contests, and the development of primary and secondary school curriculum.[15]

Efforts to standardize Limburgian writing practices and political rhetoric about heritage and inclusive Limburgian belonging both contribute to the legitimation of Limburgish and the creation of value in relation to writing practices. As will be shown in section 4, within the local classroom, the discourse of heritage is constituted not only by preservation discourses, but coalesces with discourses of historicity and linguistic expertise to construct legitimacy for Limburgish.

4.   Negotiating Legitimacy in the Local Language Classroom

Discourses of heritage and standards can be traced from official texts to various other sites, such as classrooms in Limburg. I draw on observations conducted in 2014 as part of a larger study on the discursive construction of Limburgish in the Netherlands, as I sought to understand how policies decided at provincial or national level were taken up locally by social actors involved in language promotion. The classroom data are analyzed in light of additional qualitative data collected through focus groups, various interviews conducted with teachers, speakers, and language planners and activists. I conducted two separate focus groups, meeting each of them three times over the course of several months. Those groups included students from the classrooms I observed. I use an inductive approach to research, identifying and categorizing themes emerging from the data and coding statements for various types of discourses related to purism, linguistic expertise, historicity, belonging, etc. At a second level of analysis, I examine the interactions for the positional stances participants take, such as alignments and oppositions. Although I adopt a discourse analytic approach, I do not conduct a detailed

interactional analysis. I am primarily interested in how the teacher invokes certain discourses and articulates them in particular ways.

The language classroom is a microcosm for examining how people talk about language and exploring which discursive representations of Limburgish are reproduced and foregrounded within that context. The reading and writing course I discuss here took place as evening classes in a small city in Limburg and held in a classroom of a local secondary school. Eleven participants attended the class, six women and five men, plus two male board members from the foundation which hosted the language courses and of which the teacher was the chairman. The majority of the participants were over the age of 50, although there were three younger participants, all female, in the 30–50 age range.

The instructor for the course was a teacher of Dutch by profession who had completed academic research in the field of dialectology. He had been closely involved with language policy and planning activities, was a previous board member of Veldeke, and one of the editors of a recently released word list for the local Limburgian dialect. This word list was released in the same vein as the one published by the NTU every ten years with the aim of reducing ambiguity concerning the official spelling of Dutch words.

The atmosphere in the class felt serious yet relaxed. The classroom was organized much like you would expect in a language course, such as a large dry erase board at the front of the room and desks organized in pairs to face the front of the classroom. Participants chatted and laughed with ease until the teacher called order to the class and began addressing the students and researcher. Following an introduction and offering the researcher welcome, he began his planned instruction, focusing in large part on the historical development, linguistic description, and writing practice of a phenomenon considered a distinctive feature of the local Limburgian dialect, the diphthongization of certain vowels. The teacher noted that he had adapted the lesson to fit within the allotted time and to satisfy the interest of the researcher. The lesson drew, however, on previously presented knowledge as evident in the students' responses and familiarity with the linguistic terminology used.

In the following section, I aim to show how the teacher establishes legitimacy, both for himself as a person with the authority to speak about prescriptive norms for Limburgish, and for the local dialect, drawing on particular discourses to make specific claims. Whereas at European, national, and regional scales, the heritage discourse is constituted largely of endangerment discourses and a call for language preservation, at the local level, the heritage discourse also articulates with discourses of historicity and difference and is closely linked to a discourse of expertise.

4.1   Legitimation Through Expertise

I focus my analysis on how the teacher establishes authority, as his perceived legitimacy is a crucial factor in creating validity for the local dialect. The data show that the teacher's legitimacy is constructed though the notion of

linguistic expertise and through positioning and stancetaking (Jaffe 2009). Claiming expertise through positioning is done primarily as a means of differentiation, meaning the (re)production of boundaries to construct legitimacy for both Limburgish as a real language and for the teacher as a producer of knowledge. Although these strategies are not mutually exclusive and show extensive overlap, I will demonstrate how the concept of cultural heritage is constituted through notions of historicity and difference. These elements of the heritage discourse are intimately linked with a discourse of linguistic expertise.

The data indicate that in the classroom, the teacher adopts an ideology of heritage that is constituted in a discourse of "historicity", reflected in notions of time in both absolute terms and diachronically with respect to language development. For example, in a discussion about diphthongization, a salient marker for the local dialect, the teacher makes reference to the regional variety's linguistic past, i.e. "*in de taalhistorie wiet weg*" (in the language history far off). He also makes claims about the origin of the local phenomenon of diphthongization, tracing its start to the second half of the fourteenth century and refers specifically to documents dated from 1571. Secondly, historicity is expressed in the notion of language development and biology, as evident in the ongoing class discussion about diphthongization. The teacher draws a parallel between Dutch and Limburgish explaining how some vowels undergo diphthongization in the local Limburgian dialect but do not behave the same way in Dutch. He explains this phenomenon as a case of difference in "*genen-apparaat*" (gene-apparatus). Stating that although on the outside the vowels look the same in both languages, the teacher explains that Limburgian vowels come from a different "family" and are constituted by different genes. While pointing to the Limburgian vowels on the board, the teacher states the following:

> maar dees hie, wat zich hie ontwikkelt höbbe laot ver zegge die höbbe anger genen. . .ja van thoes oet die höbbe anger genen dan die

> but these here, that developed themselves here, let's say, have other genes. . .yes from home (origin) these have different genes than those.

The teacher's reference to genes brings to mind images of species and biology, metaphors often taken up in endangerment discourses which, as expressed in the example above from the Charter text, are in this instance linked with heritage discourses. Conceptualizing language as having its own "gene-apparatus" constructs languages as having unique genealogies, though deriving from a common source.

The way the teacher conceives of heritage as historicity reframes the notion of cultural heritage by downplaying the symbolic value of a shared heritage and emphasizing historical facts. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity for displaying historic and linguistic knowledge, bolstering his legitimacy as

an expert in the classroom. Effectively, notions of language and the past are constituted through discourses that legitimate knowledge in specific ways.

Another discursive strategy for reproducing expertise is the teacher's use of linguistic terminology and the iteration of particular words and phrases. He commonly refers to rules and provides explanations for them using complex linguistic terminology. The lesson on the diphthongization entails explanations of phonological processes and features and a focus on morphological awareness. As such, the teacher refers to *monoftongen* (monophthongs), *dalende tweeklanken* (descending diphthongs), and *steigende tweeklanken* (ascending diphthongs). Students repeat back words, such as "*r-metathesis*" and "*palatalization*". While the discursive production of expertise is a means of reproducing differentiation, the teacher also uses the expertise discourse in order to neutralize opposing or conflicting discourses about Limburgian variation, as demonstrated below.

While engaging the students in the reading of a pre-selected text, a compilation of poems and stories in the local dialect, the teacher directs students to the editor's words in the introduction. The teacher explicitly expresses an interest in the content of the material, but as I show, weaves this together with a focus on language form and linguistic knowledge in order to engage students in a discussion about language beliefs. The interaction I describe here begins with the teacher asking his students what the book's editor has to say about the local dialect.[16] In response, the students begin shuffling through their papers to provide an answer to the question. One of the students reads the following words from the text: "*de modesjtaal zuverder en direkter is dan 't ABN*" (the mother tongue is purer and more direct than ABN [Dutch standard]). The teacher provides an affirming statement, takes over reading from where the student left off, but then promptly interrupts his reading aloud by drawing attention to the verb in the sentence "*gaon perbeire*" (going to try). He reads, "*en toch zeen der, zeen t'r, die—ich lees effe boavenaaf—op ei gegaeve moment gaon per perbeiere—is dat good of fout?*" (and still there are, there are, those—I read quickly from the top—at a certain moment "gaon perbeiere" [going to try]—is that right or wrong?). The students respond to the teacher's question as to whether or not "perbeiere" is right or wrong by focusing on the most salient aspect of the word, which is the diphthongization of the latter part of the word, i.e. per*bei*ere versus per*be*re. The teacher, however, redirects the students to the first syllable of the word by writing on the board the words "*per*beiere" and "*pro*beiere" (emphasis is mine) and asking students whether they favor the first or second variant. The students are divided in their responses, which prompts the teacher to ask why that might be the case. One of the students offers that the same phenomenon occurs with the words "processie" and "percessie", which prompts another student to jump into the discussion offering an explanation: "*verspringing van de 'e' nao de 'r'*" (jump/skip from the "e" to the "r"). The teacher hones in on the student's response and confirms stating: "*van de 'r' rondj de klinker dao höbst 't euver*" (from the "r" around the vowel. That's what you are talking about).

The excerpt that follows shows the subsequent class discussion and helps to illustrate how the teacher neutralizes tensions between normative notions of correctness or standards and linguistic variation.

Teacher:	[17]De r-metathesis noeme ze dat. Die vakterm kent ger (unclear) vergeite. R-metathesis dat is de verspringing van de "r" rond de klinker, dat höb ich uch vertèlt dat kump tamelijk veul veur—feberwari februari, secertaris secretaris, driede en derde [. . .] in anger talen kump 't ouch veur de "l" veur. Ich höb uch gezag in Tjechisch zègke ze mlek, veer zegke mèlk	The r-metathesis they call it. That technical term you can (unclear) forget. R-metathesis that is the skipping of the "r" around the vowel, I told you that occurs fairly often—feberwari februari (February), secertaris secretaris (secretary), driede en derde (third) [. . .] it occurs in other languages too before the "l". I have told you in Czech they say "mlek" (milk), we say "melk"
Student (female):	Dat klopt	That's right
Teacher:	Wie ich dat zoug staon zei ich hei dat is de verspringing rond de klinker. Veur ós is t hoofdzakelijk de "r", kiek maar 't weurdje drie driede en derde en dat zin de typische gevallen in t nederlands zègke ver derde maar as eemes zaet driede [. . .] krig ze de discussie nei dat is fout [pause] nei dat is een variant	When I saw that I said, hey, that is the skipping around the vowel. For us it is primarily the "r", just look at the word "drie" "driede" and "derde" (three third and third) and those are the typical cases. In Dutch we say "derde" (third) but if someone says "driede" (third) [. . .] you get the discussion no that is wrong [pause] no that is a variant
(Teacher writes on the board)	(pointing to the examples on the board) hie wirk dae regel op van de versjpringing en hie haet dae regel neet gewirkt. That's all. Dus as eemes zaet secertaris, 't nederlands haet gekoze secretaris haet t nederlands gekoze, maar in dialect schrif secertaris, is dus de verspringing van de "r" rond de klinker	(pointing to the examples on the board) Here applies the rule of the skipping and here that rule has not applied. That's all. So when someone says "secertaris", Dutch chose "secretaris" has Dutch chosen, but in dialect writes "secertaris", is thus the skipping of the "r" around the vowel

The teacher engages the students in a discussion around the linguistic phenomenon of metathesis, i.e. the reordering of phonemes or syllables in a word.[18] This discussion not only serves to increase the students' metalinguistic awareness but also affords the teacher an opportunity to claim his role as a linguistic expert and reproduce linguistic boundaries.

The teacher claims his expertise in the first statement when he provides the linguistic term "r-metathesis" and immediately states that students don't have to remember this technical term. Here, he clearly positions himself as an authority, separating himself from the students. He further claims legitimacy as an expert by making a reference to "*anger talen*" (other languages) in which metathesis occurs, specifically the example of "mlek" in Czech versus "melk" in Dutch and the local dialect. The teacher uses a similar strategy later in the interaction when, referring to r-metathesis, he states:

> Veur ós is t hoofdzakelijk de "r", kiek maar 't weurdje drie driede en derde en dat zin de typische gevallen in 't nederlands zègke ver derde maar as eemes zaet driede [. . .] krig ze de discussie nei dat is fout [pause] nei dat is een variant

> For us it is primarily the "r", just look at the word "drie" "driede" and "derde" ([three third and third] and those are the typical cases. In Dutch we say "derde" (third) but if someone says "driede" (third) [. . .] you get the discussion no that is wrong [pause] no that is a variant.

However, in this instance, he not only draws a comparison between the local Limburgian dialect and the Dutch standard to put them on equal footing as linguistic varieties, i.e. "languages", he also uses his expert knowledge to bridge the gap between norms of correctness and linguistic variation. By explaining how the rule of metathesis is applied in certain instances but not others, he aims to neutralize the right/wrong dichotomy and create legitimacy for variation.

The students, nevertheless, are not immediately swayed by the teacher's argument for variation as they are still focused on linguistic form and matters of correctness. This is evident in the following question from one of the students and the teacher's response:

Student:	dus wat mót t noe zeen? Is 't noe perbeiere of probeiere?	So now what is it? Is it perbeiere or probeiere?
(Several students respond saying that both forms are correct)		
Teacher:	't kènt allebei. . .(directed to student) wat zeis ze?	Both are possible . . . (directed to student) what did you say?
Student:	maar 't ein is neet fout?	But the one isn't wrong?
Teacher:	nei loester de kens zegke ich gaef de veurkeur—ich höb zelf een bietje de neiging aan probeiere maar misschien omdat ich van hoes oet leraar nederlands dit gewent ben—maar besef maar al te good dat dit een lEUke variant is op ene regel de verspringing van de r rond de klinker.	No listen, you can say I give preference—I personally have a little bit the tendency of "probeiere", but perhaps because as originally a teacher of Dutch I am used to this—but keenly realize that this is a nICe variant to a rule, the skipping of the "r" around the vowel.

The teacher appears to recognize that his students feel uncomfortable with the flexible nature of variation, preferring instead predictable and uniform rules. As such, he responds in an informal manner, aligning with his students, when he says that one can give preference for one variant over another and shares his own personal inclinations perhaps attributed to his profession as a teacher of Dutch and familiarity with its forms.

In addition to discursively taking a stance as a knowledge producer in the classroom, the teacher shows alignment with his students, shifting between different frames. The teacher shows evidence of frame shifting when he states, "*[v]eur ós is t hoofdzakelijk de 'r'*" (For us it is primarily the "r"). Here, the "us" includes everyone in the classroom, i.e. users of the local dialect. When the teacher says, "*in t nederlands zègke ver derde*" (in Dutch we say "derde" [third]), he aligns as a speaker of Dutch and frames himself and his students as bilingual speakers of both the Dutch standard and the local variety of Limburgish. The alignment with Dutch in this case contrast with other instances where the teacher focuses on differentiating between the local dialect and the Dutch standard. In other words, the teacher adopts different stances, which in some instances create oppositions and at other times show alignment. In both cases, however, the teacher reproduces linguistic boundaries that give the local dialect, as a variety of Limburgish, value and legitimacy. One might argue, though, that in the latter case, adopting a stance of alignment with both Limburgish and Dutch, the teacher attempts to create a bridge between two opposing discourses. On the one hand; a discourse of difference, evident in his use of comparisons or "othering" in order to create clear boundaries for Limburgish as a language separate from Dutch; on the other hand, a discourse of heritage which entails an identity encompassing both Limburgish *and* Dutch.

5.   Conclusion

This case study aimed to illustrate how the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages frames language protection in terms of heritage and how in the Limburgian case, the production of heritage discourses materializes at regional and local scales in connection with language standardization. In other words, this chapter shows that standardization is inherently linked with processes that authenticate language, rather than anonymize it as other minority language groups have attempted (see the introduction to this volume). Far from removing indexicality of place and origin, standardization through heritage anchors language in situated forms of authority. In this case, minority language standardization follows a very different path from the pattern that led to the standardization of Dutch and its establishment as a national language.

This investigation thus shows how a claim to heritage creates legitimacy for languages under the ECRML by increasing the perceived status and value of the languages it protects, but also creates new imperatives for social

actors to manage and control those resources. This is evident in the increase in language management activities focused on linguistic form. In Limburg, specific focus has been aimed at developing spelling norms that address the dialectal diversity within Limburg in a polynomic way.

A focus on the local language classroom illustrates how the teacher appropriates heritage discourses and articulates them with discourses of expertise and difference to valorize Limburgish. As shown in the classroom, the discourse of heritage is realized through merging a discourse of historicity with a discourse of expertise, each in turn justifying and authorizing the other. The teacher indicates notions of time and distance by referencing a language history in the past and by painting a picture of language development over time. Through this discussion, the teacher is able to demonstrate linguistic knowledge, which is an important component in constructing him as an expert in the classroom. This chapter thus points to the importance of combining the study of texts at policy level and local studies showing how those texts are taken up, adapted, and modified to suit and construct local perspectives.

Notes

1. This work was partly supported by the Research Council of Norway through its Centres of Excellence funding scheme, project number 223265, and *Standardising Minority Languages,* project number 213831.
2. The ECRML is one of the treaties under the auspices of the Council of Europe designed to protect human rights.
3. The ECRML entails two levels of protection. Part II of the Charter, which outlines objectives and principles applied to all the regional or minority languages spoken within a territory, is largely symbolic. Part III provides the highest level of protection and entails specific measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life in accordance with a minimum of 35 (sub) paragraphs chosen. In the Netherlands, Frisian is the only language receiving protection under Part III, whereas other regional and minority languages, including Limburgish, are covered strictly under part II.
4. Romani and Yiddish are considered non-territorial languages.
5. See the page of the province of Limburg: www.limburgsedialecten.nl (last accessed 25 January, 2017).
6. The Dutch language union was created in 1980 as the governing body on language for the Netherlands and Belgium. Suriname joined as an associate member in 2004 and additional collaborations exist with Aruba, Curaçao, and St. Martin (http://over.taalunie.org/dutch-language-union).
7. Jaspaert's letter was in response to a letter from Verstraeten dated 21.06.99, asking the NTU for advice regarding Belgium's consideration of the ECRML, and particularly the recognition of Limburgish as regional language within its borders.
8. Any party who signs onto the ECRML is part of a continuous monitoring process, which entails three main partners: the CoE, the State, and NGOs/representatives of the speakers. Reporting is conducted at three-yearly intervals. The State Periodical Report is a means for the country itself to report on how the treaty is being implemented. The CoE examines the country's reports, carries out monitoring, and conducts on-the-spot visits. Their evaluation report,

which is then presented to the Committee of Ministers who make a set of rec-ommendations, is considered the most authoritative instrument of the treaty. The Charter reports are not government policy texts; they emanate from the CoE. Nevertheless, these texts provide the framework for how minority lan-guages are dealt with in Europe, and in this sense, they are normative.

9. Veldeke is an acronym for V.E.L.D.E.K.E, meaning **V**oor **E**lk **L**imburgs **D**ialect **E**en **K**rachtige **E**enheid [for every Limburgian dialect, a powerful unity]. The name also points to Hendrik van Veldeke (Heinrich von Veldeke), a writer/poet from the Low Countries whose works date back to the twelfth century.

10. *Aanwijzingen voor de spelling van de Limburgse dialecten* (modifications for the spelling of the Limburgian dialects).

11. The 2003 spelling has been termed "official" in the sense that it is supported by the most prominent social actors in Limburg and receives backing from the provincial government.

12. See www.LimburgseSpelling.nl (last accessed 25 January, 2017).

13. Annual regional language conference, hosted by the Stichting Nederlandse Dialecten (SND) (Foundation Dutch Dialects) in Middelburg, Netherlands on 07.10.16 and focused on the theme "Taalvariatie in sociale media" (language variation in social media).

14. De Limburger, 10.10.16, Guus Urlings, Dialect doet 't digitaal.

15. A discussion of these various activities is beyond the scope of this chapter.

16. For the purpose of anonymity, I refrain from using the actual term of the local dialect as used by the teacher and students.

17. In my transcription, I aimed to represent the speech of participants as respect-fully and accurately as possible. Capital letters show significant emphasis in speech. Bold and italic fonts highlight specific contrasts made in pronunciation or spelling.

18. Most commonly, as is the case here, metathesis refers to the swapping of two or more contiguous phonemes. An example in English might be ca**val**ry versus ca**lva**ry or comf**ort**able versus comf**ter**ble.

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