Doris Stolberg

Changing argument structure in (heritage) Pennsylvania German

Abstract: By way of migration, large numbers of German-speaking settlers arrived in Pennsylvania between roughly 1700 and 1750. Pennsylvania German, as a distinct variety, developed through levelling processes from L1 varieties of these migrants who came mainly from the southwestern regions of the German speaking area. Pennsylvania German is still spoken today by specific religious groups (primarily Amish and Menonnite groups) for many of whom it is an identity marker. My paper focuses on those Pennsylvania Germans who are not part of these religious groups but have the same migration history. Due to their being closer to the cultural values of American mainstream society, they were integrated into it, and during the 20th century their use of Pennsylvania German was continually diminishing. A revival of this heritage language has occurred over the past c. three decades, including language courses offered at community colleges, public libraries, etc., where ethnic Pennsylvania Germans wish to (re-)learn the language of their grandparents.

    Written Pennsylvania German data from four points in time between the 1860s and the 1990s were analysed in this study. Based on these linguistic analyses, differences between the data sets are shown that point towards a diachronic change in the language contact situation of Pennsylvania German speakers. Sociolinguistic and extralinguistic factors are considered that influence the role of PG and make their speakers heritage speakers much in the sense of recent immigrant heritage speakers, although delayed by 200 years.

Keywords: Pennsylvania German, argument structure, language change, heritage language

1 Introduction

The topic of heritage languages and their speakers receives attention in a number of different settings (cf. Hornberger 2005, Polinsky/Kagan 2007). Among the

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major concerns is the question of how heritage language speakers – who have been exposed to their heritage language usually from early on – are best taken care of in and can benefit from a language learning classroom setting, as their starting point is obviously quite different from that of other language learners who had no previous contact with the language in question. Another aspect is the assessment of heritage language competence, complicated by highly variable acquisition scenarios and a wide range of input varieties. An important question in this respect is how to determine the baseline language, that is, the actual input variety of a heritage language speaker. As heritage language exposure frequently occurs in informal settings, formally acquired and normatively prescribed varieties usually do not provide a good measure. It is important to assess the baseline variety properly so that no erroneous conclusions be drawn about presumed language change or attrition processes. Related to this is the question of what changes languages undergo in a heritage situation that can include incomplete transmission scenarios. It is this latter research interest that is central to the present paper.

The focus of the paper is on an immigrant language in the USA that has been retained by its speech community for over three hundred years: Pennsylvania German (PG)[1]. During most of this time, PG was in close contact with (American) English (AE), as are more recent immigrant languages in the USA as well. What sets this case apart is the long duration of the heritage setting that can add a long-term perspective to the discussion on heritage languages more generally.

2 Historical background

During the religious conflicts and the devastations of the Thirty-Year-War (1618–1648), central Europe had lost a considerable part of its population. In order to attract settlers and work against the depletion of his electorate, the elector of the Rhenish Palatinate promised land and religious freedom to anybody willing to settle under his rule. Due to regional conflicts and a change in religious policy, however, living conditions deteriorated considerably within the following decades. During the same period, William Penn recruited settlers for his newly (1681) founded state of Pennsylvania in North America. As a consequence, large numbers of German-speaking settlers immigrated to Pennsylvania between c. 1700 and 1750. The immigrants were speakers of different but closely related German varieties from the southwestern parts of the German speaking area of that
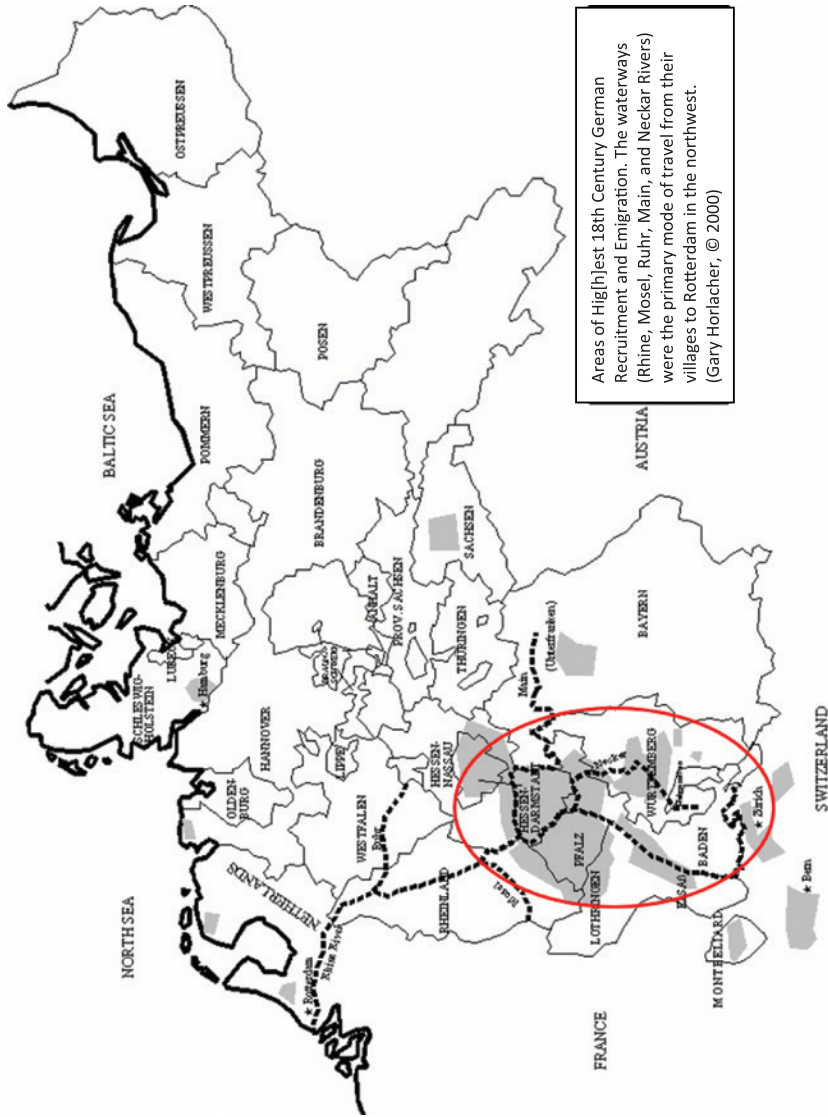
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1 also referred to as Pennsylvania Dutch.

Areas of Hig[h]est 18th Century German Recruitment and Emigration. The waterways (Rhine, Mosel, Ruhr, Main, and Neckar Rivers) were the primary mode of travel from their villages to Rotterdam in the northwest. (Gary Horlacher, © 2000)

Fig. 1: Main regions of origin of German immigrants in Pennsylvania (circled area)[2]

2 Source: http://www.progenealogists.com/images/1700GerEm.jpg (circling of relevant area added, DS).

time (mainly Palatinate German, but also Swabian, Alemannic, Alsatian, Hessian, etc.; cf., e.g., Grubb 1990, Häberle 1909, Lambert 1924, Seel 1988, Werner 1996, Westphal Fitch 2011).

In Pennsylvania, the immigrants' primary settlements were marked by a rural lifestyle and little contact with other immigrant groups. The immigrants' group itself was fairly homogeneous; native varieties that were (more or less) mutually intelligible, and a shared Christian-Protestant background[3] provided a sufficiently strong base to develop a stable group identity. These factors contributed to the preservation of German varieties.

During the second half of the 18th century, PG, as a distinct variety, emerged as the result of mixture and levelling of the original immigrants' varieties, and it stabilized around 1800. PG displays lexical and grammatical features of the original source dialects in a new combination and added to by lexical and some structural innovations (e.g., Bowie 1997, Buffington/Barba 1954, Fuller 1999, Haag 1956, Post 1992, Van Ness 1996). The first written documents date from around 1830, and the first linguistic description appeared in 1872 (Haldeman 1872), indicating the linguistic recognition of PG as a separate variety. Today, it is mainly spoken by specific religious groups (primarily Amish and Menonnite groups) for many of whom it is an important marker of their religious identity (cf. Louden 2006, 2008).

3 The speech community

Currently, the PG speech community falls roughly into two parts. One of them is the Anabaptist, or sectarian, speaker group. In this group, PG is usually the L1, while AE is acquired as an early L2, mainly under normative control as it is the medium of school instruction (Hostetler 1993, Louden/Page 2005). This acquisition setting results in balanced bilingualism for the members of the speech community. For most speakers, PG is their in-group variety and has the function of a high-ranking identity marker (Enninger 1986, Louden 2006). Consequently, it is important to keep PG viable and distinct from AE.

For the group of non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans, the linguistic setting is different. Up until World War I, and in several places even up until World War II, the PG speech community consisted of monolingual speakers of PG and bilingual speakers of PG and AE. Considering the order of acquisition (first/

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3 At the time of immigration, the majority of the settlers belonged to the Lutheran or Reformed Protestant church. Only 4% of them were members of Anabaptist groups, mainly of Amish and Mennonite affiliation (Louden 2006).

second), language command (dominance), and social and communicative function (primary/secondary), there were many bilingual speakers whose first, dominant, and primary language was PG, while AE was second in terms of acquisition, command and communicative frequency and function. Even into the 1940s, not all speakers of PG were fluent in AE, as one contributor's comment in the *Eileschpiggel*[4] of September 1943 indicates:

> "Ich kann aa weenich Englisch schwetze. Mir breiche uns net schemme. Es leit genunk hinne uns as schwetzt in re Schtimm as alle Leit verschteh kenn, waer un was mer sin."

> [*I, too, can speak only a little English. We don't have to be ashamed. Enough lies behind us that speaks in such a voice that everybody can understand who and what we are.* (my translation, DS)]

Today, however, non-sectarian Pennsylvania German group identification rests on cultural markers[5] of their ethnicity and much less on language command. PG is viewed as a diachronic heritage marker, and purist tendencies cause a conscious and explicit decision to delimit borrowing from English (e.g., Druckenbrod p.c.[6]). As a result, word-form borrowing from AE is more limited than in sectarian PG. Since group identity is not crucially indicated by speaking PG, code-switching to AE is acceptable, affording the preservation of a not fully viable variety for ethnic affiliation. The large majority of non-sectarian PG speakers today acquired PG as an early or late L2, with AE being their L1 (Kopp 1999). That is, all non-sectarian PG speakers are fluent speakers of AE today while their command of PG may vary.

4 PG speakers as heritage speakers

Members of the PG speech community, being speakers of an immigrant minority language that has been maintained over several generations, can be considered heritage language speakers. Their heritage language history falls into, at least, two distinct stages that show parallels with the setting of more recent heritage language communities.

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4 a PG newspaper, published in Bethlehem, Pa., 1943–46.

5 such as food, recipes, arts and crafts, and the use of "trophy words", i.e., single words and phrases from PG.

6 R. Druckenbrod is the author of "Es Deitsch Schtick", a weekly PG dialect column that appeared in The Allentown Morning Call between 1978 and 1985.

During the 18ᵗʰ century, the concept of heritage language does not apply in a strict sense as many different speech communities settled in North America, and the primacy of English on a local scale was not solidly established everywhere. The PG heritage setting starts, I suggest, with the period of early social stigmatization around the mid-1800s when the prejudiced image of PG speakers as "uneducated farmers" was established, because at this time speaking a language different from English appears to have become a marker of a distinct non-majority group affiliation. The timing may be related to increasing immigration numbers during the second half of the 1800s, with a sharp rise just after 1900. A legislative reflection of changed attitudes towards aliens as well as foreign languages is the Naturalization Act of 1906 that crucially includes the requirement of speaking English in order to become naturalized (Olson/Woll 2002:5). Around World War I, and even more so between the two World Wars, being German was strongly stigmatized due to the political circumstances. As one consequence, the transmission of PG from one generation to the next was interrupted by the decision of the parent generation. This development led to a heritage setting very much like that of recent immigrants where the immigrating generation consists of native L1 speakers of the language but the language is not transmitted fully to the next generation (cf. Jordan 1978; Huffines 1980, 1984a; Louden/Page 2005). The result for the PG speech community was the wide-spread use of a learner variety of the majority language, AE, with marked features resulting from structural interference from the speech community's former L1 (mainly in pronunciation, but also, to some degree, in word order and lexicon; cf. Van Coetsem 1995, 2000, and Thomason/Kaufman 1988 on structural interference in a language shift setting). This (original) learner variety, Pennsylvania German English (PGE), was able to stabilize for some time (cf., e.g., Huffines 1984b, Louden/Page 2005) since the cultural-ethnic group of Pennsylvania Germans maintained close social ties among themselves and rather looser ties with the AE L1 speech community.

During the 1960s, a school reform was implemented in Pennsylvania, replacing many small local schools with fewer but much larger ones that consequently served a much more diverse student community (Wenders 2003). In this setting, PGE became marked as a deviant variant of AE, and its speakers, again, were stigmatized for not speaking AE 'properly', i.e., according to the (social) norm. Consequently, they adjusted to mainstream AE, due to two factors: They wanted to minimize the social pressure, a strong extralinguistic motivation to change language behavior; and, as a crucial linguistic factor in this process, the new schooling situation made available mainstream L1 input in AE.

In the 1970s, a number of PG speakers dedicated time and effort to encourage and continue the intergenerational transmission of PG. Newspaper features as the following one (Figure 2) indicate, however, that at this time, PG L1 transmis-

Ernie and Irene Bechtel of Ephrata are trying to preserve Pennsylvania Dutch dialect

Couple's television show attempting to keep Pennsylvania Dutch alive

EPHRATA (AP) — Irene and Ernie Bechtel's Pennsylvania Dutch television talk show is only the latest campaign in their 25-year uphill battle to keep the dialect alive.

The television show, conducted entirely in Pennsylvania Dutch, starts every Wednesday with a cheerful "gut owed" — good evening — from Mrs. Bechtel and then launches into 30 minutes of slapstick, buffoonery and earthy philosophy.

On "Blauder mitem Buschgnibble un Minnie Schnauss" — which translates as "Chat with Clodhopper and Snoopy Minnie," the Bechtels conduct interviews with local quiltmakers, artists and doctors.

The show is broadcast on Ephrata cable television channel CATV and is carried by cable systems in Lebanon, Reading and Palmerton.

Bechtel, a stocky, 56-year-old barber and native Pennsylvania Dutchman, said the language is "as much a part of Lancaster County as chicken-corn soup and woodcarving...I'll stop at nothing to ignite the flame."

He has written 15 humorous plays and 500 poems in the dialect, turns out a weekly column for the local newspaper, cohosts a weekly radio program and tutors students at his home.

It started back at elementary school in Bechtel's home town of Reinholds, when a teacher scrubbed his mouth with lye soap until his tongue bled to discourage use of the language.

Bechtel said he was "stubborn, obstinate and pigheaded" then as now. The ordeal didn't change a thing.

The Bechtels are part of a growing effort by professors, museums and just plain folks to preserve the language. Developed by descendants of Swiss and German immigrants who came to the area more than 200 years ago, Pennsylvania Dutch is the principal language of the Amish and Old Order Mennonites and is used by many old-timers.

Willard Martin, professor of German at the Pennsylvania State University, said of the Bechtel's show, "I consider these interviews important. They present an excellent example of the dialect. Sometimes I wish they were a little more professional, but one thing is certain — Bechtel is a master of the dialect."

The fans don't mind that alleged lack of professionalism. CATV programing director Bob Miller said he believes about 115,000 state residents watch regularly.

The couple gets "piles of fan mail," said the plump, merry Mrs. Bechtel, 58. "People often stop me on the street to say, 'We saw your Dutch show — keep up the good work.'"

Scholars are pessimistic about the dialect's survival. William Parsons, a history professor at Ursinus College in Collegeville, said many of its non-Amish adherents are elderly "Fancy Dutch."

"When those generations die, so will the dialect. Their children aren't learning it, even in the Dutch country of Pennsylvania," he said.

In 1949, Parsons estimates 300,000 Americans used the dialect. In his recent book, "The Pennsylvania Dutch: A Persistent Minority," he said about 150,000 now use the language — 90 percent of them in Pennsylvania. In 20 years, he says, it may die out completely.

Fig. 2: Newspaper article from The Morning Call[7], January 8, 1979

sion was breaking down, as marked by phrases like "their 25-year uphill battle to keep the dialect alive".

A few decades ago, however, a process gained momentum that I refer to as the second heritage setting of (non-sectarian) PG: the revival of PG as a marker of ethnic and cultural heritage. In this context, PG is promoted as the cultural community heritage language. The regional, and often just symbolic, use of words and phrases from PG as isolated borrowings within AE speech is applied to mark the PG heritage identity; this usage, however, is not linked to a widespread functional command of the variety. Only few speakers of PG are L1 speakers, and, usually, they are elderly (70+ years of age). It is of considerable linguistic relevance that the promoters and prestige speakers of PG, such as course instructors

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7 a daily newspaper, published in Allentown, Pa.

or authors of newspaper columns, are L2 acquirers of PG[8]. Acquisition contexts for them include learning, or at least overhearing, it from older relatives (e.g., grandparents) or in a local workplace in the community[9]. That is, PG was acquired in a cultural heritage setting but not necessarily within the family and certainly not through direct intergenerational transmission. In addition, this informal and untutored acquisition context, rather typical of more recent heritage language settings, is increasingly complemented or even replaced today by a tutored classroom setting. So, while formerly the language input was of a naturally occurring kind, it now tends to be of a more mediated kind and in a somewhat constructed setting. The change in acquisition context is an indicator of (a) a breakdown of intergenerational transmission within the (extended) family; and (b), from a motivational perspective, a strong desire to mark cultural/ethnic heritage with language means, however limited. It seems that what is relevant here is not being functional in PG but preserving a culture and (some knowledge of) a language that are different from the mainstream.

Advertisement of PG classes is framed in terms of cultural heritage and family relations; that is, PG is explicitly linked to informal communication settings. Public libraries and community colleges are among the primary providers of such classes, marking them as low-threshold offers (financially as well as in terms of educational prerequisites) and as offers that are linked to a regional group identity.[10] In 2010, the Reading Eagle, a local newspaper from Reading, Pa., advertised the publication of a new PG textbook.[11] The feature provides some background information on the textbook authors that reflects well the heritage setting of PG (acquisition of PG as a second language, overhearing it when relatives spoke it) as well as language attitudes (a strong emotional value is attached to PG, indicated by phrases such as "this strange, stirring language") and language planning intentions (extending the vocabulary to cover current communicative needs) of current prestige speakers of PG.

In the following section, written PG data are analysed with respect to selected diachronic changes in this heritage variety.

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8 Cf. Trudgill (2011) on typological changes, especially in terms of morphological simplification, to be expected if large numbers of late (i.e., after puberty) L2 acquirers speak a language.
9 According to anecdotal reports in newspapers (e.g., http://articles.mcall.com/2009-10-18/news/4460119_1_pennsylvania-dutch-speaking-lehigh-valley; cf. also fn. 11), this is the PG acquisition background of several instructors of PG classes.
10 Cf., e.g., http://www.emmauspl.org/events/PENNSYLVANIA%20GERMAN%20CLASSES%20 2012.pdf
11 http://readingeagle.com/article.aspx?id=209496

5 Changes beneath the surface: Shifts in argument structure

5.1 The data base

The data base for the study consisted of printed PG texts from magazines and newspaper columns. In this text genre, relatively naturalistic patterns of language interference from AE can be expected as the texts are characterized by immediacy and conceptual orality (cf. Wulf/Oesterreicher 1985).

The corpus texts were published in southeastern Pennsylvania (Lancaster, Allentown, Pennsburg), an area whose counties even today have comparatively high numbers and a high proportion of PG speakers.[12] The data sets were chosen based on the following factors:
– same region of origin across time to avoid an erroneous interpretation of dialect divergence as diachronic change;
– a sufficiently large data set from as early as possible to get close to a hypothetical base-line variety at a time of limited contact with English;
– sufficient material from each source to be able to distinguish nonce borrowings (and typographical errors) from established loans/developments; and
– sources from before WW I as well as after WW II, based on the hypothesis that changing sociopolitical conditions and attitudes (towards Germany) had an impact on the use and set-up of PG.

Table 1 provides an overview of the data set-up and the size of the corpus analyzed.

The focus of the analyses was on semantic and syntactic features of verbs. I report here on shifts in argument structure, a semantic feature with syntactic consequences. Of main concern are changes in reflexive marking.

Verbs exhibiting a decreasing use or loss of surface reflexive marking

A quantitative analysis of reflexive marking patterns was carried out, considering all verbs that

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12 Cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Pennsylvania_German_distribution.png, based on U.S. census data of 2000.

Table 1: Corpus data overview

Date of publication	Name of feature (author/editor)	Place of publication	No. of verb tokens
1868	Breefa fum Pit Schwefflebrenner (E. H. Rauch)	Lancaster, Pa.	2,217 verb tokens (31 texts)
1913	Sim Schmalzgsicht's Own Magazine (ed. Rinn & Weiser)	Allentown, Pa.	2,749 verb tokens (96 texts)
1978–79[13]	Es Deitsch Schtick (R. Druckenbrod)	Allentown, Pa.	2,509 verb tokens (40 texts)
1989–92	Der Schnitzelbonk (C. Arner)	Pennsburg, Pa.	3,602 verb tokens (97 texts)

a. are attested in all four data sets, and
b. appear with surface reflexive marking in the corpus (or are immediately related to a reflexive verb in PalG, as in the case of *fiehle*, cf. below).

The verbs exhibiting these types of change differ from Palatinate German (PalG)[14] and Standard German (StG) in their use, their meaning, and/or argument structure, hinting at semantic-syntactic change. The established meanings and argument structures of these verbs in the relevant varieties were derived from the following sources: for PalG, the *Pfälzisches Wörterbuch* (1965–1998); for PG, Lambert (1924), a PG to English dictionary; Thierwechter (2002), a PG to English word collection; Beam (1985), an English to PG dictionary; and two lexicological studies of PG, namely Seel (1988) and Werner (1996). Not all of the sources provide entries for each verb under discussion, with the exception of the *Pfälzisches Wörterbuch* and Lambert (1924). In addition, none of these works offer much information on the syntactic realization of obligatory arguments. Therefore, conclusions on changes in argument structure can only be drawn from the sources where examples are provided of how a verb is commonly used, and where these examples can be analyzed with respect to possible patterns of argument realization.

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13 Of the 40 texts of this data set, 38 are from 1978–79, and one each is from 1982 and 1985, the latter being the last one of these columns.
14 Historically, PalG was one of the major source varieties of PG. Today, it is the European German variety that resembles PG the most.

5.2 Changes in argument structure: Preliminaries

PG, like many languages in contact, exhibits lexical changes, that is, borrowings, blends, loan translations, etc. (cf. Seel 1988, Werner 1996). Over time, changing estimates of the English influence on the PG lexicon were offered, cf. Table 2.

Table 2: AE influence on the PG lexicon

Research publication	Estimated percentage of AE material in PG lexicon	Remarks
Learned (1889)	12%–13%	– based on mainly written data – most likely non-sectarian PG[15]
Buffington/Barba (1954)	2%–8%	– non-sectarian PG – B/B note that variation depends on region, topic, age of speaker, etc.
Enninger (1985)	2.5%–7%	– sectarian PG
Knodt (1986)	14%	– sectarian PG (Old Order Amish, Delaware)

Estimates of this kind depend on what is counted as English material. It is impossible to draw an accurate line between German and English in the PG lexicon (cf. Seel 1988, Werner 1996, for possible combinations of overt, covert, and pseudo-borrowing patterns). What is not covered by such estimates are semantic shifts and changes in the lexicon where the lexical surface forms remain largely unchanged. My central research interest is the investigation of such lexical-semantic tendencies of change with <u>structural</u> consequences, as they have received little systematic attention so far with respect to PG.

Distinguishing between semantic/syntactic and phonological/morphological aspects of a verb as reflected in such language-contact phenomena agrees with Levelt's (1989) concept of a lexical entry as being divided into the *lemma* and the *phonological encoding*[16]:

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15 In sectarian PG speech communities, PG is not a written register, but only a spoken one. Therefore, the information that mainly written data were analyzed implies that they were non-sectarian PG data.

16 What Levelt (1989) refers to as 'phonological encoding' is also called a 'lexeme'. Here, Levelt's terminology is used because it offers a more transparent description of the parts of the lexical entry that are affected differently by language contact.
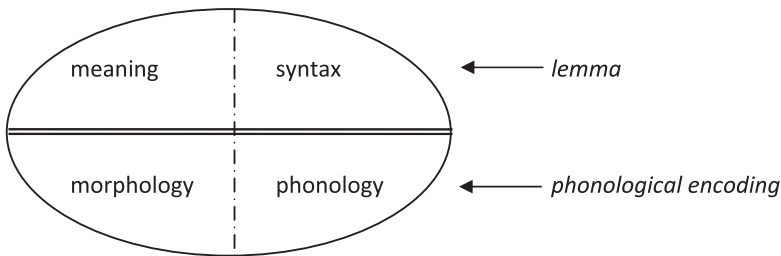
Fig. 3: Structure of a lexical entry (adapted from Levelt 1989:182, 187f.; following Kempen and Huijbers 1983)

Following Levelt (1989), I refer to the phonological, rather than the orthographic, form of the lexical entries, even though the data are written. There is no uniform orthography of PG in general use[17], even less so across the time range investigated. It would thus neither be informative nor indeed possible to speak of an unchanged orthographical form of what one must, for linguistic reasons, consider the same lexical item. Allowing for changing correspondences between spelling and sound, it is, however, possible to identify the (approximate) pronunciation of a lexical entry. Just to give an example, the verb 'hear', StG *hören*, PalG *heere*, appears in the following spellings (in the infinitive): *haehra, haere, heara* (1868); *haera, haerer, hearer* (1913); *heere* (1978 ff); *haera, haerra, hare, heara* (1989ff). (The number of not grammatically motivated variants increases if finite verb forms are included.) Influence from English orthography plays a role to changing degrees, and variable spellings appear within the same text and by the same author in unsystematic ways.

5.3 Changes in reflexive marking

The focus here is on clauses with an accusative reflexive pronoun in the position of direct object. Dative reflexive pronouns do not play a role in the changes to be discussed; therefore they are not included here (cf., e.g., Steinbach 1998 for structural differences between accusative and dative reflexive constructions). Reflexive clauses (with accusative reflexive pronouns) in German all share the same surface structure. Syntactically, they are transitive in that they include two syntactic arguments, that is, the nominative case subject and the accusative case

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17 linked to the fact that PG was never taught normatively in schools, and a prescriptive spelling norm does not apply.

reflexive pronoun in direct object position. Semantically, reflexive clauses in German can receive different interpretations, depending on verb and context. Four possibilities for interpretation exist (Steinbach 1998):

– <u>reflexives</u> (true reflexivity; the verb is used either reflexively or transitively)

   Example: *Er$_i$ rasiert <u>sich$_i$</u>* 'he shaves (himself)' vs. *Er$_i$ rasiert ihn$_j$* 'he shaves him'

– <u>middle constructions</u> (usually accompanied by a modifying adverb)

   Example: *Das Buch liest <u>sich</u> leicht* 'the book reads easily'

– <u>non-causatives / anticausatives</u> (for verbs that participate in the causative alternation[18])

   Example: *Die Tür öffnet <u>sich</u>* 'the door opens' vs. *Max öffnet die Tür* 'Max opens the door'

– <u>inherent reflexives</u> (lexically reflexive verbs; non-reflexive use is not possible)

   Example: *Er erkältet <u>sich</u>* 'he catches a cold' (*Er erkältet ihn 'he catches him a cold')

The reflexive pronoun in both middle constructions and non-causative constructions is not linked to a semantic argument in the argument structure of the verb; it is only syntactically selected (Steinbach 1998). The same is true for inherent (lexical) reflexives, but not for true reflexives where two arguments exist in the argument structure of the verb that are or are not coreferential (corresponding to reflexive vs. transitive use). English, in contrast, does not have a non-argument reflexive in the corresponding structure, which leads to surface identity between constructions that are distinguished by (+/−) reflexive marking in German, a difference already highlighted by Hawkins (1986). Hawkins (who does not differentiate between middle constructions and non-causative constructions) focusses on the reflexive marker and its presence / absence in German and English in both constructions, and on the fact that English allows "patient arguments" in the subject position without marking their origin as an internal argument. Other thematic roles can be involved, too (e.g. experiencer, cf. van Gelderen 2001, among others). What is crucial here is that the entity in subject position does not carry the role of agent/actor. Hawkins thus touches upon the matter of mapping different thematic roles to one syntactic form: English accepts the entity bearing the patient role (in Hawkins' terms) into subject position without morphological modification of the verb, while in German both middle constructions and non-causatives are often morphologically marked by a reflexive pronoun.

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18 Some German verbs that participate in the causative alternation form non-reflexive (i.e., morphologically unmarked) non-causatives (Abraham 1997, Schäfer 2003). They are not discussed here because the focus is on changes in the use of reflexive structures and reflexive marking.

Hawkins points out that the reflexive marker in German functions like an overt trace of the (internal) argument that has been moved into subject position:

> "This *sich* could be regarded as an overt marker in surface of the semantically appropriate object position from which the patient argument has been moved. It is significant that it is German that should preserve this pronoun, whereas English deletes all reference to any non-subject origin of these patients. Once again English is deleting more than German, and in the process English permits a complete structural identity and ambiguity between patient subject sentences such as *the door opens* and genuine agentive intransitive sentences like *the boy sings*." (Hawkins 1986:118)

Reflexive marking in the context of middle constructions and non-causative constructions is, from a structural (and semantic) perspective, the result of the opposite process to causativization in that the external cause/agent is removed (Fabricius-Hansen 1991, Levin/Rappaport Hovav 1994, Abraham 1997). With respect to both processes ("add / remove cause"), German tends to follow a *one form – one function* strategy, while in English one form is used to fulfill several functions, as Abraham (1997:19), similar to Hawkins (1986:118; cf. above), notes:

> "Damit erfüllt aber das Deutsche ganz allgemein und ohne den Zwang, auf kontextuelle Schlüssel zurückzugreifen, das Prinzip "eine Form – eine Bedeutung", wogegen das Englische dazu neigt, Ein- und Zweiwertigkeit zu einer einzigen Form zusammenfließen zu lassen (...)."

> ("*Therefore German, quite generally and without having to resort to contextual cues, fulfills the principle of "one form – one meaning", in contrast to English which tends to merge mono- and bivalency into one single form (...).*" [my translation, DS])

Against this background, the PG data on loss of reflexive marking receive their significance. The changes in PG affect different groups of verbs differently but where they do apply, they result in a shift towards form-function relations that are more like those in English (more functions are covered by fewer forms) and less like German.

The relevant instances of this change in my data fall into three categories[19]:

1. Verbs that are (almost) always used <u>without</u> a reflexive marker throughout my data, but where equivalents in Palatinate German and related German dialects appear regularly <u>with</u> reflexive markers. These PG verbs are taken to have <u>lost</u> their reflexive marking.

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19 Note that reflexive marking is a grammatical procedure and not linked to matters of style or sociolinguistic appropriateness.

Examples: (*sich*) *fiehle* 'feel', (*sich*) *wunnere* 'wonder'.

With respect to the classification of transitive reflexive constructions, these verbs are lexically (or inherently) reflexive in PalG and StG when used in the meaning they denote in the relevant data, but they do have non-reflexive German variants with different but related meanings. Non-reflexive *wunnere* (PalG, PG) 'amaze, surprise; (PG) wonder' can be used in impersonal constructions (e.g., *es wunnert ihn*, lit. 'it surprises him', i.e., 'he is surprised'). Non-reflexive *fühlen* (StG)/*fiehle* (PalG, PG) 'feel' is a verb of (physical) perception like *see*, *smell* or *hear*. As a reflexive verb (in PalG and StG), in contrast, it has a subjective-psychological meaning component and refers to a person's state of subjective well-being.

2. Verbs that occur with and without reflexive marking. These verbs instantiate cases of true reflexivity and can be used either as reflexive or as transitive verbs in PG as well as in European German dialects. In the reflexive use, they have two arguments that are coreferential, the second one being encoded as a reflexive pronoun in direct object position. In the transitive use, the two arguments are distinct.

Examples: *sich* (*hie*)*hocke* [refl.] 'sit down'; (*hie*)*hocke* [tr.] 'set down'
             sich (draa)gemaahne [refl.] 'remind oneself'; *(draa)gemaahne* [tr.] 'remind'

3. Verbs that are always used with a reflexive marker, in PG as well as in European German dialects. These verbs are cases of lexicalized or inherent reflexivity that have, in contrast to category 1, no non-reflexive variants with a related meaning.

Example: *sich ferlasse uff* 'rely on'

(This is the only verb of category 3 that is attested throughout all four data sets.)

There are no cases of "misplaced" reflexive markers in my PG data, that is, reflexive markers with verbs that do not allow a reflexive marker in other German varieties (e.g. **ich schlafe <u>mich</u>* 'I sleep REFL').
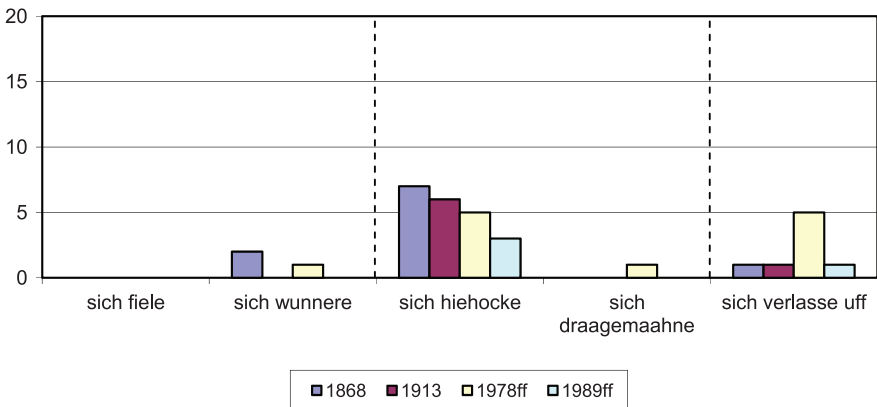
Table 3 provides a quantitative overview of the diachronic use of overt reflexive marking in the verbs under discussion.

The following two diagrams are based on the numbers in Table 3 and visualize the patterns of reflexive marking separated according to category.

Two factors appear to have an effect on a verb's susceptibility to change with respect to reflexive marking: Similarity in form between German and English, that is, the existence of a non-reflexive cognate in English as with (P)G (*sich*) *wunnere*/

Table 3: Use of reflexive verb marking (PG)

category	1: loss of reflexive marking				2: optional reflexive marking (true reflexivity)				3: stable reflexive marking	
verb	(sich) fiehle		(sich) wunnere		(sich) (hie)hocke		(sich) (draa)-gemaahne		(sich) ferlasse uff	
reflexive marking	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
1868	–	5	2	2	7	10	–	3	1	–
1913	–	11	–	4	6	13	–	3	1	–
1978ff.	–	3	1	12	5	7	1	14	5	–
1989ff.	–	14	–	18	3	15	–	10	1	–
total	–	33	3	36	21	45	1	30	8	–

Fig. 4: Verb occurrences <u>with</u> reflexive marker

AE *wonder* and (P)G (*sich*) *fiehle*/AE *feel*; and the availability of a non-reflexive variant within German.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, the following process can be assumed for PG verbs with close English cognates: During the activation process of lexical items in speech production (referred to as 'calling procedure' in Myers-Scotton 1993ff; cf. Green 1986, Levelt 1989), both cognates' entries are activated, leading to competition between their syntactic frames. In a setting of constant bilin-
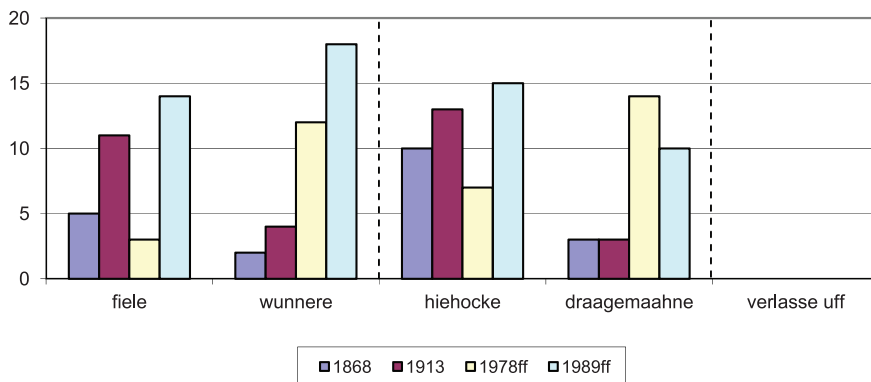
Fig. 5: Verb occurrences <u>without</u> reflexive marker

gualism, and given a trend towards form simplification, the choice is more likely to be made in favor of the English frame, I suggest, because English is the dominant language in most environments PG speakers encounter[20]. It is the language shared by all speakers they interact with, English monolinguals as well as English/PG bilinguals. Prestige factors and conflicting identity values are unlikely to interfere here, in the case of non-sectarian PG speakers, because of their high degree of integration into mainstream American society. The combination of an English argument structure (or lemma, following Levelt 1989) with the PG surface form (the phonological encoding of the lexical entry) allows the accommodation of both languages, and thus the expression of a dual social identity, at the same time.

Another factor that also influences the rate of change is the sociolinguistic message that a verb, an expression or a structure carries. In PG, reflexive *wunnere* is a shibboleth of group membership, and its application used to evoke a negative connotation. Today, however, with the imminent loss of the language, this connotation has changed to the opposite at least group-internally, making reflexive *wunnere* a marker of PG social identity.

High or low frequency of use appears to play a role, too. Here, the (low) frequency factor applies to the third category (*sich ferlasse uff*). This verb occurs in all four text blocks, always with a reflexive marker – but it shows an extremely low frequency of use, with only one occurrence each in 1868, 1913, and 1989ff, and five occurrences in 1978ff. A verb of such marginal use, with no immediate

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20 today, and at least since after the school reform in the 1960s, including the authors of the two younger data sets.

cognate the reflexive frame would clash with, does not increase the psycholinguistic load by much, I maintain, and can therefore be preserved with its original frame.

For the second category, verbs that can be used either with a reflexive marker or as transitive verbs (without reflexive marking), I observed a reduced preference to use these verbs in a meaning that requires reflexive marking, as compared to using the non-reflexive frame. That is, although there is no "positive" evidence for the loss of the reflexive marker as in category 1, the frequencies point towards a preference for the non-reflexive form that coincides with the English frame.

While PG overall shows a decreasing use of reflexive marking, one of the characteristic features recorded for PG-influenced English (PGE, cf. above) is the redundant use of reflexive markers, usually where the German construction required a reflexive marker. Buffington (1968:39) cites the following example from PGE as a typical instance:

(1) PGE   *Eat yourself done*
     PG/PalG   *Ess dich satt*
               eat REFL full
               'Eat your fill'

Such language use indicates that, when PG was the dominant language, German verb frames were transferred to English as well as to English loan words in PG. Today, with English being dominant, the opposite tendency prevails: English verb frames are extended to PG, in accordance with Thomason/Kaufman's (1988) and Van Coetsem's (1995, 2000) observation that structural influence from the dominant to the receding or weaker language is a typical outcome of language contact. It is also a reflection of shifted language relations in this heritage language setting.

5.4 PG verbs: Linguistic developments across time

The corpus data show that contact-induced changes can occur in the lemma, while the surface form part is preserved (relatively) unchanged. A possible explanation for this split is based on a combination of sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic reasons: The more salient parts of a lexical item (the phonological encoding) with their distinct language-specific affiliation are consciously preserved in their original form for sociolinguistic reasons while the lemma, being less salient and less accessible to conscious control, converges with the contact language.

As a general feature of these changes it can be established that the lexical forms of PG verbs remain German throughout the investigated period. There is even a proportional increase in German verb stems in the analyzed corpus between the 1868/1913 data, on one hand, and the 1978–1992 data, on the other, which is likely to be due to increased preservational efforts over the last few decades.

"Underneath" this German surface, however, that is, on the lemma level, the analysis of semantic-syntactic features of PG verbs revealed convergence with English patterns.

Related to the heritage setting and concomitant acquisition patterns of PG and AE, a diachronic correlation exists between certain contact settings and specific findings. For the authors of the older PG data, 1868 and 1913, that is, previous to World War I, PG was their L1, and the same can be assumed for the readership of these texts. Uninterrupted L1 transmission of PG had taken place up until this time. The contact phenomena found in the data reflect this: The primary type of interference consists of lexical borrowings from AE (including nonce borrowings) but little structural interference[21]. The data thus imply that PG was unambiguously the L1 and primary language of the speech community, with AE lexical items being readily available to (and being understood by) PG speakers. There may have been a good amount of code-switching going on even then, as reflected in reported dialogues from the corpus, but this did not necessarily entail a thorough command of AE, as occasional comments by the corpus texts' authors indicate.

The more recent data, 1978–1992, present a different picture in that here, quantitative lexical interference from AE is reduced while structural interference has increased if compared to the data from before WW I. This somewhat surprising finding can be explained when considering sociolinguistic factors. Authors, as well as most of the readers, by now are no longer L1 speakers of PG but of AE, with PG being acquired as the L2. Accordingly, structural interference from AE can be expected and is documented in the data, for example, as changes in word order and argument structure. Purist language planning activities have an impact on word choice, reflected by a reduced portion of AE origin verbs, but they do not affect the more structural components of PG that are psycholinguistically less salient and less accessible to conscious control (and manipulation).

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21 This claim is further supported by similar results from more structural areas of PG, i.e., different types of word order patterns (extraposition of prepositional phrases, preposition stranding, and finite verb position in subordinate clauses), with the earlier data sets showing clearly less structural influence from English than the later ones; cf. Stolberg 2014.

As a result, the underlying patterns of PG appear to slowly converge with AE, the majority language, while a strong (cultural) heritage motivation helps to preserve the German surface of lexical forms.

6 Pennsylvania German: Still a heritage language?

A heritage language is usually understood to be a community/minority/ immigrant language that has been maintained in a setting where a different language is the official or majority language. A heritage speaker is someone who has acquired or has been exposed to a heritage language early in life, and commonly in an informal setting. Typically, his/her acquisition of the heritage language has been somewhat incomplete because of limited or interrupted input (cf. Polinsky/ Kagan 2007).

While it would seem appropriate to consider PG a heritage language from an immigration / minority perspective, it is distinct from more recent heritage languages in that there are mainly, or even exclusively, L2 speakers today in the non-sectarian speech community. Also, since the variety came into being in Pennsylvania, there are no non-heritage speakers whose variety it can be compared to (in the sense of a baseline variety) to arrive at conclusions regarding language change. Therefore, any such research has to rely on either diachronic comparisons, or on comparisons with modern European forms of the source varieties of PG.

Current speakers acquired PG in a rather typical heritage setting: informally, by overhearing relatives speaking it with each other, or within the community environment. This transmission setting was quite similar to more recent heritage language settings. Today, however, the input is mostly or exclusively L2 input, and it is not available in natural interaction to a large degree, since PG is not a commonly spoken community language anymore. There are very few PG speakers today who bring up their children bilingually, and they are L2 heritage speakers of PG themselves.

The linguistically interesting question, then, is: What linguistic developments are to be expected if (non-sectarian) PG is transmitted by L2 speakers? According to Trudgill (2011), this scenario can have substantial typological consequences in the long run. Morphological features that Trudgill, following Dahl 2004, refers to as "L2 difficult" can be hypothesized to be lost. Generally, these are features that contribute to morphological complexity, that is, to a rich form inventory (within a paradigm) and to the encoding of a broad range of morphological categories (i.e., syntagmatically). Their reduction results in fewer forms that will

serve more functions, a tendency that is clearly displayed by the analyzed corpus data. While this development increases the functional load and reduces transparency (due to more ambiguous form-function relationships; cf. Plank 1983), the total amount of forms to be acquired is reduced. If, however, current L2 speakers of PG increasingly transmit PG to children in an early L2 or bilingual L1 setting, this will affect PG in yet other ways, even though, at the moment, their numbers are still too low to result in linguistic consequences.

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