Published in:: Göz Kaufmann, Javier Caro Reina und Peter Auer (Hg.): Language variation - European Perspectives IV ; selected papers from the Sixth International Conference on Language Variation in Europe (ICLaVE 6), Freiburg, June 2011. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, pp. 83–116.

'Standard usage'

Towards a realistic conception of spoken standard German*

Arnulf Deppermann, Stefan Kleiner & Ralf Knöbl
Institut für Deutsche Sprache (IDS), Mannheim

'Standard language' is a contested concept, ideologically, empirically and theoretically. This is particularly true for a language such as German, where the standardization of the spoken language was based on the written standard and was established with respect to a communicative situation, i.e. public speech on stage (*Bühnenaussprache*), which most speakers never come across. As a consequence, the norms of the oral standard exhibit many features which are infrequent in the everyday speech even of educated speakers.

This paper discusses ways to arrive at a more realistic conception of (spoken) standard German, which will be termed 'standard usage'. It must be founded on empirical observations of speakers' linguistic choices in everyday situations. Arguments in favor of a corpus-based notion of standard have to consider sociolinguistic, political, and didactic concerns. We report on the design of a large study of linguistic variation conducted at the Institute for the German Language (project "Variation in Spoken German", *Variation des gesprochenen Deutsch*) with the aim of arriving at a representative picture of 'standard usage' in contemporary German. It systematically takes into account both diatopic variation covering the multi-national space in which German is an official language, and diastratic variation in terms of varying degrees of formality. Results of the study of phonetic and morphosyntactic variation are discussed. At least for German, a corpus-based notion of 'standard usage' inevitably includes some degree of pluralism concerning areal variation, and it needs to do justice to register-based variation as well.

1. Theoretical background: Discussing concepts of standard German

'Standard language' is a contested concept, ideologically, empirically and theoretically, not only in sociolinguistics, but well beyond (Bex & Watts 1999; Crowley 2003). Some of the questions discussed are the following:

* We thank Peter Auer and Martin Durrell for comments on a prior version of the paper.

- Is it always necessary to define a spoken standard at all (Maitz & Elspaß 2012)?
- Which forms count as standard (Lenz & Plewnia 2010)? Which speech events and which groups of speakers should be taken into account when defining a standard variety? What is the role of empirical facts in determining the standard?
- Should the notion of an oral standard allow for (regional, register-dependent) variants (Eichinger 2005; Spiekermann 2006)? On what grounds do we decide that there is some change in 'standard usage'?
- Who has the authority to define standards (Milroy & Milroy 1999)?

This paper asks how linguistics can contribute to this discussion from an empirical point of view. The answer, in essence, will be: by describing speakers' 'standard usage' (the *Gebrauchsstandard*). But this answer is far from being self-evident. It needs justification. Empirical findings about the standard language depend on prior decisions on what is to be counted as standard usage. The counter-argument there is that 'standard' is a normative concept which cannot be defined on empirical grounds alone, i.e. it cannot be equated with regularity or frequency (cf. Gloy 1995). We must therefore ask: which criteria are available for establishing a solid normative point of departure from which empirical research can start? One possible way to answer this question is to identify the norm-defining groups first. Linguistics and linguists (which are not always quite the same) are part of a complex field of groups of agents who compete with and influence each other. Building on Ammon (1995, 2005) and some elaborations of his theory by Hundt (2010), it is possible to distinguish (Figure 1):

- *Language codifiers* who define language codices (state institutions such as the *Académie Française* in France, government institutions such as the *Kultusministerkonferenz* ["conference of the ministers of education"] in Germany). Primary goals for codifiers are to ensure articulatory precision and nationwide comprehensibility, but they also have political motives, such as establishing the unity of a national language as a symbol of national identity, and practical aims (such as using the same school books). They define the standard language in accordance with use of the centre of political power, often preferring this variant over others in decisions on codification. Language codices, such as the *Duden* in Germany, are not codifiers in a legal sense, but they are accepted as such by the public, even if they only claim to describe standard practice.
- *Norm authorities* (teachers, parents) who enforce norms and correct speaking and writing. Social prestige and codification matter most for them.

- *Model speakers and writers* who are considered to have produced written texts and speech which can serve as a model.
- *Language experts* such as linguists, but also writers, journalists and other figures in the public sphere who recommend and criticize linguistic usage. Here, cultural criticism concerning the alleged decay of language practices (Milroy & Milroy 1999) finds its place.
- Finally, the *language users* themselves, who confirm and change norms by their practice. They do so both by orienting themselves towards norms, which they are more or less aware of, and unintentionally by producing discursive patterns and variants which become established usage through recurrent practice and acceptance in the speech community. Labov (1996) has pointed out that language users may consciously advocate one norm, and subscribe to it if asked for metalinguistic judgements on grammaticality, acceptability and conformity with 'standard usage', but will – sometimes even in the very act of producing acceptability judgements – orient themselves towards a different set of non-codified norms, which govern their own practice on occasions where standard usage is called for. These practices may diverge quite substantially from codified norms.

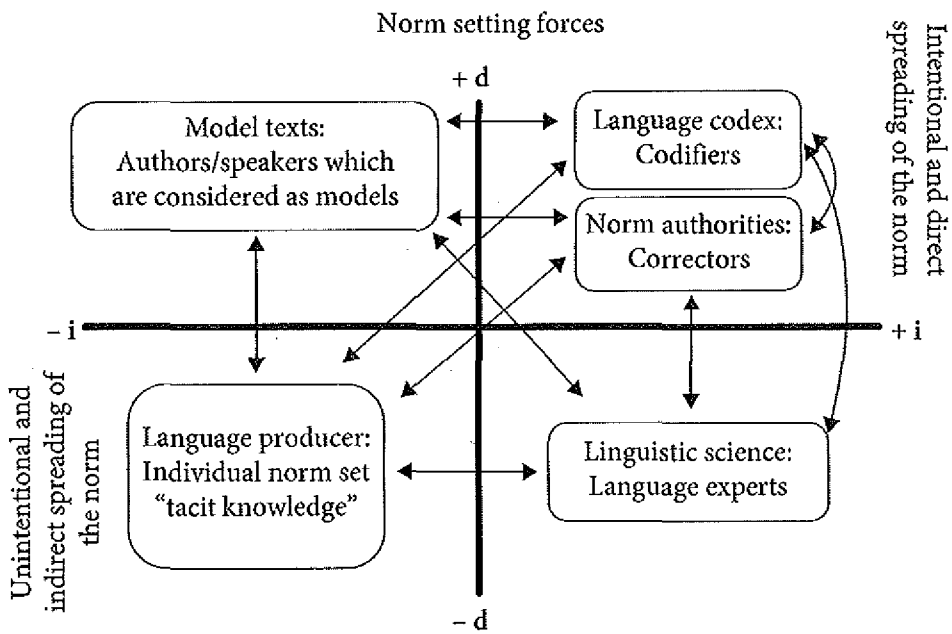

Figure 1. Model of language norms (Hundt 2010: 34)

In the discussion of spoken standards of a language, it has to be kept in mind that standardization of a language always starts with the codification of writing. The first determinant of the spoken standard therefore is correspondence to the

written norm. In Germany, only the written language is officially codified, and its use is sanctioned to a much higher degree than the spoken language, at least in school. Grammarians have mostly assumed that the rules of written language also apply to spoken language. Only recently linguists have started to investigate the question of whether the grammar of spoken language might not only have its own norms, but also constitute a linguistic system of its own, with specific constructions of its own which do not occur in writing. Since this is a rather theoretical dispute, which rests on different notions of 'grammar', but essentially not on conflicting data evidence, we will not deal with it in this paper. With regard to standard pronunciation it is clear that it needs to be defined on its own grounds, i.e. it cannot be directly derived from the written standard. This in turn raises the question of whether one regional norm of pronunciation (Schmidt 2010) is preferred over others as the standard.

All five groups of normative agents (cf. Figure 1) influence each other to different degrees. But, of course, their views often clash, because they adhere to different criteria. The question is: can linguistics find an Archimedean point for defining 'standard usage', which can serve as a solid starting point for empirical research? It is clear that this Archimedean point cannot be established solely by looking at empirical data. We argue that in order to be sociolinguistically valid, a definition of a 'standard usage' should include the following criteria:

- the variety must be an *Ausbausprache* (Kloss 1952), which can be used for the vast majority of communicative events in a speech community orienting towards the same *Dachsprache* (language roof, Kloss 1952);
- it must be comprehensible to members of the speech community without additional effort;
- it must be a part of the repertoire of an average educated speaker, i.e. a speaker who is able to take part efficiently in all kinds of social interaction which do not require professional training in speech, and who is regarded as a competent native speaker.

This notion of 'standard usage' corresponds roughly to the one common in English-language linguistics.[1] When applied to English, it implies, for example, that there are national varieties of English in the world which are all considered to be standard English, and that the majority of the English-speaking population are

1. Note, however, that English-language linguists do not necessarily consider pronunciation to be a necessary constituent of 'standard language' (cf. Trudgill 1999).

regarded as competent speakers of the standard variety (e.g. Trudgill & Hannah 2008). It also implies that standard often embraces some regional, social and register-related variation with respect to a certain linguistic variable.[2]

A notion of standard German comparable to standard English is advocated by British germanists such as Durrell (1999) and Barbour and Stevenson (1990: 135): "Despite the scarcity of descriptions of it, a colloquial standard German does exist, analogous to standard English; there is often less purely social variation in its pronunciation than there is in standard English, but it is regionally more diverse in every respect." While such a position might not be new to most British linguists, it stands in sharp contrast to what is still common practice in German linguistics. We just give two influential examples.

(1) The *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* [German pronunciation dictionary], written by scholars specializing in speech communication and speech training, defines standard language as follows: "Standard language does not contain any regional colloquial forms. (...) It is predominantly used and expected in official public situations" (Krech et al. 2009: 7, translation AD, SK, RK). Newsreading is the genre the authors consider to be most relevant for the identification of standard variants. Still, the *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* seeks to support its decisions about the codification of pronunciation by lay judgements of speech samples (Hollmach 2007). The rated materials were taken from the mass media, such as newsreading and talk shows, and raters were asked to judge whether the variants used were appropriate for public speaking. Northern variants turned out to be preferred on average, but South German speakers were prepared to accept both northern and southern variants, while northerners did not accept the southern ones. Newsreaders, of course, train hard to produce standard pronunciation according to the codified norm. Thus, it borders on circularity to derive codification from this group, because the standard they orient towards is precisely what is already codified. Krech et al. (2009: 6) claim that standard language as defined in such a way could be used in situations ranging from ceremonial speeches to everyday conversations. However, they neither study nor specifically take into account which variants are actually used in these interactional situations, and whether the standard features are judged to be acceptable in interaction among non-professional speakers. Apart from lexical stress and degrees of articulatory precision, they only rarely allow for variants. Interestingly, this contrasts with

2. See for example Wells' (2008) dictionary of English pronunciation, which in most of its entries lists several options, which may vary in frequency according to, e.g. speaker's age and register.

Haas & Hove's and Wiesinger's chapters on Swiss and Austrian Standard German in the *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* (Krech et al. 2009).

(2) In the Marburg-based REDE project (see, for example, Schmidt 2010), one major aim is to determine the degree of dialectality of emerging regional (dialect) varieties. In order to do this, REDE starts from a notion of standard language that is devoid of any regional features and modelled on newsreaders. "Standard language is characterized by absence of (communicatively) salient regional forms" (Schmidt & Herrgen 2011:62, translation AD, SK, RK).[3] Variation in spoken language is in their view only permitted if it is caused by allegro speech, such as elisions and assimilations of unstressed syllables, which are said to be independent of regional variation (cf. Kohler 1995).

These views keep the standard away from any regional influence. Similar views are not only widely held, but they are also consequential for the social prestige of linguistic forms, and ultimately for speakers' prestige and hence their chances in social participation and success. The prestige function of a standard language (Garvin & Mathiot 1968) limits professional career opportunities and upward social mobility of non-standard speakers (cf. Ammon 1983). Speakers with a regional accent tend to become stigmatized (Maitz & Elspaß 2011). Its linguistic characterization as 'substandard' and the common graphic representation of the standard-dialect continuum (cf. Auer 2005), with the standard being the peak of a pyramid of the varieties of a language, could be understood to discredit other forms of language use as being less prestigious, less developed, etc. – although the linguists' aim is not to claim their inferiority, but only to represent the societal understanding of their social prestige. König (2004:134) therefore suggests treating the continuum as a horizontal rather than a vertical scale of varieties.

On the other hand, the national standard varieties of German have become increasingly acknowledged among linguists (Clyne 1992) during the last twenty years. Evidence of this is, for instance, the *Variantenwörterbuch des Deutschen* [Dictionary of Lexical Variants in German] (Ammon et al. 2004), which gives a detailed account of the specifics of the national lexica of Germany, Austria and Switzerland (and also includes variants from Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, East Belgium and South Tyrol).

It is no coincidence that it is linguists from southern Germany (Auer 1997; Eichinger 2001, 2005), Switzerland (Haas & Hove 2009) and Austria (Wiesinger 2009) who plead for a revised and more comprehensive definition of standard German, because codification has always tended to prefer northern variants. Historically, High German forms from the Upper Saxon and Middle

3. Regional variants are 'salient' if they are easily distinguished by competent hearers of a language and considered by them as indexing regional varieties.

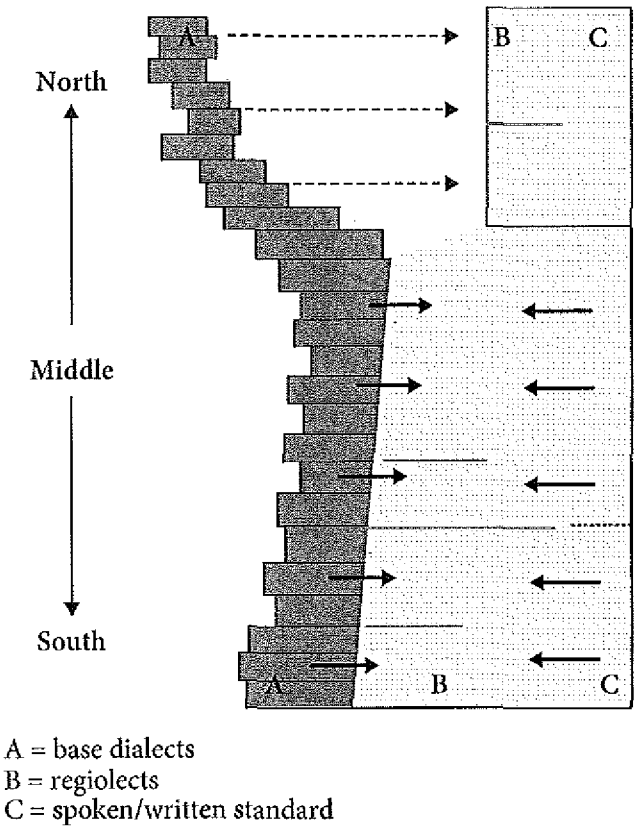

Figure 2. Model of the relationship between the standard language and local dialects in Germany (adapted from König 2004: 134)

Bavarian dialect areas were the most important sources of present-day written German. However, in the codification of German standard pronunciation (*Bühnenaussprache*) in the 19th century, i.e. the variety considered to be obligatory for theatre performances, mostly northern variants were adopted, because they conform more closely to spelling pronunciation. Historically, this preference for the codification of northern variants is somewhat ironic, as the autochthonous Low German dialects spoken in the north of Germany are much further removed from written German than the southern ones. But precisely because of this diglossic situation (dialect vs. emerging written standard), educated speakers in North Germany developed a new spoken standard modelled on writing, while a continuum between spelling pronunciation and dialectal varieties emerged in the south (cf. Auer 2005). The standard-dialect continuum essentially correlates with a formality-informality continuum of social situations, and a literate/orate continuum in the sense of Koch & Oesterreicher's conceptual spoken vs. conceptual written mode (*konzeptionelle Mündlichkeit/konzeptionelle Schriftlichkeit*, Koch & Oesterreicher 2008).

Today scholars disagree on how much they consider these continua as relevant for the concept of a (spoken) standard variety. However, all codifiers consider

a very limited range of social situations to be relevant arenas of standard usage, all of them located at the very extreme end of the formality continuum – in fact focusing almost exclusively on data from TV newsreading (cf. Hollmach 2007; Schmidt 2010). Such a definition of spoken standard German has the following consequences:

a. Standard is not an *Ausbausprache* – it cannot be used in a wide range of social situations, but is tied to just one situation of professional (newsreading) speech.
b. Most speakers will never find themselves in a situation which is relevant for the definition of the standard. Furthermore, it is not clear if and to what extent standard defined in this way is obligatory for other communicative events. Data from everyday conversation and institutional interaction show that many standard forms (of both grammar and phonetics) are almost never used in these situations.
c. Registers or degrees of formality *within* the standard are not differentiated.
d. In most regions of Germany, there are virtually no fully competent speakers of standard German (cf. Lenz 2003; Kehrein 2009).

We conclude that this view of the spoken standard language is not realistic, because it leads to absurd consequences and is not useful for the teaching of German as a foreign/second language. This, however, is one of the most important social fields in which a definition of standard usage is needed (cf. Durrell 2003). Only if the notion of standard German also encompasses common situations of ordinary colloquial language usage among unacquainted speakers can learners of German be prepared for the German they will encounter in the real world. Without an adequate concept of standard, the practice of teaching German as a second/foreign language rests on intuitions about deviations from codified forms rather than on a linguistically-based notion of registers of standard usage according to genres, social situations and regions. Finally, the narrow view of standard, which takes formal public speech as its model, is problematic from a political point of view as well. It implies a regional bias favouring northern variants, leading to discrimination of a majority of speakers, instead of making it clear that there is no linguistic legitimization for valuing some regional forms higher than others.

Therefore, we propose that a realistic notion of standard needs to include the communicative events in which ordinary speakers take part, particularly in semi-formal contexts, such as giving directions to a stranger, talking with out-group members who do not come from the same region, talking with institutional agents not known personally, etc. This will push the boundaries of what is considered standard towards the dialectal end. In any case, it will include colloquial German forms and also most of 'regional standard usage'.

2. The corpus 'German today' [Deutsch heute]

Several larger projects have recently investigated regional variation in German around the standard pole of the standard-dialect continuum. One of them is the project *Variation des gesprochenen Deutsch* [Variation of Spoken German], which started in 2001 at the Institute for the German Language.[4] We will report on the methodological design of the project and then present some results.

2.1 The speech events

The project documents regional variation in spoken German near the standard pole of the standard-dialect continuum. We recorded the same speakers in various speech events with different degrees of formality. However, all speech events (apart from the map-task, see below) are characterized by cueing speakers' orientation towards spoken standard usage as defined above because of the participation framework and/or the kind of communicative task to be performed. The design essentially follows Labov's (1966) conception and operationalization of different contextual styles. They are characterized by different degrees of formality, which most importantly implies different degrees of attention paid to speech production. Speakers had to perform the following tasks, in declining order of formality:

1. *reading tasks*
- minimal pairs (70),
- word lists (1,000 words),
- sentences (500 words),
- texts: *Nordwind und Sonne* (slow/fast reading pace), popular scientific text (500 words);

---

4. Other major projects are:

- REDE (Regionalsprache.de, 2007–2026; Schmidt & Herrgen 2011), aiming at a thorough description of contemporary regional varieties of spoken German;
- the AdA (*Atlas zur deutschen Alltagssprache* [Atlas of Colloquial German], since 2002; Möller & Elspaß 2008) in which informants are asked via the internet about lexical, but also syntactic and phonetic variation in spoken German;
- SiN (*Sprachvariation in Norddeutschland* [Language Variation in the north of Germany], 2008–14; Schröder & Elmentaler 2009) which aims to describe the standard-dialect continuum between Low German and standard German in northern Germany;
- the *Variantenwörterbuch des Deutschen* [Dictionary of Lexical Variants in German] (Ammon et al. 2004) which documents lexical variation in the national varieties of standard German as used in regional newspapers;
- an analogous project *Variantengrammatik des Deutschen* [Grammar of variants in German] (Dürscheid/Zürich, Elspaß/Augsburg, Ziegler/Graz) on grammatical variation started in 2011.

2. *description tasks*
- picture-naming (75),
- translations from English (25 words and 10 sentences);

3. *spontaneous speech*
- biographical interview with a researcher, containing questions about language biography, language use, attitudes, linguistic ideologies,
- map-task with a peer from the same local speech community.[5]

In addition, a questionnaire was administered to each speaker with questions regarding language biography and sociodemographic data.

2.2 The sample

Between 2006 and 2009, 835 speakers in all areas where German is an official language were recorded. The study thus included speakers from all regions in Germany as well as from Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, East Belgium, and South Tyrol (Italy), where German is also a (co-)official language. Recordings were made at 194 places. All relevant dialectal regions of German were covered. Both large cities and small towns were included in order to do justice to differences between urban and rural regions.

For each town, the sample consisted of four students from a *Gymnasium* (secondary school), aged between 16 and 20 years. The proportion of male and female subjects was almost equal (415 m., 420 f.). In order to be included in the study, subjects needed to have been residents of the town since birth, the same applying to at least one of their parents. In half of the places, two additional 50-60-year-old people were recorded in order to be able to study language change in apparent time. By now, the data gathered make up the largest corpus of spoken standard German available, and it is the first one to include systematically the east German area and the areas outside of Germany with the same degree of granularity as the territory of the former Federal Republic of Germany. In this respect and also in terms of the range of speech styles recorded, the corpus is more comprehensive than the one gathered by König (1989) in the 1970s for his *Atlas zur Aussprache des Schriftdeutschen* [Atlas of the Pronunciation of Written German]. We made recordings at the same places as König did whenever possible and used

5. One speaker had to give directions on a map, which the addressee also had. Neither interactant could see the other's map, and there were a few differences between the maps, meant to engender clarification questions and repair sequences.

the same cues, which will put us in a position to study language change in real time by comparing areal distributions of variants in both corpora, at least for the contextual styles and the regions which were also covered in König's study, which only included West Germany.

2.3 Data analysis will include

- auditory transcription (in varying degrees of granularity, mainly IPA/SAMPA),
- instrumental phonetic analysis (esp. duration and formants),
- annotation of (phonetic, syntactic, morphological, lexical) variables
- an atlas of variation maps with auditory materials on the internet (http://prowiki.ids-mannheim.de/bin/view/AADG/),
- dialectometric, statistical and interactional linguistic analyses.

2.4 Research questions

Until now, the main focus of the project has been to create an empirically-based inventory of standard German pronunciation in everyday usage, including phonotactic rules and word stress. This global goal involves several more detailed perspectives on the relationship between standard and regional speech in spoken German:

- What is the range of regional variation within standard usage of German?
- How does the factual realization of and variation in spoken German relate to codified norms? The project aims at putting the latter to an empirical test. We will propose revisions where standard usage can be shown to differ to a significant degree from what has been codified.
- Does variation at the standard pole of the standard-dialect continuum display regional patterns (pluri-areal German) or does it resonate with national borders (pluri-national German)? How is regional variation within the standard related to traditional dialectal regions? We thus also want to know what survives from the traditional dialects, which have mostly vanished, at least in northern German areas and in larger cities.
- How does spoken German vary with respect to degrees of formality of the speech event?
- Which morphophonetic properties of spoken German are peculiar to its use in talk-in-interaction? Here, weak forms which are typical of allegro speech, assimilation, elision, and cliticization with regard to closed-class items such as pronouns and determiners, are at issue.

In the following, we will present some of our findings regarding these focal points of the project.

3. Results

3.1 The pronunciation of word-initial ⟨ch⟩

A good starting point is the areal variation in the realization of the initial consonant in the Greek loanword *Chemie* "chemistry" (ancient Greek χημε(α) because it illustrates some basic facts about regional variation in standard German. Figure 3 shows

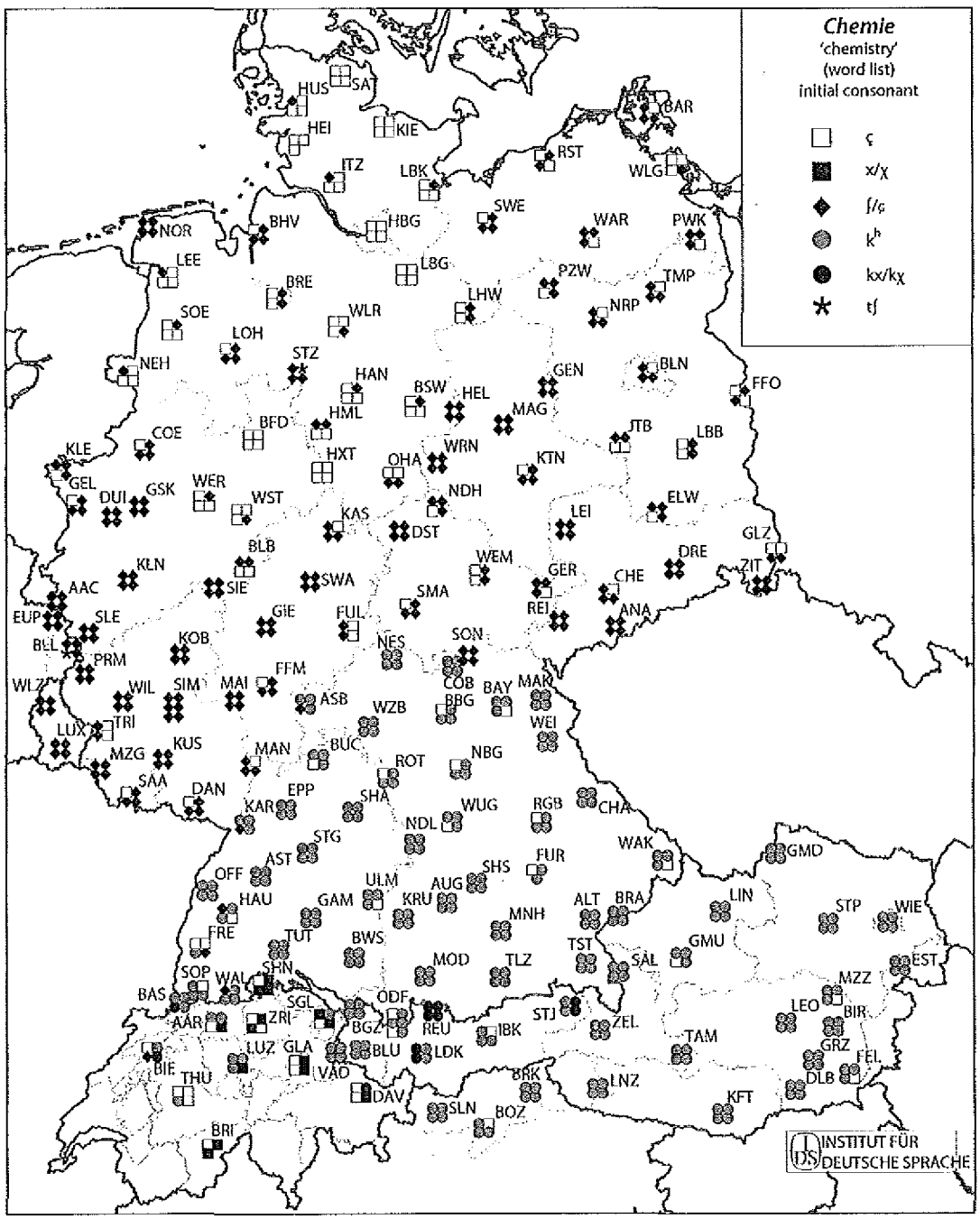

Figure 3. Pronunciation of ⟨ch⟩ in *Chemie* "chemistry" (word list style)

the regional distribution of six pronunciation variants in reading style (word lists). The codified pronunciation, the palatal fricative [ç], is used to a large extent only in northern Germany and Switzerland. The sibilant pronunciations [ʃ]/[ɕ] are particularly widespread in central areas of Germany but they are also frequent in the north. The aspirated plosive [k^h] dominates in the south of Germany, Austria and South Tyrol and is also attested with some Swiss speakers, while the affricated variant [kx] is restricted to a few speakers in northern Tyrol and Switzerland. Finally, the velar/uvular fricative [x] is found exclusively in Switzerland. (The two unexpected instances of the variant [tʃ] seem to be due to analogy to words with initial ⟨ch⟩ that are loanwords from English such as *Chips*, *Champion* etc.).

The regional distribution of these variants allows for several interpretations and conclusions:

a. The codified pronunciation is a northern variant. This is only to be expected as the original codification of the pronunciation of standard German (Siebs 1898) was based essentially on the usage of German on North German theatre stages.
b. Although the data come from a very formal style, namely a word list read aloud, the codified variant is not the one which is used most. It is used in less than 25% of the instances. (We can expect that it would be used even less in less formal situations, but *Chemie* is not produced sufficiently often in spontaneous speech in our corpus in order to test this hypothesis.) Of course, this finding does not hold for all variables in the corpus, but there is a considerable number of variables which are rarely realized in accordance with the canonical pronunciation.
c. About one-third of the Swiss speakers use the codified variant. This is a much higher proportion than in central and southern Germany and in Austria. This rather high level reflects the diglossic situation in Switzerland, which is very different from Germany (especially in the southern parts) and Austria, where there is a standard-dialect continuum. Swiss speakers tend to keep dialectal and standard forms strictly apart from each other, and stick more closely to standard forms taught at school, at least in formal situations. On the other hand, the dialectal variant with the velar (often also uvular) fricative [x] is only found in Switzerland. As far as Switzerland is concerned, the map provides evidence for pluri-nationality, because the Swiss mix of variants contrasts sharply with the predominant [k^h] used in the neighbouring southwest of Germany, which also belongs to the Alemannic dialectal region. While in Switzerland the dialect is still vital, in South Germany use of and probably also competence in dialect are very much on the decline. Dialect-based forms, i.e. velar fricatives in this case, are not used here, at least when reading aloud. Thus, the national border is also a linguistic border in this case.

d. The national border between Germany and Austria, however, is irrelevant, because virtually all of the speakers in southern Germany (in the federal states of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria) use the same aspirated plosive variant [k^h] as the Austrians. The main exceptions are Freiburg (FRE), where almost no regional linguistic influence is found in our speakers, and Mannheim (MAN), which follows the Rheno-Franconian pattern of using the palato-alveolar fricative [ʃ]. Thus, there is a clear regional distribution, but it does not correspond to national areas.
e. The variants [ʃ]/[ɕ] are typical for both the western and eastern Central German regions. Here, the majority of speakers pronounce [ç] as [ʃ]/[ɕ] in all positions, i.e. also in native German words such as *ich* "I" or *richtig* "right".
f. We can discern an effect of intra-national administrative borders. The regions using [ʃ] in Hessia and Thuringia and those using [k^h] in Bavaria are neatly separated by the border between the federal states, although traditional dialectal regions (Rheno-Franconian and East Franconian) transcend the borders. As an explanation for this relevance of the federal state borders two facts can be considered. Firstly, *Chemie* is a school subject, and therefore the word is frequently used in a school setting. Secondly, due to the cultural sovereignty of the German federal states, teachers in Germany are mainly employed in the federal state where they completed their academic studies (which is usually also the state where they grew up and went to school). This favours the spread and stabilization of highly salient regional pronunciation variants even in most formal styles on a state-wide scale.

3.2 The pronunciation of unstressed ⟨ig⟩

A more complex variable is the realization of the consonant in ⟨ig⟩ in unstressed syllables. In this case, there is not only regional variation, for factors like contextual style, phonotactic context, morphological properties, and frequency of use are also important.

The pronunciation of ⟨ig⟩ is one of the phonetic variables that speakers of German are most aware of. Codification in Duden (2005), in Siebs (1969) and Krech et al. (2009) prescribes that the ⟨g⟩ in ⟨ig⟩ is to be pronounced as:

- [ç], if it occurs word-finally, as in *König* "king" and *wichtig* "important", and before a consonant, as in past participles such as *verteidigt* "defended", ordinal numbers like *achtundzwanzigster* "twenty-eighth", and superlatives like *wichtigste* "most important";
- [k], if it occurs before the suffix *-lich* as in *lediglich* "merely" and in the compound *Königreich* "kingdom";

– [g], if it occurs before a vowel, as in infinitives such as *verteidigen* "to defend" or in inflected forms such as *Könige* "kings (nom./acc./gen. pl.)", *wichtige* "important (nom./acc. pl.)", etc.

In the case of ⟨ig⟩, canonical pronunciation therefore not only requires alternation between voiced and voiceless variants, but also between a fricative and a stop, while the letter ⟨g⟩ is pronounced as a stop in all other contexts (except for loanwords).

All three variants are in use in spoken standard German, but there is no simple correspondence with the canonical pattern. Figure 4 confirms the well-known observation that the fricative variant (the canonical pronunciation) is preferred in northern Germany, while southern Germans prefer the stop (see e.g. König 1989: Vol. 2, 319). Still, the fricative is attested to some extent in Baden-Württemberg and especially northern Bavaria as well. In addition, a range of factors influence the selection of the fricative vs. stop variant.

a. Spelling pronunciation. A clear effect of the written letters can be seen when comparing the realization of the adjective *schmutzig* "dirty" in two different styles. In the situation which requires the highest degree of attention paid to speech production, i.e. reading aloud a word list, many speakers even from northern Germany pronounce ⟨g⟩ as [k]. The corpus average for fricative pronunciation (mainly canonical [ç], rarely [ʃ]/[ɕ]) is as low as 21.8% in this condition. The rate goes up significantly to 39.6% in a more informal condition, i.e. when reading the same word as part of a text (cf. Figure 4). Speakers obviously model their speech on spelling pronunciation, even if codification deviates from it.
b. Frequency effects. The most frequent ⟨ig⟩-word in the interview part of the corpus, *richtig* "right, really", which is overwhelmingly used as a discourse particle in spontaneous speech and whose articulation probably receives less attention than nouns such as *König*, is overwhelmingly pronounced with the fricative even in southern Germany (white symbols, cf. Figure 5). Only in parts of Bavaria (without most of Franconia), Austria and Switzerland the stop prevails. So, paradoxically, more speakers use the canonical form in informal situations than in more formal ones in a word such as *richtig*.[6]

6. For some speakers in southern Germany, consonant harmony/syllable-rhyming with the first syllable in *richtig* [rɪç(tɪç)] might also account for the switch from stop to fricative pronunciation in this word. But the phonotactically parallel but much less frequent (N = 506) adjective *wichtig* "important" shows a significantly higher rate of stop pronunciation in the corpus (*wichtig* 35% vs. *richtig* 18%). This seems to contradict this hypothesis. However, corpus-wide comparisons of phenomena in spontaneous speech can be biased by unequal

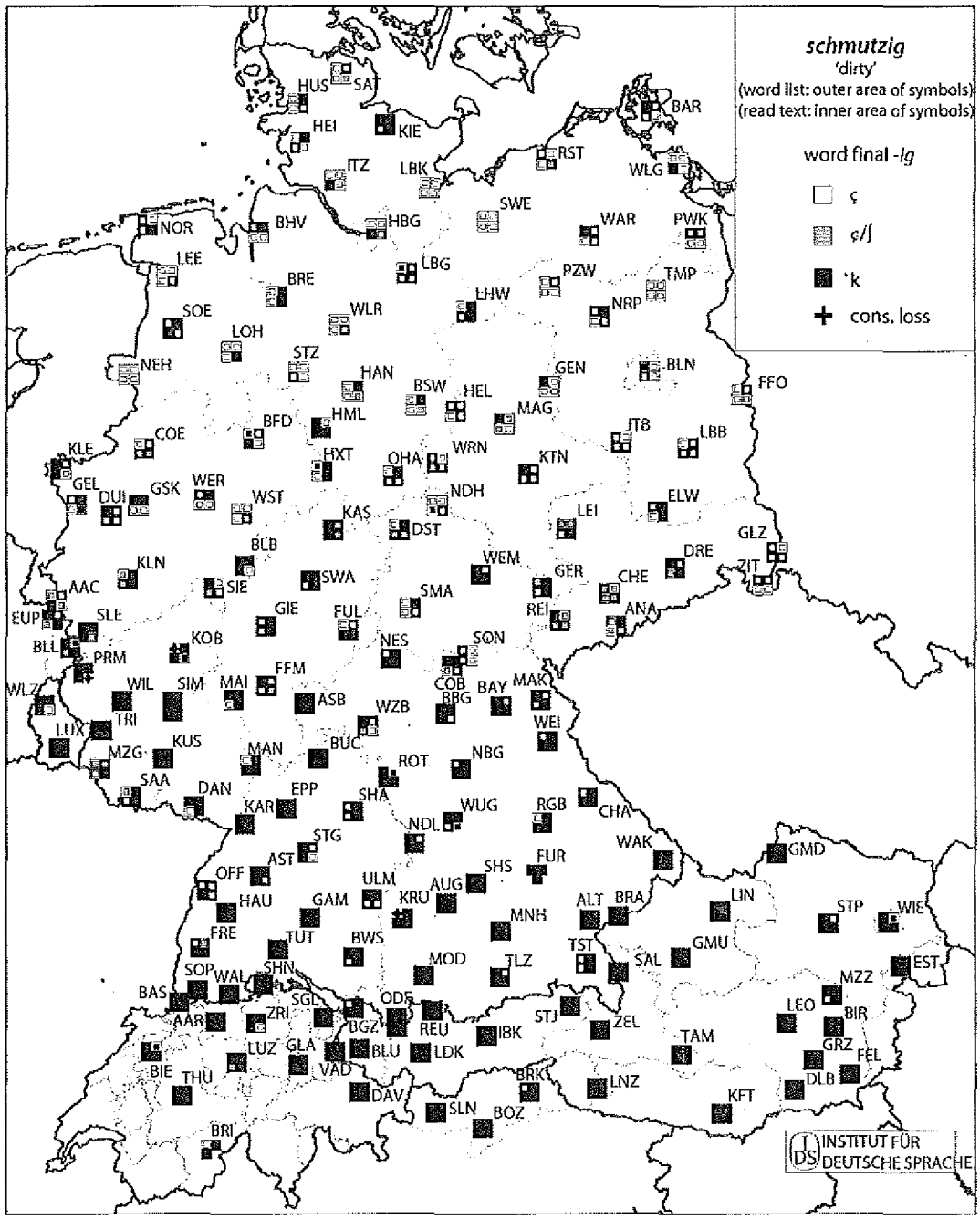

Figure 4. Pronunciation of word final ⟨g⟩ in *schmutzig* "dirty" (word list vs. text reading style). Symbols with black outer and white inner area denote speakers who style-shifted their pronunciation from stop to fricative

areal distribution of instances of the phenomenon in question. This is indeed the case here, for instances of *richtig* are attested much more rarely in the southern stop-pronouncing area than elsewhere, whereas the instances of *wichtig* exhibit a rather homogeneous areal distribution (cf. Kleiner 2011:277).

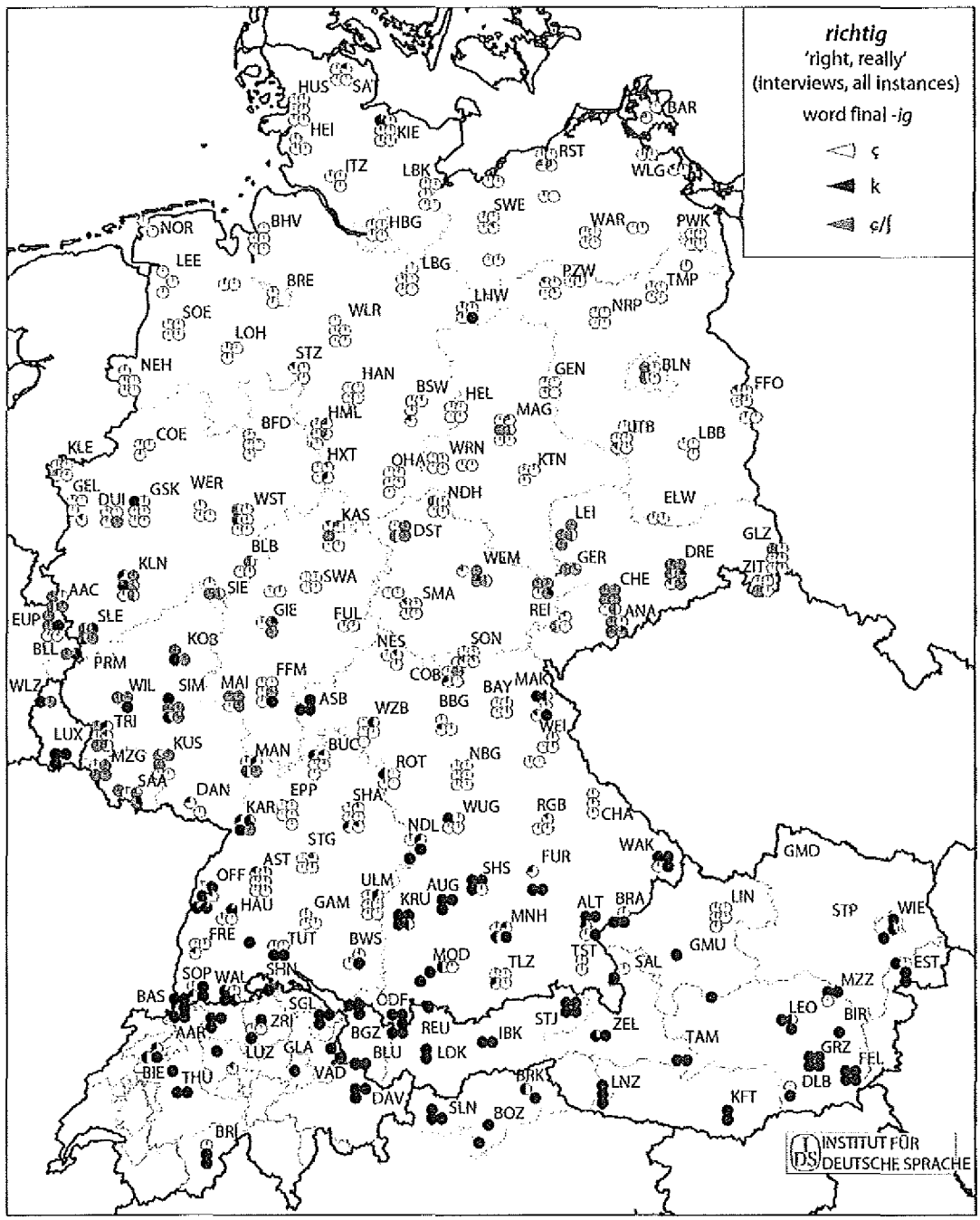

Figure 5. Pronunciation of word final ⟨g⟩ in *richtig* "right, really" (spontaneous speech, interviews, N = 2,533)

c. Phonotactic/morphological effects. There are several phonotactic and morphological factors that influence the pronunciation of ⟨ig⟩. We will point out two particularly interesting cases here. In more than one third of the speakers, no consonantal reflex of ⟨ig⟩ is attested (37.6%) in the ordinal number *achtundzwanzigster* "twenty-eighth". This finding mainly concerns those speakers who use the fricative in other ⟨ig⟩-contexts. That is, the fricative is assimilated progressively to the following voiceless /s/, which is sometimes

still reflected by some articulatory gesture (like aspiration/breathy voice) in the preceding vowel. In accordance with the increased preference for fricatives in low-attention contexts, the fricative tends to be lost if it occurs in a particularly unstressed position and in a particularly long compound. On the other hand, the same phonological context has a very different outcome in superlatives such as *wichtigster* "most important", for which the plosive variant is much more frequent than the fricative: 95.5% of the speakers use it in word list style, 82.8% in the translation task (with 57% the stop realization is more frequent than the fricative even in northern Germany). In this case, the fricative sequence [çs] is easier to pronounce if the the first sound is dissimilated to a stop, a sound change which has its parallel in a widely attested historical development of the Germanic languages (e.g. Germ. **wahsa-* > OHG *wahs* > NHG *Wachs* [vaks]; > OE *weax*; > Old Norse *vax*, cf. Kluge 1989: 771).

Morphological boundaries are another important factor. Nearly all speakers in Germany and eastern Austria pronounce ⟨ig⟩ as a fricative in nouns with the suffix *-keit* even in word list reading – the formality continuum has almost no effect here.[7] (*Notwendigkeit* "necessity" produced in a text reading passage has the lowest rate of only 18.2% stop realizations corpus-wide.) The fricative here may be chosen to signal morphological boundaries: a [k] pronunciation in ⟨ig⟩ would lead to assimilation of the final stop to the initial consonant of the suffix *-keit*, thus obscuring the morphological boundary. Only western Austrians, South Tyroleans, Swiss and a few south Germans living close to the Austrian and Swiss border use the stop in this context (in addition to some speakers from central Germany who otherwise prefer the pre-palatal/post-alveolar variant).

In sum, the fricative is preferred if words have a higher frequency, are used in more informal contexts and without reference to writing. Only in some parts of Switzerland and in western Austria, fricatives are hardly ever used. Nevertheless, in phonological contexts in which ⟨ig⟩ is followed by a consonant, the stop variant is almost exclusively used (such as in ⟨igst⟩, ⟨igt⟩), in particular in the position before past tense, past participle and superlative inflection (cf. *wichtigster*). The latter finding clearly contradicts codification in Krech et al. (2009) and Duden (2005). Again, it attests to the regional bias of codification towards northern variants, because the fricative can only be found in these regions in this phonotactic context.[8]

7. Another factor that supports the fricative pronunciation in *-igkeit* might be analogy to the parallel structure of abstract nouns such as *Möglichkeit* "possibility" with the combined suffix *-lichkeit*, in which the [ç] is unambiguously represented by ⟨ch⟩ in writing.

8. A more detailed account of the variation of ⟨ig⟩ in German can be found in Kleiner (2011).

3.3 French loanwords ending in ⟨on⟩

Codification of the pronunciation of loanwords from living languages, in particular English, French, Italian and Russian, is always a disputed matter. The question is whether and in which ways loanwords are assimilated to the German sound system. An old and rather frequent example are loanwords from French ending in ⟨on⟩, such as *Ballon* "balloon" and *Balkon* "balcony" (cf. Laeufer 2010 for an overall account of French loanwords with nasal vowels in German). Variation on the one hand concerns word stress – codification for German German and Austrian German is unanimous in requiring stress on the second syllable, while in the codification of the Swiss standard, the first syllable is stressed (Haas & Hove 2009: 272). On the other hand, there are three variants of segmental pronunciation, i.e. (a) long [oː][9] and alveolar nasal [n], (b) short [ɔ] and velar nasal [ŋ] and (c) nasalized vowels of the type [ɔ̃ː] (more rarely also [õː]), without consonantal nasal reflexes, which correspond to or at least approximate the original French pronunciation. While Duden (2005) allows all three of them, Krech et al. (2009) again follow a northern/north-eastern regional bias, allowing [ɔ̃ː] and [ɔŋ]; the latter variant corresponds neither to German spelling pronunciation nor to the phonology of the donor language. However, it is a general tendency also known from other languages that nasalized vowels tend to be integrated into systems without nasalized vowels by using the combination 'non-nasal vowel + velar nasal' (cf. the identical treatment of French nasal vowels in loanwords in the North Germanic languages, see Laeufer 2010: 84–86).

In our data, the following distribution is found (cf. Figure 6):

- In Austria and in the south of Germany, mainly in Bavaria, variant (a) is used. This corresponds to the spelling pronunciation of German, which is also used, for example, for pronouncing loanwords derived from Latin ending in *-ion*, such as *Situation*.
- In northern and especially in eastern Germany, variant (b) is common.
- (c) occurs predominantly in Switzerland, in the western and southern parts of Germany and scarcely in northern Germany. (Nasalization is sometimes weakened or even lost, especially in South Germany, but the vowel keeps its [ɔː]-quality.) The use of this variant is also connected to knowledge of French (or rather the intention to show proficiency in French by pronouncing the ⟨on⟩-words the French way). There are some lexical items in which this

9. Besides the most frequent [oːn], for the vowel there are also low numbers of [ɔːn]- and [ɔn]-pronunciations recorded. All vowel realizations also frequently exhibit co-articulatory nasalization.

variant is used more rarely than in others, e.g. *Balkon* "balcony", where the [oː]-variant is much more widespread, covering the whole south of Germany and also wide areas in the west (*Ballon* 30% vs. *Balkon* 59% [oːn]-variants).

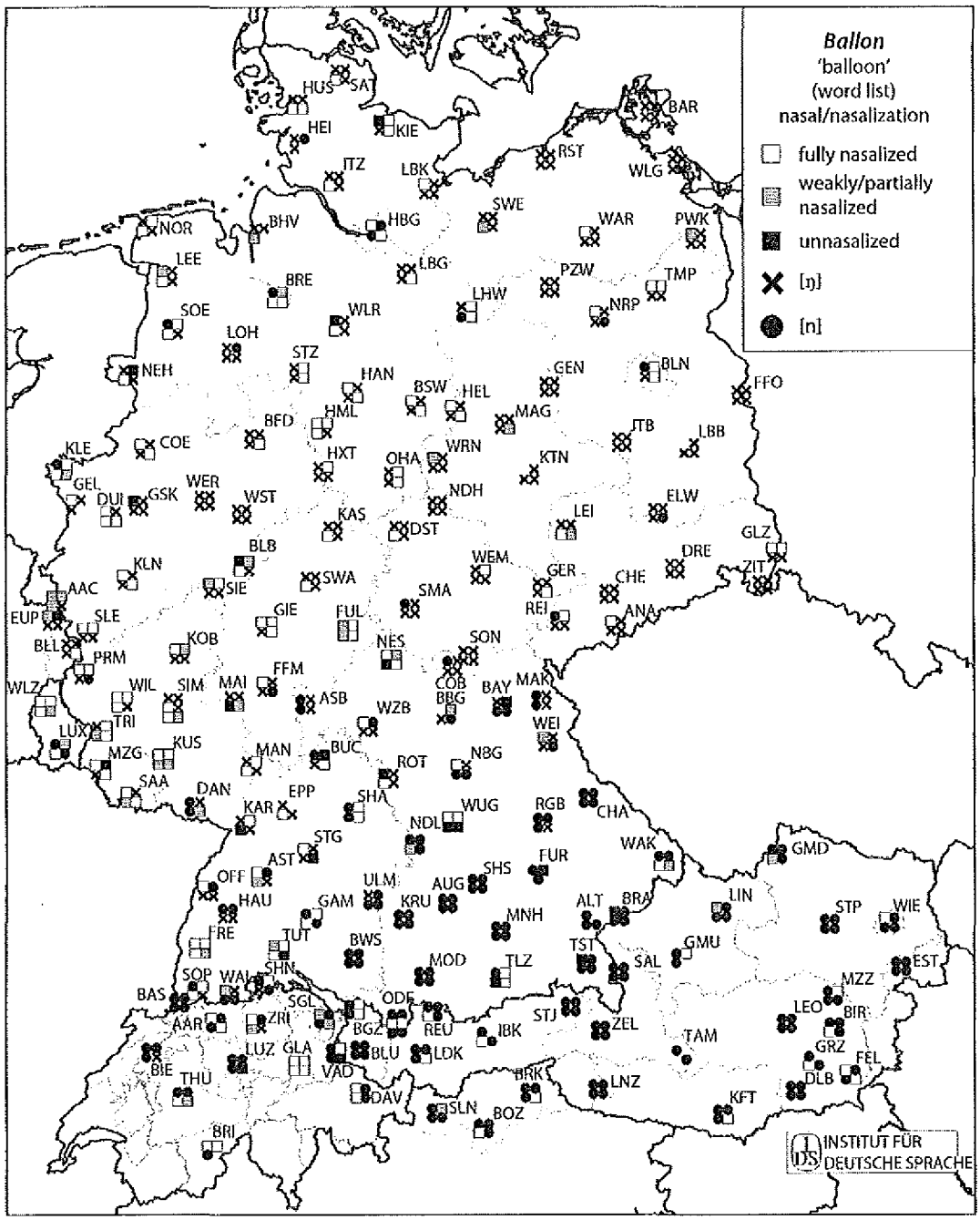

Figure 6. Pronunciation of ⟨n⟩ in *Ballon* "balloon" (word list style)

3.4 The phoneme /ɛː/

Another variable which exhibits both clear regional variation and also some effect of register in terms of spelling pronunciation is the open-mid front

unrounded vowel /ɛː/ in words such as *Käse* "cheese". This vowel phoneme is an exception to the otherwise symmetrical vowel system of standard German, in which long vowels (apart from /aː/) are always tense, while short vowels are lax. In our auditory transcriptions, we have distinguished five degrees of vowel height, using a five-step scale from white to black symbols (cf. Figure 7). The most important difference lies between the medium grey symbols, which stand for the codified variant [ɛː], and the white ones, which stand for [eɪ]. Speakers

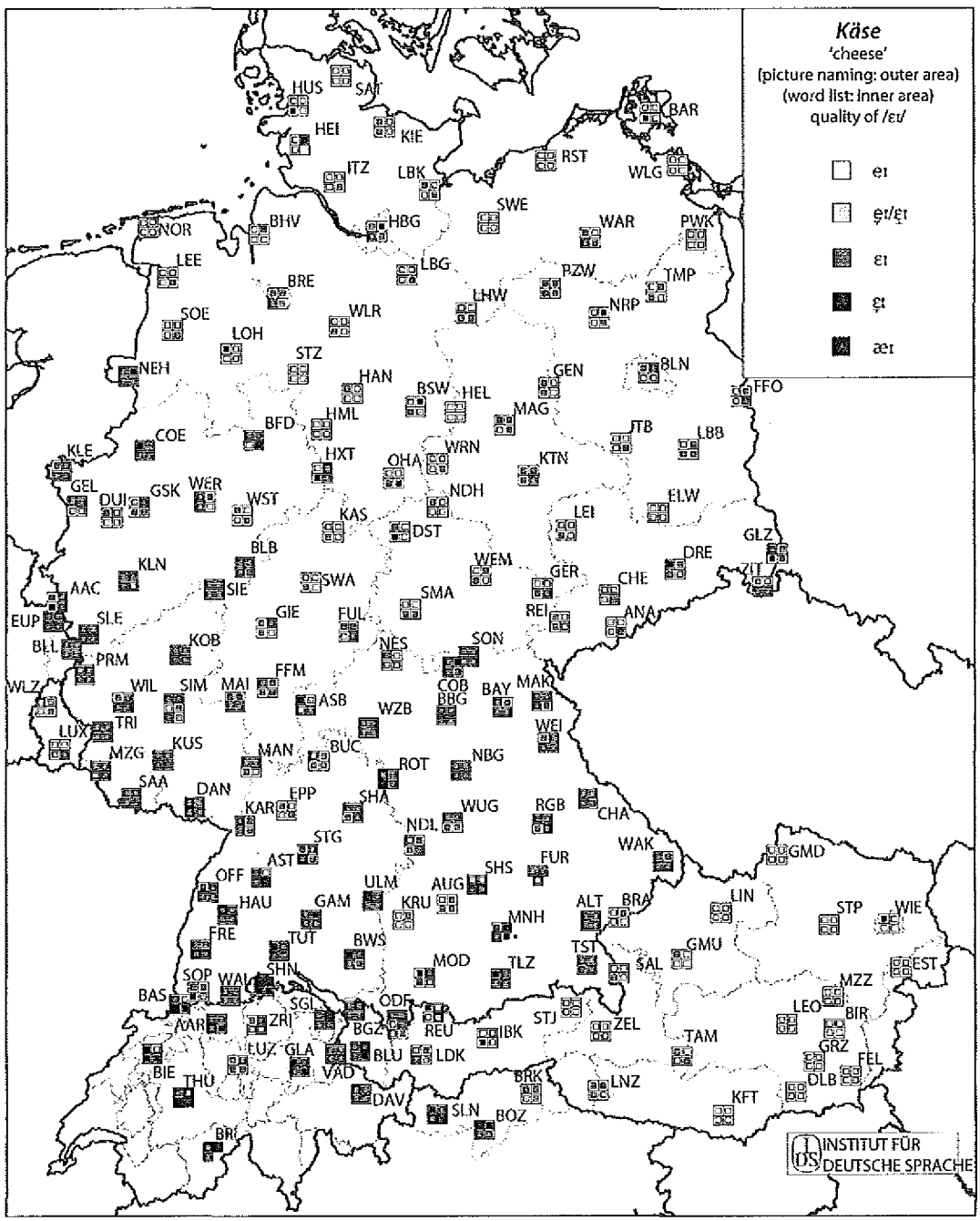

Figure 7. Pronunciation of /ɛː/ in *Käse* "cheese" (picture naming task vs. word list style)

who pronounce e.g. /kɛːzə/ as /keːzə/ have one phoneme less in their standard German vowel inventory, since /ɛː/ and /eː/ are merged. On the map, the outer area of the symbols indicates the realisation in the picture naming task; we can see that the close-mid realization (white outer area) is the most common variant (corpus-wide: 46.5% [eː] vs. 36.1% [ɛː]), prevailing almost completely in Austria, most central German areas and northern Germany, but it is also used to some extent in south Germany. The national border between Austria and Germany coincides with different variants in this case. The few black symbols showing near-open realization point to dialectal influence, especially in the south-west of Switzerland (dial. [χæːs] "cheese").

The picture changes when we turn to word list reading (inner area of symbols). Here, the percentage of canonical pronunciation is much higher (27.1% [eː] vs. 54.2% [ɛː]). It is used almost exclusively in southern and central western Germany, but also to a considerable extent in northern Germany and sometimes in Austria. Interestingly, the spelling pronunciation effect is nearly absent if subjects are required to read a text instead of a word pair (36.6% [ɛː], not mapped). This suggests that the orthoepical variant is only enhanced if the readers' awareness is directed specifically to spelling. It is not used in a text-reading task, because attention then seems to be more focussed on whole sentences and their meaning.

3.5 Weak forms of the indefinite article

Weak forms are variants – usually of function words – which are morphophonetically reduced because of their high frequency in colloquial speech (Kohler 1995) and because they receive neither focal nor contrastive accent. Variation between weak forms and their strong counterparts depends not so much on region, but is typical of spoken German in general in contrast to written German. Our example is the indefinite article, namely the forms of the accusative case (masculine) and the dative case (masculine and neuter).

Table 1 shows the paradigm of the indefinite article in German according to standard grammars:

Table 1. Paradigm of the indefinite article in codified standard German

	Masc	Fem	Neut
Nom	ein	eine	ein
Gen	eines	einer	eines
Dat	einem	einer	einem
Acc	einen	eine	ein

Possible variants in spoken German of the accusative case (masculine) and the dative case (masculine and neuter) are:

Table 2. Variants of the indefinite article in spoken German (accusative and dative case)

	Full form	Reduction forms	Dialect forms
Acc	aenən	aen, nən, n	(ɔ)a(n), e(n), ɛ(n), ə(n), ɐ(n)
Dat	aenəm	aem, nəm, m	(ɔ)am, em, ɛm, əm, ɐm

Recent research on the use of the indefinite article in interactive genres on the internet (internet relay chats, Vogel 2006; Burri 2003) and in newspapers (Ziegler 2012) suggests that the reduced form *nen* is increasingly used instead of *einen* in the accusative case of the masculine.[10] This is interpreted as a spread of a relatively new weak form of informal speech to informal written genres. The use of *nen* in these text genres is seen as part of a communicative strategy to convey informality and little social distance in the written medium.

But is spontaneous speech really like this? Our data show a different picture. We coded all occurrences of the indefinite article in the accusative case of the masculine and in the dative case of masculine and neuter (which is the same morphological variant). Our study draws on data from our interview corpus (425 hours), from a regionally balanced sample of map-task data (about 27 hours of peer-to-peer interaction), and from a corpus of 70 hours of talk on television from various genres, ranging from formal news broadcasting to more informal talk shows and live sports commentaries.[11]

Figure 8 shows the overall distribution of the indefinite article in the masculine accusative in our data. Note that all instances of *einen* are included where it is used as an article or a quantifier (but not as a pronoun).[12]

10. All three studies even attest an increasing use of *nen* instead of *ein*, i.e. for the masculine/neuter nominative case and the accusative neuter.

11. The media data were collected between 2002 and 2006. This corpus does not belong to the *German Today* corpus. It was collected in order to analyze the standard forms trained speakers use in the media. It allows for comparison between the variants these speakers use and the standard usage of untrained everyday speakers.

12. Including pronominal uses, instances of *einen* amount to N = 9,300 in our sample. The N = 3,200 instances of pronouns are almost exclusively realized as strong form without reduction of the first syllable ([aenən]/[aen]).

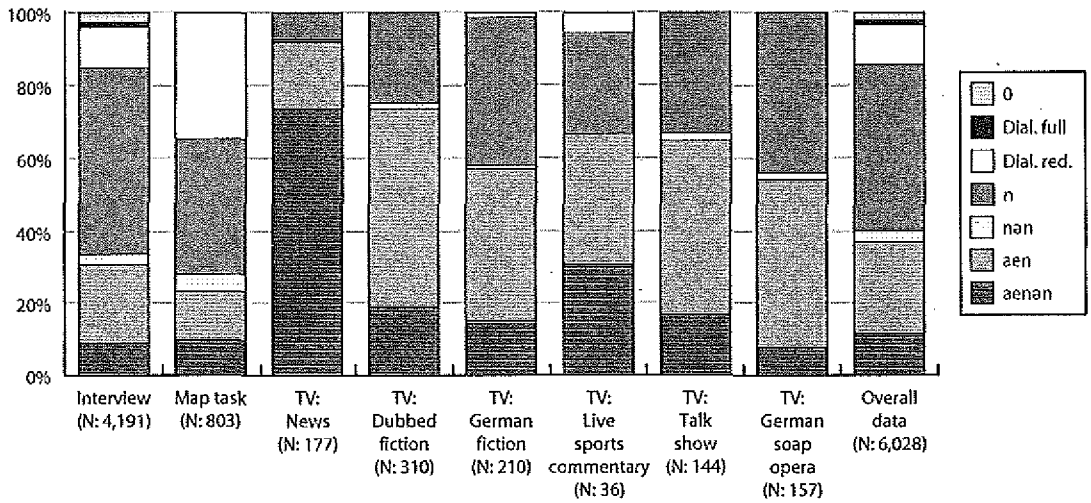

Figure 8. Distribution of the variants of *einen* (accusative masculine, N = 6,028)

The figure shows that:

- The codified form [aenən] is used in only 12% of the instances. There is, however, a strong effect of genre, as it is used in about 74% of the instances in TV news. In all other genres, it is rather infrequent. In the interviews, it is only used in 8.8% of all occurrences, many of them in Switzerland. This provides further evidence for the diglossic situation there.
- The 'end only' variant [nən] (with truncated beginning) is almost never used (only 2.9% of all instances). This is in stark contrast to what studies on newspaper and internet communication report (see above), where this form is said to be used to imitate and stylize spoken language. It is also less frequent than in a study by Ziegler (2012) based on spontaneous speech of police officers in emergency calls (19% *nen*).
- Forms attesting dialectal interference occur in the TV data only rarely. In the interview data, dialectal articles occur in 12.2% of the instances. They are used predominantly in Bavaria and Austria (above all the weak dialect forms [ɐn]/[ən]) and in the Upper Saxon regions ([en]). This share increases in the more informal map-task data where the proportion of dialectal-based forms amounts to approximately 34.5%, indicating that dialectal forms prevail in informal interaction in the southern part of the German-speaking area.

Most common are two other forms:

- The 'nasal-only' variant, i.e. reduction to the alveolar nasal [n]/[n̩], is the most common form overall (45.8%). It is even more frequent in the interviews (51.5%), where it occurs without geographical restriction in the whole German-speaking area (even in places where otherwise dialectal or full forms

abound, namely in Austria and Switzerland). In the TV data, this 'nasal only' variant is less frequent than in the interviews (28.6%). Again, frequencies differ according to genre and the influence of writing (7.3% in news broadcasting, 24.8% in dubbed fiction, and almost 44% in daily soap operas). In many cases, this variant is produced as an enclitic or proclitic element, but it can also be realized as an autonomous syllable.

- The 'beginning-only' variant, i.e. reduction to monosyllabic [aen], has an overall share of 24.4%. Whereas in the interviews, 'nasal only' was the most frequent form followed by [aen], in the TV data, it is the other way round with [aen] being the most frequent form: 43% of the media occurrences, but only 21.8% of the interview instances are 'beginning-only' tokens.

The degree of reduction of the canonical form roughly correlates with the degree of formality. Thus, the variants on the reduction continuum – the three forms [aenən] → [aen] → [n] – closely correlate with degrees of formality within standard usage (see the distribution of the forms in Table 3, in particular the differences between TV news, TV sports reports and the interviews).

Table 3. Distribution of *einen* within different contextual styles/genres

	Genre	[aenən]	[aen]	[nən]	[n]/[n̩]	Dialect	0 (omission)
Text-reading	News	73.5%	18.6%	0.6%	7.3%	0%	0%
Monological spontaneous speech	Live sports commentary	30.6%	36.1%	0%	27.8%	5.5%	0%
Formal interaction	Interview	8.8%	21.8%	2.9%	51.5%	12.2%	2.8%
Informal interaction	Map task	9.6%	13.6%	4.7%	37.5%	34.5%	0.1%

The data also show that [aen] and [n] are used within the same style with similar frequencies. Does their use reflect variation within the same level of formality? Or are there other reasons for using both forms in the same situation?

Preliminary observations show that there seems to be a difference in function. It is only the less reduced form [aen] (besides [aenən]) which can be used as a pronoun. The pure nasal never occurs in this function. The same applies to contrastive use. This can be seen in the example *also ich hab EIN freund noch- n sehr langjährigen-* ("Well I have one friend still- a very old one-"): the diphthongal form is used to establish a referent contrastively and to focus on the quantifier as indicated by stress, intensity, and duration, while 'nasal only' used as

indefinite article is unstressed and short. The PRAAT picture in Figure 9 shows that the 'beginning only' variant [aen] used as quantifier (*also ich hab EIN freund noch*) is stressed and takes 270 ms, while the 'nasal only' indefinite article in the following apposition (*n sehr langjährigen*) is unstressed, proclitic and much shorter (50 ms).

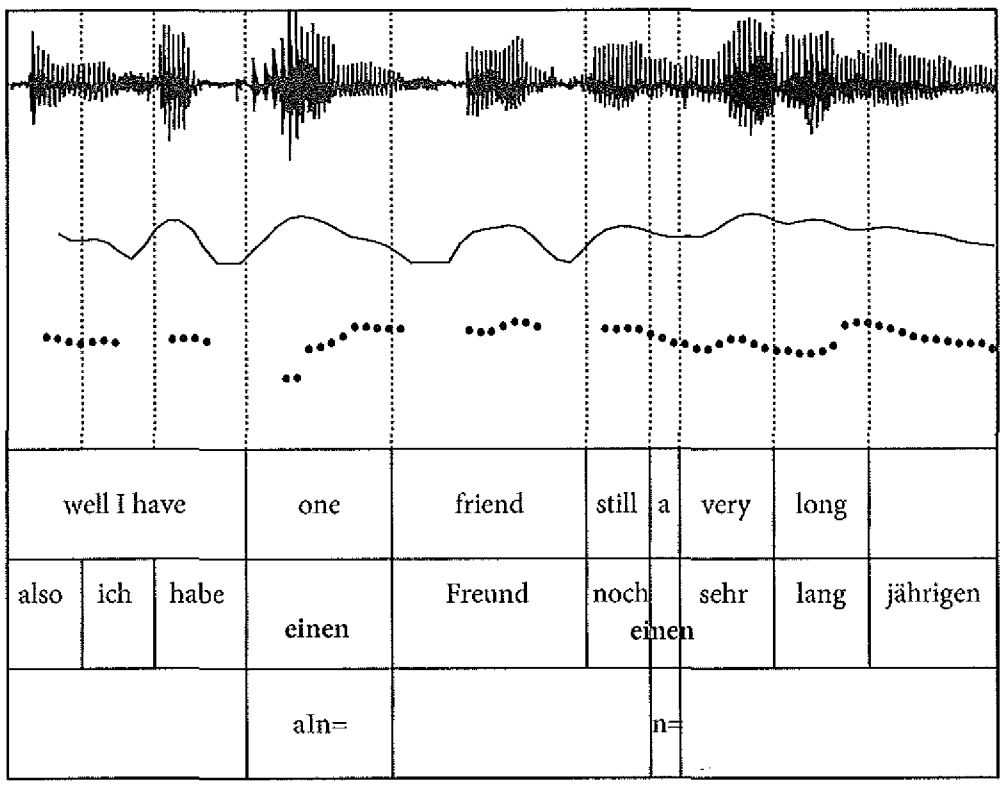

Figure 9. Differences between *einen* as quantifier vs. indefinite article; pitch is indicated by the speckled lower curve and intensity by the upper curve below the spectrogram

The diphthongal form ([aen] or full [aenən]) also seems to be preferred if the quantifier reading of the indefinite article matters semantically, i.e. if it is truth-conditionally relevant. Cf. the following instance of repair in an interview:

(1) MAG: grad wieder nachwuchs gekriecht
son KLEEnen_ne? (-)
just got offspring
kind of a small one right? (-)

(2) INT: also (-) äh' a' (-) SELBST (--) gezogene? (-)
so (-) uh uh (-) home-grown ones?

(3) MAG: jaja (.) naja **EInen** JA.
yesyes well one yes

In line 1, the interviewee (MAG) reports that the fish in his aquarium had offspring (*Nachwuchs*), which in German is a mass noun like its English counterpart. In the following apposition (*son kleenen* "kind of small one"), he uses the 'nasal only' article (in combination with *so* "kind of"). The interviewer in line 2 formulates an understanding check using a plural form (*selbstgezogene* "home grown ones"). In line 3, the interviewee corrects the plural reading by using [aenən], this time clearly pronounced as the full variant, thus making the quantifier meaning 'one' (small fish) clear. The less reduced form with the diphthong has more phonetic substance and is acoustically more prominent. Therefore it is more suitable to semantically 'heavier' uses, i.e. as a pronoun or a quantifier. In contrast, the most reduced form [n] is predominantly used as (indefinite) determiner in NPs introducing new information. There seems to be an iconic form-function-correlation between the reduced form and mere determiner use with low semantic weight, whereas acoustically more prominent diphthongal forms are used to index more semantic weight. See for example the use of the diphthong-form to indicate that indefiniteness of the NP is relevant:

(1) SWA: ähm ja ich hab ne freundin die **nen/** (.) die **ein** dialekt spricht,
uh yes I have a friend who speaks a dialect,

(2) aber ich weiß nich wo die HERkommt.
but I don't know where she is from.

Before the extract, the interviewee (SWA) was asked whether any member of her peer-group speaks a regional dialect. In line 1, she answers that a friend of hers does speak a dialect. She repairs the acoustically less prominent article *nen* by the more prominent diphthongal form *ein* [aen], which indexes the indefinite status of the object 'dialect' more clearly, i.e. that she does not know which specific dialect it is. The relevance of this semantic interpretation of the article is made explicit by the second part of her answer (line 2).

There are still other factors than semantic load and discursive relevance in play. This becomes apparent if we also take into account *einem*, the indefinite masculine/neuter article/quantifier in the dative case.

At first sight, it might come as a surprise that the distribution of the variants – full [aenəm], 'beginning only' [aem], 'nasal only' [m], 'end only' [nəm] and dialectal forms – differs considerably from the figures for the accusative case (cf. Figure 8). Most notably, 'nasal only' is comparatively rare (16.8%), whereas the 'end only' variant, which is virtually absent in the accusative case, is now almost on a par with the canonical full variant and with the 'beginning only' variant [aem]. Again, there is a clear difference in register: the canonical variant occurs only in 12.5% of the interview data, whereas it prevails in the media data (60.5%) and is almost exclusively used in news broadcasting (92%).

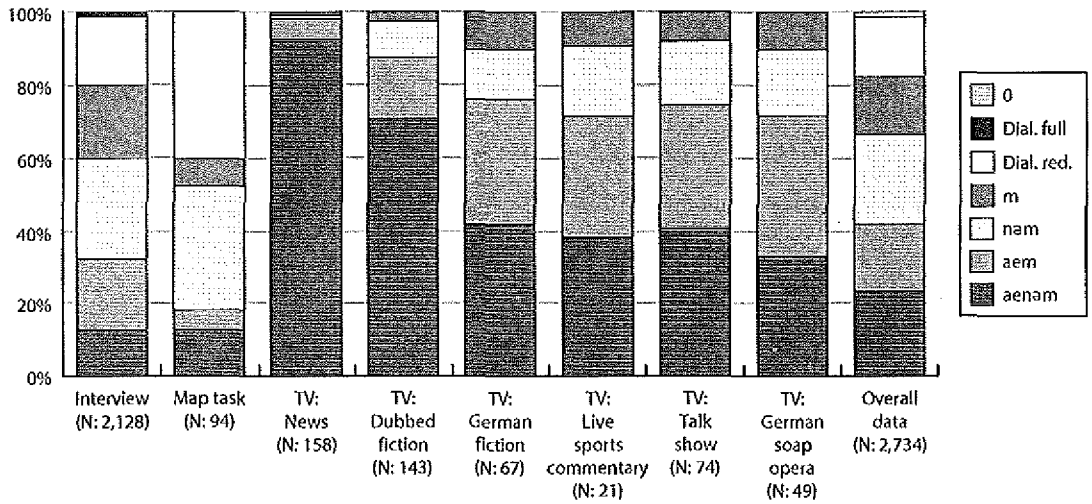

Figure 10. Distribution of *einem* (dative masculine and neuter, N = 2,734)

Nevertheless, what is most striking in comparison to the accusative is the change in distribution between the 'nasal only' and the 'end only' variants.

- The bilabial 'nasal only' variant [m] drops to 16.8% from 45.8% in the accusative.
- The 'end only' variant [nəm] is a regular option for the dative indefinite article in our interview data (27%); in the media data, it is only used in 10% of the cases. For the accusative case, the 'end only' variant [nən], however, is almost never used (less than 3%).

This difference between the cases cannot be accounted for in functional terms. Rather, the explanation lies in the different morphological and phonotactic contexts. Most instances of the indefinite article in the dative occur within prepositional phrases (PP) after a small set of prepositions (in declining order of frequency: *in, mit, von, an, bei, zu, unter, über*). The accusative case is twice as frequent overall, and collocational patterns are much more varied (cf. Nübling 1998). Prepositional cases (*für, auf, über, an, in*) play a role here, too, but there are many more instances of use as a determiner of a direct object, which allow for all different kinds of preceding lexical and phonetic contexts. We also have to take into account that the enclitic nasal in $\text{PREP+DET}_{\text{dative}}$ collocations (i.e. [m]) is conventionalized as the clitic variant of the definite article.[13] Therefore, in the syntactic context of a PP,

13. Many of these clitic variants are codified in standard grammars, such as *beim, vorm, zum* and the assimilated variants *am, vom* in the dative case. The accusative cliticizations are not codified, e.g. *fürn, aufn, übern, in(n), an(n).*

the reduction to 'nasal only' cannot be used to encode the indefinite article (keeping in mind that in German the preposition always has to precede the determiner immediately). Since the percentage of dative indefinite articles occurring within a PP is much higher than for the accusative indefinite article (about 90% of the datives are governed by a preposition vs. 10% of the accusatives), the overall ratio of the 'nasal only' variant is much lower for the dative case. This very fact also accounts for the higher frequency of the 'end only' variant [nəm] in the dative case as compared to the accusative case. Since most dative prepositions end in a vowel or vocalized /r/, e.g. *bei, zu, unter, über*, the use of [aem] would lead to a hiatus and is thus avoided. As diphthongs are avoided for euphonic reasons, and 'nasal only' is ruled out because this variant is reserved for the definite article, the use of the variant [nəm] is the 'natural' solution for the indefinite article in the dative case if a vowel precedes the indefinite article.

4. Preliminary conclusions

What do these empirical results tell us about standard usage? What can they contribute to an empirically based, realistic notion of standard, which does justice to how we speak in out-group interactions of varying degrees of formality?

1. National variation is clearly evident. For many phonetic variables, there are clear national borders, in particular between Germany and Switzerland, less between Austria and Germany (Bavaria). National variation has become increasingly accepted as a property of standard German (see Ammon et al. 2004; Krech et al. 2009). But to accept national variation while disallowing regional variation as a feature of the standard leads to the somewhat inconsistent result that variants which are standard in one region are non-standard a few miles away. This is often the case with respect to the German-Austrian border.
2. Regional variation within the German-speaking nation states is common in speech genres which have to be considered as critical sites for any notion of standard usage which purports to be relevant for how speakers use language in their daily lives. If regional variation is dismissed as non-standard, this necessarily leads to a regional bias: Codification has mostly opted for northern forms, because they are often closer to spelling pronunciation. But our analyses show that, especially in Germany (to a lesser degree in Austria and Switzerland), regional variation is pervasive. It reflects dialectal substrates (e.g. in the case of the [æ:]-pronunciation in *Käse* in the southwest of Switzerland), but also political boundaries (as in the case of *Chemie*

in Germany), and in some regional forms the effects of levelling between autochthonous and allochthonous forms (e.g. *Chemie* in Switzerland).

3. Codified pronunciation is often not the prevailing option, and is sometimes rare. As the analysis of the variants of ⟨ig⟩ shows, factors such as frequency, orientation towards writing (spelling pronunciation), and subtle properties of phonotactic and morphological context may account for a considerable amount of variation which is not captured by codification. They sometimes even lead to paradoxical effects, as in the case of ⟨ig⟩, where the canonical fricative is more often used in highly frequent words in more informal contexts than in less frequent words in highly formal contexts. Of course, it is questionable whether codification should try to capture such regularities as rules because areal distributions are often rather gradual and hard to generalize. They vary item by item, depend much on the discourse context and are probably in flux. Variation is not the exception; it is the rule. As a consequence, it may be more interesting to know which variants may be produced and tend to be preferred in which region and which register than to define one variant as the standard.
4. Often, the codified variant is only used in registers situated at the extreme end of the formality continuum, i.e. in monological, reading-aloud tasks. But language is mostly used in social interaction which is not scripted. If we accept that the standard must not be a norm that can only be applied correctly by professional speakers, but has to be relevant as a point of orientation in everyday talk, then we must also accept the fact that a spoken standard is stratified according to social occasions of speech, i.e. it needs to include various registers. Otherwise, 'standard' would be a severely restricted notion of at best dubious relevance to everyday linguistic practices.
5. There is a range of phenomena within standard usage which do not vary significantly according to region, but still differ clearly from the written standard. Weak forms such as the indefinite article and other phenomena of elision (such as the apocope of the first person singular /-e/ and second and sometimes third person singular /-t/ in present tense verbs), cliticization (e.g. V+PRO and PREP+article encliticization) and assimilation clearly belong to them. Research in Interactional Linguistics over the last two decades has also shown that grammatical constructions which are neither codified nor common in writing are core practices of spoken standard usage. Among them are expansions beyond the right component of the *Verbklammer* ("sentence brace", cf. Auer 1996a), various forms of pre-front-field elements (Auer 1996b), projector constructions (Günthner 2011), verb-second constructions after connectors which are classified as subjunctors in standard grammar (Günthner 1996) and the grammaticalization of constructions that

become discourse markers (Deppermann 2011) – to name just a few highly recurrent phenomena. However, we know very little about how general these structures exactly are, and how they vary in relation to region, genre and register.

References

Ammon, Ulrich. 1983. "Soziale Bewertung des Dialekt-Sprechers: Vor- und Nachteile in Schule, Beruf und Gesellschaft". *Die Entfaltung der deutschen Sprachgestalt in der Vor- und Frühzeit* ed. by W. Bersch and F. Tscherch, 1500–1510. Berlin: Schmidt.

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

Ammon, Ulrich. 2005. "Standard und Variation: Norm, Autorität, Legitimation". *Standardvariation. Wieviel Variation verträgt die deutsche Sprache?* ed. by L. Eichinger and W. Kallmeyer, 28–40. Berlin & New York: de Gruyter.

Ammon, Ulrich, Hans Bickel, Jakob Ebner, et al. 2004. *Variantenwörterbuch des Deutschen. Die Standardsprache in Österreich, der Schweiz und Deutschland sowie in Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Ostbelgien und Südtirol.* Berlin & New York: de Gruyter.

Auer, Peter. 1996a. "On the prosody and syntax of turn-continuations". *Prosody in Conversation. Interactional Studies* ed. by E. Couper-Kuhlen and M. Selting, 57–100. Cambridge: CUP.

Auer, Peter. 1996b. "The pre-front field in spoken German as a grammaticalization position". *Pragmatics* 6 (3): 295–322.

Auer, Peter. 1997. "Führt Dialektabbau zur Stärkung oder Schwächung der Standardvarietät?". *Standardisierung und Destandardisierung europäischer Nationalsprachen* ed. by K. Mattheier and E. Rathke, 129–161. Frankfurt am Main: Lang.

Auer, Peter. 2005. "Europe's sociolinguistic unity, or: A typology of European dialect/standard constellations". *Perspectives on Variation* ed. by N. Delbecque, J. van der Auwera, and D. Geeraerts, 7–42. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Barbour, Stephen, and Patrick Stevenson. 1990. *Variation in German. A Critical Approach to German Sociolinguistics.* Cambridge: CUP.

Bex, Tony, and Richard J. Watts, eds. 1999. *Standard English. The Widening Debate.* London: Routledge.

Burri, Gabriela. 2003. "Spontanschreibung im Chat". *Linguistik online* 15 (3/03): 3–33.

Clyne, Michael. 1992. "German as a pluricentric Language". *Pluricentric Languages. Differing Norms in Different Nations* ed. by M. Clyne, 117–148. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Crowley, Tony. 2003. *Standard English and the Politics of Language.* 2nd ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Deppermann, Arnulf. 2011. "Constructions vs. lexical items as sources of complex meanings. A comparative study of constructions with German *verstehen*". *Constructions: Emerging and Emergent* ed. by P. Auer and S. Pfänder, 88–126. (= *linguae & litterae*, 6) Berlin: de Gruyter.

Duden. 2005. *Aussprachewörterbuch. Duden Band 6.* 6th ed. Mannheim: Duden.

Durrell, Martin. 1999. "Standardsprache in England und Deutschland". *Zeitschrift für germanistische Linguistik* 27 (3): 285–308.

Durrell, Martin. 2003. "Register, Variation und Fremdsprachenvermittlung. Zum Problem des Deutschunterrichts in Großbritannien". *Deutsch von außen* ed. by G. Stickel, 239–258. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Eichinger, Ludwig. 2001. "Sprache und Sprachgebrauch im Süden Deutschlands. Konturen eines süddeutschen Gebrauchsstandards". *Regionalstandards* ed. by E. Knipf-Komlósi and N. Berend, 61–94. Budapest: Dialóg Kiampo Kiadó.

Eichinger, Ludwig. 2005. "Norm und Variation. Zur realen Existenz nationaler Varietäten". *Varietäten – Theorie und Empirie* ed. by A. Lenz and K. Mattheier, 141–162. Frankfurt: Lang.

Garvin, Paul L., and Madeleine Mathiot. 1968. "The Urbanization of the Guarani Language: A Problem in Language and Culture". *Readings in the Sociology of Language* ed. by J. A. Fishman, 365–374. The Hague: Mouton.

Gloy, Klaus. 1995. "Zur Methodologie der Sprachnormen-Forschung". *Sprachnormen und Sprachnormwandel in gegenwärtigen europäischen Sprachen* ed. by O. Müller, D. Nerius, and J. Unger, 73–93. Rostock: Universität Rostock.

Günthner, Susanne. 1996. "From subordination to coordination? Verb-second position in German causal and concessive constructions". *Pragmatics* 6 (3): 323–371.

Günthner, Susanne. 2011. "Between emergence and sedimentation: Projecting constructions in German interactions". *Constructions: Emerging and Emergent* ed. by P. Auer and S. Pfänder, 156–185. (= *linguae & litterae*, 6) Berlin: de Gruyter.

Haas, Walter, and Ingrid Hove. 2009. "Die Standardaussprache in der deutschsprachigen Schweiz". *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* ed. by E.-M. Krech, E. Stock, U. Hirschfeld, and L. C. Anders, 259–277. Berlin & New York: de Gruyter.

Hollmach, Uwe. 2007. *Untersuchungen zur Kodifizierung der Standardaussprache in Deutschland.* Frankfurt am Main: Lang.

Hundt, Markus. 2010. "New norms – How new grammatical constructions emerge". *Grammar between Norm and Variation* ed. by A. N. Lenz and A. Plewnia, 27–57. Frankfurt am Main: Lang.

Kehrein, Roland. 2009. "Dialektalität von Vorleseaussprache im diatopischen Vergleich – Hörerurteil und phonetische Messung". *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik* 76 (1): 14–54.

Kleiner, Stefan. 2011. "Zur Aussprache von nebentonigem *-ig* im deutschen Gebrauchsstandard". *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik* 77 (3): 259–303.

Kloss, Heinz. 1952. *Die Entwicklung neuer germanischer Kultursprachen seit 1800.* Düsseldorf: Schwann.

Kluge, Friedrich. 1989. *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache.* 22nd ed. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Koch, Peter, and Wulf Oesterreicher. 2008. "Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit von Texten". *Textlinguistik. 15 Einführungen* ed. by N. Janich, 199–215. Tübingen: Narr.

Kohler, Klaus. 1995. *Einführung in die Phonetik des Deutschen.* 2nd ed. Berlin: Erich Schmidt.

König, Werner. 1989. *Atlas zur Aussprache des Schriftdeutschen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland.* Ismaning: Hueber.

König, Werner. 2004. *dtv-Atlas deutsche Sprache.* 14th ed. München: dtv.

Krech, Eva-Maria, Eberhard Stock, Ursula Hirschfeld, and Lutz-Christian Anders. 2009. *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch.* Berlin & New York: de Gruyter.

Labov, William. 1966. *The Social Stratification of English in New York City.* Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Labov, William. 1996. "When intuitions fail". *Chicago Linguistic Society* 32: 77–106.

Laeufer, Christiane. 2010. "Nasal vowels in French loanwords in German: The effect of linguistic environment". *Folia Linguistica* 44 (1): 53–101.

Lenz, Alexandra N. 2003. *Struktur und Dynamik des Substandard. Eine Studie zum Westmitteldeutschen (Wittlich/Eifel).* (= *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik. Beihefte*, 125) Stuttgart: Steiner.

Lenz, Alexandra N., and Albrecht Plewnia, eds. 2010. *Grammar between Norm and Variation.* Frankfurt am Main: Lang.

Maitz, Péter, and Stephan Elspaß. 2011. "Zur sozialen und sprachpolitischen Verantwortung der Variationslinguistik". *Dynamik des Dialekts – Wandel und Variation. Akten des 3. Kongresses der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Dialektologie des Deutschen (IGDD)* ed. by E. Glaser, J. E. Schmidt, and N. Frey, 221–240. Stuttgart: Steiner.

Maitz, Péter, and Stephan Elspaß. 2012. "'Dialektfreies Sprechen – leicht gemacht!' Sprachliche Diskriminierung von deutschen Muttersprachlern in Deutschland". *Der Deutschunterricht* 63 (3): 7–17.

Milroy, James, and Lesley Milroy. 1999. *Authority in Language: Investigating Standard English.* 3rd ed. London: Routledge.

Möller, Robert, and Stephan Elspaß. 2008. "Erhebung dialektgeographischer Daten per Internet: Ein Atlasprojekt zur deutschen Alltagssprache". *Sprachgeographie digital. Die neue Generation der Sprachatlanten (mit 80 Karten)* ed. by S. Elspaß and W. König, 115–132. (= *Germanistische Linguistik*, 190–191) Hildesheim, Zürich & New York: Georg Olms.

Nübling, Damaris. 1998. "Wann werden die deutschen Präpositionen flektieren? Grammatisierungswege zur Flexion". *Models of Inflection. Linguistische Arbeiten 388* ed. by R. Fabri, A. Ortmann, and T. Parodi, 266–289. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

Schmidt, Jürgen Erich. 2010. "Language and space: The linguistic dynamics approach". *Language and Space: An International Handbook of Linguistic Variation. Volume 1: Theories and Methods* ed. by P. Auer and J. E. Schmidt, 201–225. (= *Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft/Handbooks of Linguistics and Communication Science*, 30: 1) Berlin & New York: de Gruyter.

Schmidt, Jürgen Erich, and Joachim Herrgen. 2011. *Sprachdynamik: Eine Einführung in die moderne Regionalsprachenforschung.* Berlin: Schmidt.

Schröder, Ingrid, and Michael Elmentaler. 2009. "Sprachvariation in Norddeutschland (SiN)". *Niederdeutsches Jahrbuch* 132: 41–68.

Siebs, Theodor. 1898. *Deutsche Bühnenaussprache. Ergebnisse der Beratungen zur ausgleichenden Regelung der deutschen Bühnenaussprache, die vom 14.-16. April 1898 im Apollosaale des Königlichen Schauspielhauses zu Berlin stattgefunden haben.* Berlin, Köln & Leipzig: Ahn.

Siebs, Theodor. 1969. *Deutsche Aussprache. Reine und gemäßigte Hochlautung mit Aussprachewörterbuch* ed. by H. de Boor, H. Moser, and C. Winkler. 19th ed. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Spiekermann, Helmut. 2006. "Standardsprache als regionale Varietät – Regionale Standardvarietäten". *Osnabrücker Beiträge zur Sprachtheorie* 71: 81–99.

Trudgill, Peter. 1999. "Standard English: What it isn't". *Standard English: The Widening Debate* ed. by T. Bex and R. J. Watts, 117–128. London: Routledge.

Trudgill, Peter, and Jean Hannah. 2008. *International English: A Guide to Varieties of Standard English.* 5th ed. London: Hodder Arnold.

Vogel, Petra M. 2006. "'Ich hab da nen kleines Problem!'. Zur neuen Kurzform nen des indefiniten Artikels im Deutschen". *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik* 73 (2): 176–193.

Wells, John C. 2008. *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*. 3rd ed. Harlow: Pearson.

Wiesinger, Peter. 2009. "Die Standardaussprache in Österreich". *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* ed. by E.-M. Krech, E. Stock, U. Hirschfeld, and L. C. Anders, 229–258. Berlin & New York: de Gruyter.

Ziegler, Evelyn. 2012. "*Merkel hat 'nen Neuen*. Die Kurzform *nen* – ein Mündlichkeitsmarker par excellence". *Anders Schreiben: Formen, Funktionen, Traditionen* ed. by B.-M. Schuster and D. Tophinke, 295–316. (= *Philologische Studien und Quellen*, 236) Berlin: Schmidt.