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'Luxemburger Standarddeutsch'. On the future of the German language in Luxembourg[1]

Abstract: Although the German language has been part of the cultural heritage of Luxembourg for centuries, this fact has largely been forgotten by the general populace. The German language is often perceived as an import from Germany. There is hardly any awareness of an independent national standard German in Luxembourg ('Luxemburger Standarddeutsch'). This is where linguistics comes in. Systematic surveys and intensive study of a specific German language in Luxembourg could make an important contribution to a more reflective and more appreciative understanding of the language and the discussion about sovereignty. The question of the future of the German language in Luxembourg is intrinsically bound to this issue.

1 Background: German in multilingual Luxembourg – ambiguities, controversies, perspectives

The history of the German language begins in Luxembourg. The oldest written records of Old High German originate from the Luxembourgian Abbey of Echternach. This refers to German language glosses, which were already translated into Latin by 730 "Maihinger Evangeliar".[2] The history of the German language in Luxembourg continues to this day.[3] A well-known milestone for the Middle Ages is the „Reim-Vita", written in Middle High German (with a Luxembourgian influence) „Yolanda von Vianden",[4] developed in the late 13th century.[5] The German language also played an important role in early modern printing ('Buchdruck')[6] and administrative writing.[7] Similarly, from the very

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1   In: Muhr, Rudolf / Meisnitzer, Benjamin (eds.) (2018): Pluricentric Languages and Non-Dominant Varieties Worldwide: New Pluricentric Languages – Old Problems. Wien et al.: Peter Lang Verlag, pp. 233–252.
2   See Glaser/Moulin-Fankhänel (1999: 104).
3   For a historical overview, but also the role of the German language in Luxembourg, see Sieburg (2013). We also recommend the recent dissertation by Scheer (2017).
4   Edited by Newton/Lösel (1999) and Moulin (2009).
5   According to Fernand Hoffmann (1964: 37): "Wir dürfen in dieser mittelhochdeutschen Legende das erste Gedicht in luxemburgischer Sprache sehen".
6   See, for example, Moulin/Pauly (2007ff).
7   See Solms/Wegera (1999).

beginning, the country's newspaper business was closely linked to the German language.[8] An awareness of this tradition, or a certain pride in it, would be hard to find in the Luxembourg of today. The long history of the German language in Luxembourg was overthrown and suppressed by the occupation of the country by German troops in both the First and Second World Wars. The associated traumatic experiences have thoroughly and permanently discredited German. Only recently has a more positive and less biased view of the German language emerged.[9] A statement by the Luxembourgian writer Nico Helminger (born in 1953) is symptomatic and exemplary of the difficulty of dealing with German in the post-war period. Referring to his childhood memories, he said in an essay published in 2014 in the 'Zeitschrift für interkulturelle Germanistik' (ZiG):

My distrust of all Germans was so strong that I could not understand why we had to learn to read and write in this awful language in the first school year. [Mein Argwohn allem Deutschen gegenüber war so stark, dass ich nicht verstehen konnte, wieso wir im ersten Schuljahr ausgerechnet in dieser verpönten Sprache lesen und schreiben lernten.] (Helminger, 2014: 162)

Another passage is also interesting:

And something else struck me: the hated German language was far closer to our language than the highly praised French that most of us had difficulty with. [Und noch etwas fiel mir auf: Das verhasste Deutsch war weit näher an unserer Sprache als das hochgelobte Französisch, mit dem die meisten von uns ihre Schwierigkeiten hatten.] (Helminger, 2014: 162)

The quotations make three things clear:

1. Enormous damage had been caused to the image of the German language, especially due to the Nazi occupation ("awful language," "hated German").
2. The "highly praised French" is mentioned. French (not least as a 'prestige language') has also been part of the language history of Luxembourg since the Middle Ages too.
3. By "our language" Luxembourgish (Lëtzebuergesch) is meant, which is of particular relevance to the recent history of the language.

8 See Hilgert (2004).
9 See in particular, Sieburg (2013: 102ff). An indication of this is the increasing popularity of the German-speaking area as a place of study; according to the headlines of the Luxembourg daily press: "Deutsche Universitäten boomen, Luxemburger Studierende suchen zunehmend den Weg in den germanofonen Raum" (Luxemburger Wort of 3 October 2017, p. 2).

Luxembourgish has been developing since the 19th century, on the basis of the 'Westmoselfranconian' regional variety of German, to a now independent standard language. Luxembourgish is the mother tongue of (native) Luxembourg citizens and, since the language law of 1984, has been the official national language of the Grand Duchy. Until the Second World War, Luxembourgish was recognised by its speakers as 'Lëtzebuerger Däitsch',[10] [Luxembourgish German] which points to its close relationship to German. It was the spoken-language counterpart to written standard German. This means that the situation was comparable to today's situation in Switzerland, with the juxtaposition of spoken Schweizerdeutsch/Schwyzerdütsch [Swiss German vernacular] and Schriftdeutsch [Swiss standard German].[11]

The reason for a somewhat distant relationship with the German language is also due to the emancipation process of Luxembourg. Its establishment could only take place with a programmatic delimitation from the German language - and towards Germany.[12] Linguistic considerations were less important than political and social psychology. The establishment and emancipation of Luxembourg was an essential prerequisite for the gradual development of national consciousness in the 19th century. Already from this time, Klein (1999: 90) sees the relationship between Germany and Luxembourg as follows:

"Political decoupling, economically beneficial synergism, cultural and, above all, cultural policy, the ambivalent, hybrid mixture of necessary sympathy and the desire for distance, even a compulsion for distancing oneself. [...] Connection and restraint: truly a tense relationship."

This "compulsion for distancing" was historically justified and understandable from a psychological and social point of view, a prerequisite for the country's identity, independence of Luxembourg, and indispensable for the country's identity. Looking at this separately, the systematic dismantling of the German language in Luxembourg could be viewed as a useful programme for strengthening Luxembourg's identity.

Moreover, in fact, German is sometimes regarded as (somewhat) superfluous in the language discourse of the country. However, such an attitude ignores not only the function of the German language in Luxembourg, which is also currently important, but also provokes a threat that should not be underestimated.

10 See Berg (1993: 94) and Fehlen (2011).
11 For an overview see Sieber (2010).
12 For the development of Luxembourg, see Gilles (1999), Gilles/Wagner (2011), and Fehlen (2011).

Luxembourg as a country between the Francophone and the German-speaking linguistic and cultural area is, due to its multilingualism, able to cover both areas linguistically and to derive a wide range of economic and political advantages. The abolition of the German language would shift Luxembourg from the centre between the two areas to the periphery of the French-speaking region - certainly with noticeable disadvantages.[13]

So how to intensify the relationship in the best and most legitimate interest of the country, and from the point of view of preserving and strengthening national identity, maintain proximity (Verbundenheit [closeness]) to the German-speaking world, with a view to positively and appropriately developing the long history of the German language in Luxembourg? The answer to this could be the awareness and appreciation of the specific national character of the standard German language in Luxembourg (Luxemburger Standarddeutsch). The pluricentricity concept, which has long been recognised in linguistics, should also be anchored in the consciousness of the Luxembourg language community.[14] German, along with many others, belongs to the pluricentric languages:

"The main feature of these languages is that they appear in two or more states, have the status of an official administrative or state language there, and thereby develop a degree of linguistic and communicative autonomy" (Muhr 2003: 191).

German is a state or administrative language in seven countries and forms more or less distinctive national varieties. The pluricentricity concept presupposes the equality of the nation-specific variants and is strictly opposed to the outdated monocentric viewpoints, which are still valid between a mono-normative and thus valid in the sense of the standard autonomous 'Binnendeutsch' (German from Germany [Core German]), and a deviating 'Randdeutsch' [peripheral German] difference.[15] From the viewpoint of contemporary variational linguistics:

"The pluricentric conception of the German language means that linguistic peculiarities of national centres do not count as deviations from an overarching standard German language, but rather as equal existing standard language expressions of the German" (Ammon et al. 2016: XLI).

Depending on whether the linguistic features of a country are codified (usually in dictionaries), full and semi-centres can be distinguished. As full centres, there

13 This, of course, also applies to the theoretically conceivable case of the loss of French.

14 Austria can serve as a model for this *mutatis mutandis*. It is also true that "the tension between the Austrian identity and the German language has created a confusing and unresolved situation for many Austrians" (Muhr 1995: 75).

15 See, for example, Muhr (2005) or Utri (2014).

are (so far) Germany (*Deutschländisches Deutsch*[16]), Austria (*Österreichisches Deutsch*) and Switzerland (*Schweizerisches Deutsch*). Luxembourg, on the other hand, is a small centre (semi-centre) of German, similar to *Liechtenstein* (*Liechtensteinisches Deutsch*), Belgium (*Ostbelgisches Deutsch*) and South Tyrol/Italy (*Südtiroler Deutsch*).[17] Before discussing the expression of the 'Luxemburger Standarddeutsch'[18] national, social, psychological, and linguistic implications, we must first refer to some of the background and characteristics of the Luxembourg language community.

2 Multilingual Luxembourg – role and function of the German language

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is a comparatively small country. It currently has about 590,000 inhabitants, with nearly 50 % of them of foreign nationality. The largest migrant group is the Portuguese, with more than 80,000 inhabitants. Luxembourg is also an economically prosperous country. One indication of this is the fact that about 160,000 employees enter and leave the country every day, of which around 80,000 are 'Grenzgänger' (cross-border commuters) from France as well as about 40,000 are from Belgium and Germany. It is clear from the demographic composition of the inhabitants and additional incoming workers, that the language situation of Luxembourg is complex.

According to the language legislation of 1984, Luxembourg is officially a trilingual country: Luxembourgish is the national language, French and German are additional official languages. French has the status of a legal language. French

16 The terminology is ultimately unsatisfactory precisely because of the coincidence of the state and language name. Alternatively, the terms *BRD-Deutsch* or *Federal Republic of Germany* are also proposed. Clyne uses English terminology, due to the attested "semantic confusion between *deutsch*/'German' pertaining to Germany, and *deutsch*/'German' pertaining to the pluricentric language" (Clyne 1995: 23), using the term "German German" which is also very unsatisfactory.

17 In addition to the full and semi-centres, with reference to Romania, Namibia and a number of Mennonite settlements in different countries of North and South America, there is still the differentiation of quarter-centres ('Viertelzentren'), "wo Deutsch keine Amtssprache ist, aber dennoch spezifische standardsprachliche Formen entstanden sind" (Ammon et al. 2016: XL).

18 The term "Luxembourgish Standard German" indicates that the specific national expression of the German language in Luxembourg is being referred to. The term "Luxembourgish German", on the other hand, presents the danger of being misunderstood as a (historical) term for Luxembourgish.

also dominates the public image of the country, especially in Luxembourg. In recent times, especially in the booming banking sector, English has also become more prominent. Portuguese is also heavily represented. If the question of a national standard variety of German is raised, the complex and at the same time "volatile language marker" of the country must be considered. In other words, when discussing the German language in Luxembourg, it should always be seen in the context of differentiated and complex Luxembourgian multilingualism. Describing the role and function of German in today's Luxembourgian is therefore not easy. The fact is, first of all, the German language, despite all reservations, remained the national language even after the Second World War. There were mainly pragmatic reasons for this. The ability of most Luxembourgers to speak German was much more developed than their ability to speak French.[19] As a language of national identity, Luxembourg German became increasingly established in the post-war period.[21]

In Luxembourg, the German language is (as it was before) the language of education.[22] It is predominant in the very diverse press landscape, as well as the preferred language in television consumption and newspaper and literary

As already indicated, a more relaxed relationship with the German language seems to be emerging in recent times, especially among the younger generation. The reasons for this are certainly pragmatic. For native speakers of Luxembourgish, it is much easier to learn German than it is to learn French. In addition, the German border area (especially Trier) is a popular shopping and residential area for many Luxembourgers.[20] Germany, but also Austria and Switzerland, are also popular places to study.[21]

19 For Nico Helminger, another factor was added when it came to his adherence to the German language in the immediate post-war period. "Mein Verhältnis zur deutschen Sprache änderte sich grundsätzlich durch die Beschäftigung mit Paul Celan, dessen Todesfuge wir in der Schule lasen [...] – und mit Elias Canetti, der sich 'Deutsch als Sprache des Geistes von den Nationalsozialisten nicht stehlen lassen' wollte. Ich sah nicht ein, dass ich mir, wie ein Kritiker schrieb, dadurch, dass ich als Luxemburger Deutsch schrieb, unausweichlich die 'Last der Deutschen Geschichte' aufbürdete und dadurch, dass 'viele Zeichen, die die deutsche Sprache gesetzt hat, vergiftet' seien, selbst als literarischer und weltanschaulicher 'Giftmischer' empfunden werden müsse". (Helminger 2014: 167).

20 Interesting in this context is the Carpentier study (2010). See also Boesen (2015).
21 It can not be overlooked that in the last few years, French has been deeply affected by prestige (see, for example, Timm 2014: 158; Fehlen 2013: 50f).
22 For more about the Luxembourgian school system, see Scheer (2017: 76-165).

studies.[23] The Luxembourg literary scene publishes its books mostly in German. In addition, German as an official language still has an important function, as shown by Scheer (2017), for public communication at the municipal level.

On the other hand, Luxembourgish, especially in informal texts (SMS, chat), is increasingly taking on written-language functions, partly at the expense of German. In national theatres, German-speaking performances are shown alongside French ones – and in the cinemas, a portion of German-language films are also shown. As a spoken language, German in Luxembourg is largely restricted to teaching at school and talking to German-speaking foreigners (workplace). All in all, one can summarise: German plays a significant role in Luxembourg, but by no means the main role.

In addition, it can be stated that the relationship between many Luxembourgers and the German language is ambivalent. The German language is generally not recognised as a possession, as a legitimate part of one's own national identity, as an integral part of the cultural heritage of the country.

How the role of German in Luxembourg will develop in the future is difficult to foresee, especially given growing immigration from the Romanophone area. Skepticism about the future of the German language is often expressed in Luxembourg.[24]

3 Luxembourgish German as a future perspective

In my opinion, the further role of the German language in Luxembourg will be determined according to the categories of self and other. And here, the question of Luxembourgish standard German is the decisive factor. There is no doubt that there are country-specific forms of the standard German language in Luxembourg, especially at the lexical level. This is clear only with regard to the variant dictionary of Ammon et al. (2004, 2016). For example:

Luxembourg specifics[25] include *Bering* [surroundings] (vs. *Umschwung* CH; 'Gelände,' 'Umland'), *Erkennungstafel* [number plate] (vs. *Kennzeichentafel* A, *Kontrollschild* CH, *Nummernschild* CH, D, *Kenntafel* STIR), *Fahrradpiste* [bike path] (vs. *Fahrradweg* D), *Konsultation* [information retrieval]

23 On the functions of the German language in Luxembourg, see Sieburg (2013) and Scheer (2017).
24 Already Berg (1993: 82) had noted a decline in German in his dissertation. Here, with a view to the "Verwendung der drei Sprachen" is summarised: "Lëtzebuergesch: progressiv/Französisch: konstant/Deutsch: regressiv".
25 This includes expressions that are only used in Luxembourg.

('Informationssuche' 'Informationsabfrage'), Klassensaal [class room] (vs. Klasse A, D, Schulzimmer CH), Leichendienst [dead mass] (vs. Auferstehungsgottesdienst A, Beerdigungsgottesdienst CH, Totenmesse D).[26]

Non-specific Luxembourgisms are listed as follows: Kollektivvertrag [collective agreement] (also A vs. Bereichsvertrag STIR, Gesamtarbeitsvertrag CH, Tarifvertrag D), UHT-Milch [UHT milk] (also CH vs. H-Milch A, D), Ehrenwein (also CH), Automobilist [car driver] (also CH, Autolenker A, CH, Autofahrer D), Stage [internship] (also CH vs. Praktikum D), Zivilstand [civil status] (also CH, BELG vs. Familienstand A, D).

Also words and phrases like Schöffe ('member of the communal administration'), Camion ('truck'), Ambiance ('atmosphere'), Taxichauffeur, Turnsaal ('gym'), Serie (with long i), arrangieren ('to be useful'), zensurieren ('to give grades'), klassieren ('to place'), panikieren ('to panic'), progressiv ('bit by bit'), wintertags ('in the winter'), Notizen nehmen, sich basieren auf, sich inspirieren an are among the usual German-language forms used in Luxembourg.

The decisive factor for the future of the German language in Luxembourg is, in my opinion, whether it is recognised and acknowledged as a Luxembourgish ownership, and whether a corresponding linguistic loyalty is associated with these Luxembourgisms and a corresponding place in the construction of the national identity of the country.

This is the aspect of the national consciousness-forming effect of different languages. The following is true: the mother tongue and identity marker of the (native) Luxembourger is clearly Luxembourgish. As a national language, Luxembourgish is also community-forming in the sense of national sovereignty - and enjoys a huge reputation in this respect. In addition, Luxembourgish is also promoted by the state as an instrument of social cohesion among the highly heterogeneous Luxembourg population, for example as the language used in compulsory preschool. Luxembourgish, and this is by no means negligible, is also experienced as an identity-defining demarcation against the much larger neighbouring countries, above all Germany, but also France.

The psychosocially intelligible and socially politically effective need for demarcation, the marking of independence against Germany, frequently perceived as disproportionate is, of course, not specific solely to Luxembourg. This is also evident in Austria and Switzerland. This function does not take place in Switzerland by 'Schweizer Standarddeutsch' but by the dialectal 'Schweizerdytsch'.[27] It is different in Austria, where Austriacisms "have the

26 CH = Switzerland, BELG = Belgium, A = Austria, D = Germany; STIR = South Tyrol.
27 See Koller (2000) and Wicki (2012: 50f).

character of true national symbols"[28] (Wicki 2012: 50) and precisely serve to identify and delimit identity.[29]

Regarding Luxembourg, things are also more complex there. Undoubtedly, and above all, Luxembourgish fulfils this function, and provides special prestige. On the other hand, German, often referred to as a 'foreign language', forms the opposite pole. Here the trauma of the occupation by Germany still has a clear effect.

In my opinion, this after-effect is strongly reinforced by a strict norm-orientation at the standard language from Germany 'Deutschländisches Standarddeutsch'. The one-sided orientation towards a foreign norm weakens the German language's prestige in Luxembourg. On the other hand, the awareness of having an independent standard variety of the German language would also represent the language-historical longue-durée realities of the country more appropriately. At the same time, this would also render the one-sided and unquestioned fixation on a federal external standard as obsolete.

In this sense, Luxembourger Standarddeutsch, analogous to Austrian German (Österreichisches Deutsch), could serve as identity-defining and flanking Luxembourgish. This potential of the German language in Luxembourg is, however, currently being completely given away. It is true that Luxembourger Standarddeutsch exists. However, this is (as a rule) neither recognised nor acknowledged as such by the population.

In relation to Luxembourg, it must be made clear that German is not regarded and used as a mother tongue. However, the German language is also not a foreign language in the conventional sense. The linguistic history of the country, the status of German as a language of literacy and teaching, but also as a preferred language of the media (press, television consumption, reading) is proof against this.

The Luxembourgian writer George Hausemer has shaped the term 'Schwiegermuttersprache' (mother-in-law-language) for German. This is not a

28 [den Charakter von echten Nationalsymbolen haben].
29 The case of Austria makes it clear that language-related identity must not be directed against an other language, here German, but can be realised within German: "Bei plurinationalen Sprachen wird der Gedanke des Zusammenhangs zwischen Sprachen und Nationen von eigenständigen Sprachen auf bloße Varietäten übertragen. An die Stelle einer eigenständigen Nationalsprache tritt nun die Nationalvarietät." [In plurinational languages, the idea of the connection between languages and nations is transferred from independent languages to varieties. In place of an independent national language the national variety takes this function.] (Ammon 2000: 516).

linguistically established term, but it describes the proximity/distance ratio quite aptly. (Mother-in-law, according to established opinion, tends to be a „difficult kinship"). In this connection, I myself have repeatedly suggested the concept of 'Eigensprache'[30] (inherent/own language). It is a term that should point to the fact that the German language has undoubtedly played a large role in Luxembourg's cultural and historical heritage. As I see it, the perception and acceptance of Luxembourgish Standard German would, in my view, also contribute to the perception of the status of the national language as a distinct national standard of the German language in Luxembourg.

4 Luxembourgish German caught between nationality and sovereignty

Against the concept of pluricentricity and the consideration of national variants in Luxembourg, a (too) uncritical use of the term national could be formulated as an objection. In fact, when national standards are used here, nationality is seen as an unproblematic spatial organisation. From an areal linguistic perspective, it could be seen as a problem that national-language variants are by no means always tied to state boundaries. Thus, many like Austriacisms locking items are not restricted to Austria, but are also found in Bavarian (however often with a different status and pragmatic use). The question of the extent to which the distinction between national differences within languages can lead to the development of a transnational European identity is politically more controversial. In European history, and especially with regard to Germany, there has been a fixation on the national level, especially in the first half of the 20th century, which has proved to be exceedingly disastrous.

A transfer of this semantics to the concept of the national variety would, however, be a completely erroneous conclusion. It is precisely with regard to the German language that the concept of the national standard variety means the departure and defence of aggressive pragmatic attempts to raise awareness in the sense of a centrally organised 'Heim-ins-Reich' [Return home to the empire] ideology.

On the contrary, the standpoint of national standard varieties of German is based on an attitude which is based on the equality of differences, on respect for neighbours, and on the acknowledgment of the other - and, on that assumption, naturally also the self. Thus, a monocentrism projected in a superiority gesture is

30 See Sieburg (2012, 2013, 2016).

thus repulsed by a pluricentrism which can be called democratic in its core, and a programmatic willingness, indirectly, to acknowledge pluriperspectivity and changes in perspective. The path from the pluricentrism approach to the overriding goal of learning tolerance is not a long one. On the other hand, of course, it is a not so trivial issue to implement the concept in the classroom. (See below for more.)

So the theory goes. With regard to the reality of the situation, however, disillusion is spreading. In Luxembourg (but not only there[31]) an understanding of pluricentricity is still very underdeveloped. As a rule, German is referred to as a national language by the neighbours of Germany. At the same time, its German is seen by most as the only standard. To speak and write 'correct German' in the sense of this standard, to 'overcome' ones Luxembourg origin in this way is often considered to be a special competence and education – and is frequently trained systematically. Divergences, on the other hand, are perceived as being deficient and subject to shame, insofar as they are recognised at all.

The effect of this is, in many cases, an inhibition of actively using German at all, in fear of being misunderstood or being unable to meet their own standards. (An inhibition, which also applies to French in Luxembourg.) The linguistically untenable focus on the German norm paradoxically leads to the fact that many Luxembourgers who, owing to their multilingual competency, should have every reason to show a pronounced and healthy linguistic self-confidence, feel and show a lack of precisely this self-confidence.[32] The view that the German language is also Luxembourg's legitimate asset and that it possesses a distinctive character that naturally deserves to be cultivated with self-confidence, is virtually absent. This view is generally met within Luxembourg with a disbelieving and sceptical defensive attitude.[33]

31 See, for example, Scharloth (2005), Dürscheid (2009), and Wicki (2012).
32 Of course, it can not be denied that there is less opportunity (and necessity) for Germans and Austrians to actively use the German language, which inevitably results in a practical difference. To react to this with an avoidance strategy, however, is not only not a solution, but also contributes to solidifying the problem.
33 Mario Wicki's article published in 2012 with the title *Gibt es ein Schweizer Standarddeutsch? Pro und Contra zu dem Schluss*: "Die Frage, ob ein Schweizer Standarddeutsch existiert oder nicht, hängt letztlich davon ab, wem sie gestellt wird: Für eine/n Sprachwissenschaftler/-in besteht letztlich kein Zweifel an der Existenz des Schweizer Standarddeutsch; die Mehrheit der Laien hingegen verneint wahrscheinlich deren Vorhandensein." (Wicki 2012: 53). This also applies to Luxembourg.

The reason for this is, of course, a norm-consciousness that is taught at school, that the country-like variation is regarded as deficient, as a deprivation and as an expression of formal incompetence. And, in fact, an awareness of the value of the variation with regard to the German language is difficult to convey when the same consciousness is vehemently denied in relation to French in Luxembourg also from the linguistic side. France is seen as the norm.

Accordingly, Timm proceeds in his 2014 empirical study based on the title *Französisch in Luxemburg* (French in Luxembourg) Timm evaluates country-typical features from the Parisian standard as interferences and formulates in a correspondingly flush way:

"The analysis and explanations in the previous chapters have made it clear that the existence of a distinct Luxembourgish variety of French is to be denied" (Timm, 2014: 157).

The contradiction between a pluricentric conception with a view to the German language and a monocentric one in relation to French is, of course, not easy to convey in a German-French-multilingual country. The fact that linguistic arbitrariness does not predominate here, however, results from the linguistically different development of both languages.

In contrast to French, German never had just one centre. Pluricentricity is, therefore, one of its historically developed basic characteristics. To represent this with regard to national standard varieties is therefore no more than a natural consequence. In this respect, the concept of pluricentrism can also be regarded as well-founded, even from a linguistic-historical perspective, against the long-standing linguistic concept of monocentrism, which is also predominant in relation to the German language, and without prejudice to the French situation.

It is worth exploring this issue further, because here an effective counter-resistance of different basic language concepts is shown. Maitz/Elspaß (2012: 44) point to the following basic antagonism (with reference to Cobarrubias 1983: 65):

In countries whose use of language variation or language diversity as well as their official language policy of the ideology of *assimilation*, all speakers are forced in some way to learn and use the dominant language or linguistic variety. On the other hand, states whose language policy is based on the ideology of *pluralism*, try to ensure that all linguistically definable groups have the same right to maintain and cultivate their languages or varieties.

As far as Luxembourg is concerned, an ideology of assimilation is not pursued in the sense that the official multilingualism of the country (and even more so when considering the flanking languages such as English and Portuguese) consists of a principle of openness to heterogeneity. This is in line with the fact

that country-specific multilingualism is viewed as positive by an overwhelming majority.[34] This pluralism, however, obviously exists only with regard to the interlingual juxtaposition of the individual languages and not (intralingually) within the respective individual languages.

5 Luxembourgish standard German as a task

With respect to the German language in Luxembourg, there is a clear tendency towards assimilation in the sense of an orientation towards the German standard. However, this does not follow an ideological attitude of an intrinsically motivated adaptation to Germany, but only the specifications of an educational tradition, which today must be regarded as obsolete. In view of the German language, a pluralistically oriented programme in Luxembourg and for Luxembourg would be far more appropriate for historical and identity-related reasons than to hold onto an ideologically oriented ideology; which is negligible in its own potentials in favour of the alleged dominance of the German neighbours. So what prevents the official and offensive assertion of the pluralistically oriented concept with the name 'Luxembourgish Standard German'? In my opinion, there are three main reasons for this:

A. The focus on a supposedly universal default standard German is, on the one hand, motivated by a language-based literacy education, which has been internalised for generations, and which, in part, entailed considerable effort - which denounced everything Luxembourg-typical in the German language as faulty and inferior.

B. In addition, the simple fact that, as a rule of reference, questions about the measurement and correctness of the measurements of the exchange rate, it is generally necessary to refer to the 'instances' as *Rechtschreibduden*[35] as well as to the textbooks used in Germany. Most of the reference works are only available as external codes - and probably for the most part only conceivable as such. Luxembourg has no independent dictionaries, such as those that exist in Austria or Switzerland.

C. An awareness of the existence of equivalent national variants is still completely underdeveloped. And this is by no means solely for normal language users, but also for language mediators, i.e. teachers. This can be formulated without a hint of reproach, as long as all the necessary efforts have been made by

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34 According to a representative empirical survey, this is 95% (Gilles et al. 2010: 65).
35 [Duden spelling dictionary].

the scientific community to clarify and act accordingly. In other words, the pluricentricity concept combines not only linguistic expertise, but also the task of conveying it: "There can be no [...] reasons that the pluricentric approach does not have a firm place in teacher education." (Dürscheid 2009: 68). The task of the teachers would then have to be to reflect on their own monocentric point of view, possibly to overcome it and to develop openness towards a linguistically appropriate pluricentric conception and also to impart this when teaching German.

It has already been pointed out that this is not an easy task, of course.[36] The discussion within the scientific community, as well as the proposals for practical implementation, have been developed so far that ignoring the pluricentricity concept can no longer be an acceptable option. Depending on the learner group, differentiated concepts are proposed, which do not overwhelm the teachers or the learners. With regard to Luxembourg, 'Deutschländisches Deutsch' cannot simply be replaced by a Luxembourgish standard. It is unavoidable that this 'Deutschländische Deutsch' has to remain an essential function in regard to the neighbourhood, but also because of the greater linguistic community, the references like *Duden* or media consumption, which are mostly related to it.

What is important, however, is to convince pupils (and students) that this 'Luxemburger Standarddeutsch' is not a worse kind of German. Difference is not a deficit, but a living *variation* in the sense of perceptual tolerance and skills of variety ('Perceptual Tolerance' and 'Variety Competence') ['Wahrnehmungstoleranz' and 'Varietätenkompetenz'][37] To develop concepts here requires joint efforts from the university and the academic side. The main task here is to distinguish between standard and nonstandard. Dürscheid (2009: 62) has to be agreed with when he writes:

[T]he statement that national variants are standard-language variants [is] theoretically easy to understand; in practice, however, it is not easy to determine whether a national variant is actually accepted as standard or not.

With regard to the pluricentricity concept, it is, therefore, a matter of developing operationable models, distinguishing standard from nonstandard. Or, in regards

36 In addition to Dürscheid (2009), we can refer to Hägi (2006), Hensel (2000).
37 See also Studer (2002). The claim, of course, is by no means solely directed at Luxembourg teachers, but should also be referred to the German colleagues. Here again, the awareness that German is not the only norm is still very underdeveloped. This also applies to spelling. Here, not only Austriacisms or Helvetisms, but also 'Germanisms' - and, of course, Luxembourgisms.

to the concept of a norm: it is about the reliable description of a standard of use and, as a result, the definition of an official norm. Of course, these are not only theoretical considerations, but also existing models which have already been practised.[38] In this context, Newspaper articles are often used as model texts, which allow conclusions about the (potential) standard status of national variants. Due to the extraordinarily vital and discourse-relevant newspaper market in Luxembourg, this text type is particularly suitable as a frame of survey. For the purposes of illustration below, here are some arbitrarily selected typical examples of the Luxembourg daily press:

(1) Und man gratulierte sich selber zu dem Weitblick, bei den *Bipartite*-*Verhandlungen* im November 2014 die Regierung daran erinnert und dazu verpflichtet zu haben, dass bei den *Kollektivvertragsverhandlungen* der Artikel 28 eingehalten werden soll. [And they congratulated themselves on the foresight, in the *bipartite* negotiations in November 2014, of reminding the government and pledging that Article 28 be adhered to in the collective labour agreement negotiations.] (Lëtzebuerger Journal, 28 June 2017)

(2) Das Gesetz zu seiner Reform *ist gestimmt* – und tritt am 1. Juli in Kraft – die Umsetzung läuft demnach derzeit. [The law on its reform has *been approved* – implementation is currently under way.] (Luxemburger Tageblatt, 21 June 2017)

(3) Die Frage der *Depenalisierung* des Schwangerschaftsabbruchs war spätestens Anfang der 1970er Jahre zum Politikum in Westeuropa geworden. [The question of the *depenalisation* of abortion had become a political issue in Western Europe by the early 1970s at the latest.] (Luxemburger Tageblatt, 1/2 July 2017)

Explanation:

• *Bipartite* (1) is the name for (pay) negotiations between employers and the government in Luxembourg, and the trade unions are also involved in *Tripartite*. This negotiation is typical of the 'Luxembourg social model.'
• *Kollektivvertrag* (1) includes, as already mentioned above, nonspecific Luxembourgisms and is also found in Austria. On the other hand *Gesamtarbeitsvertrag* is used in Switzerland, *Tarifvertrag* in Germany and *Bereichsvertrag* in South Tyrol (Italy). *Ist gestimmt* (2) can be used as an example of a different verb valency.

38 See, for example, Ammon (1995) or Dürscheid (2009).

- *Depenalisierung* (3) can no doubt be explained by the French *depenalisation* ('decriminalising').

The systematic evaluation of newspapers, but also of other sources (literature, factual texts, essays or seminar papers) would be an essential basis for the creation of a lexicon 'Luxemburger Standarddeutsch.' The development of such being created, ideally an official codex, would be an important and probably necessary step towards the awareness of an independent national variety of German in Luxembourg.[39] It remains to be seen whether this will happen at all. It would be helpful and necessary to have support from the research institutions, as well as fundamental interest from politics and society.

6 Conclusion

It is to be hoped that in Luxembourg, the concept of the existence of a national standard language of German developed from its own linguistic history, which has uniform (usage) norms and is thus equal to the other German-speaking countries, will find wider recognition in the future. It would also be desirable to be more confident in dealing with the specific national character of standard German according to one's own culture.

This leads to an understanding that Luxembourg, not only Austria and Switzerland, has a legitimate claim not only to the German language in general, but also to its specific form, according to the prerequisites of one's own country. Such a view would underscore the sovereignty of the country.

It is ultimately a question of claiming the legitimate right to perceive German in Luxembourg not as a foreign language, but as a separate one, as a communication medium, in which one can feel comfortable because of its country-specific characteristics. Such a view, to counter any suspicion, is, of course, directed neither vf Luxembourg-based multilingualism would be strengthened significantly.

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[39] In the sense of preliminary studies, a number of recent bachelor's and master's theses at the Universities of Trier, Halle and Luxembourg can be used alongside the conceptual, sometimes overtly, but otherwise very revealing work of Magenau (1964).

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Trilingualism in Luxembourg: The role of Lëtzebuergesch – upgrading a regional variety to a national language[1]

Gerhard Edelmann

Abstract: Lëtzebuergesch (Luxembourgish) is the national language of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, a country whose characteristic feature is the trilingualism of Luxembourgish, German and French. This linguistic situation is the result of the country's history. Lëtzebuergesch is spoken by the majority of the inhabitants of the country in all spheres of life. French and German have their specific roles. The state promotes Lëtzebuergesch on different levels. Trilingualism with Lëtzebuergesch as the national language helps Luxembourg to maintain its role as an economic centre in Europe and to maintain distance to its powerful neighbours France and Germany. In particular, Lëtzebuergesch is important as a sign of identity for the country. World War II can be considered as decisive for definitely upgrading Lëtzebuergesch from a regional variety of German to the national language of Luxemburg. Recently, however, there are voices expressing certain concern and uneasiness about the future of Lëtzebuergesch and raise questions whether measures to increase the status of Lëtzebuergesch are needed in order to guarantee the role of this language.

1 Introduction

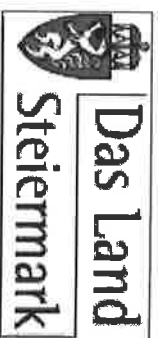In this paper the role of Lëtzebuergesch (Luxembourgish) within the system of trilingualism is studied, which is a characteristic feature of Luxembourg. I will start with a brief overview of the history of the country and the development of Lëtzebuergesch from a German regional variety into Luxembourg's national language.[2] After that the presence of Lëtzebuergesch and the other languages of the country in the different spheres of life is presented. The next step will be to find out which role Lëtzebuergesch plays within the existing linguistic system and why Lëtzebuergesch is important for the identity of the country. In a final

1 In: Muhr, Rudolf / Meisnitzer, Benjamin (eds.) (2018): Pluricentric Languages and Non-Dominant Varieties Worldwide: New Pluricentric Languages – Old Problems. Wien et al.: Peter Lang Verlag, pp. 253–264.

2 Also see a recent report on Luxembourgish in the Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/28/luxembourgish-grand-duchys-native-language-enjoys-renaissance.

Preface

This volume comprises a selected number of 30 papers that were presented at
the "5th World Conference of Pluricentric Languages and Their Non-Dominant
Varieties – Nation, Space and Language" (WCPCL). It was held at the University
of Mainz (Germany) on July 13th–15th, 2017. It was the fifth gathering organized
by the "Working Group on Non-Dominant Varieties of Pluricentric Languages"
(WGNDV) since the foundation of the group in 2010. The authors of the papers
of this volume come from 15 countries and deal with 14 pluricentric languages
(PLCLs) and directly or indirectly with a total of 31 (non-dominant) varieties
(NDVs) around the world.

The conference pursued several objectives, especially (1) to deepen the theory
of PLCLs and the methods for the description of NDVs in particular and (2) to
get exhaustive reports of the situation of as many PLCLs and NDVs worldwide
and in particular of lesser known and researched PLCLs and NDVs. The editors
are happy to say that the central objectives (1) and (2) have been met. This volume
contains an extensive overview on misconceptions about PLCLs and pluricentric
theory (R. Muhr). In respect to task (2), the number of known PLCLs has again
been extended. There are now 43 PLCLs in all. Apart from papers on "new" PCLs
that have been recently identified, there are others on varieties were specific or
renewed descriptions were lacking. Such an example is Malay. Although Malay
has been known as a PLCL since M. Clyne's volume of 1992, we are happy that
Prof. Omar has provided an updated and extended description of Malay as a
PLCL. Other first-hand papers of this category are: A paper on Somali as a (new)
PLCL (M. Nilsson), on Romanian (M. Hutanu/A. Sorescu-Marinković) in Serbia
(that also show the extreme monocentric language policy of the Romanian state),
and two papers on Albanian as a PLCL (L. Jusufi/A. Muco) that depict the battles
between a pluricentric viewpoint and a "one language-one nation-one norm"
approach of Albanian. Three papers deal with NDVs of Hungarian in Slovakia
(Jank/Gál/Kozmács) and (for the first time) with Hungarian in Croatia (Oszkó).
They too show how difficult it is to reach linguistic self-definition against a
rather centralized language attitude in the dominant variety (DV). O. Goritzka
is detailing the search for expressions of identity via ethnonyms in Belarusian
Russian. The paper of M. Saeedi deepens the knowledge about the development
of Persian as an PLCL in its history. S. Hashami details second-level and even
third-level pluricentric situations in Hindi in India. R. Calabrese/K. Russo report
about of multiword constructions in Indian English and Australian Aboriginal
English and K. Fonyuy about Cameroon Pidgin English that is shedding light

ÖSTERREICHISCHES DEUTSCH –
SPRACHE DER GEGENWART

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BAND 20

PETER LANG

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Pluricentric Languages and Non-
Dominant Varieties Worldwide

New Pluricentric Languages – Old Problems

PETER LANG