Dialect (Non-)Acquisition and Use by Young People of Migrant Background in Germany

Peter Auer[a,b]

[a]*Hermann Paul Centre of Linguistics, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany*
[b]*Section of German Linguistics, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany*

peter.auer@germanistik.uni-freiburg.de

German Linguistics

Universität Freiburg

D-79085 Freiburg

Dialect (Non-)Acquisition and Use by Young People of Migrant Background in Germany[*]

This article reports on a study investigating the use of regional language features by young people of (mostly Turkish or Balkan) background who were born, or raised from an early age on, in Stuttgart/Germany. The results of the Stuttgart study show that most young speakers from migrant families do not accommodate the local or regional dialect, but rather speak their own (multiethnolectal) variety of German. Existing evidence on dialect (non-)acquisition and (non-)use by speakers with similar social, linguistic and cultural backgrounds in other parts of Germany suggests that this finding reflects a general tendency. Some possible explanations for the non-acquisition and non-use of dialectal features are discussed.

1.   Introduction

Most of the sociolinguistic discussion on the language of second and third generation Europeans with 'migration background' has focused on these speakers' multilingual behaviour as well as the emergence and use of multiethnolectal registers among them (see the references in the introduction of this special issue). Multiethnolects[1] are by definition variants of the language of the receiving society. Their emergence among speakers who speak this language well (and often as their dominant language) cannot be explained by second language acquisition; rather, it testifies to their needs to position themselves by linguistic means that neither correspond with those of their families, nor that of the linguistic majority. What this sociolinguistic research tradition has failed to consider so far, however, is what kind of features, styles, registers or dialects of the language of the receiving society these multiethnolectal features build on. This Special Issue therefore raises the issue of the relationship between already existent ('autochthonous') non-standard forms and multiethnolectal ways of speaking.

While several articles in this Special Issue report on sociolinguistic contexts in which dialects or local vernaculars are chosen as the base-line from which multiethnolect innovations emerge, this paper presents the case of Germany where the existing evidence suggests that the multiethnolect excludes regional features – despite the fact that it may contain non-dialectal substandard features. I will start by presenting a study carried out in the city of Stuttgart, located in a region of Germany (Swabia) in which the dialects are still relatively strong, but which is also characterized by massive immigration (Section 2). In the second part of the paper (Section 3) the perspective will be widened to other regions of Germany, summarizing the sparse existing literature on the topic.

2.   Do young people of migrant background in Stuttgart acquire and use regional language features?

The city of Stuttgart with the metropolitan area around it is among the German regions with the highest rates of foreigners (residents without German citizenship) and persons of 'immigration background' (residents with German, often dual citizenship, but at least one parent who immigrated[2]). In 2017, the percentage of these two groups together accounted for 44.5% of the city's 611 665 inhabitants (25.4% and 19.2%, respectively)[3], which is about twice as much as in Germany as a whole.[4] The percentage has risen by roughly 7% from 37.2% in the year 2000. Already in 2011, 44% of all children and adolescents under the age of 18 were raised in migrant families.[5] The largest groups until 2015 were of Turkish or ex-Yugoslavian/Albanian background; since then, Syrian refugees and other Arab-speaking people have also become an important group, with a most recent Sub-Saharan African immigration following. The

southwest of Germany with Stuttgart as the capital of the state of Baden-Württemberg is also generally considered a region in which the dialects still have a rather strong position, although at the same time, the traditional and even regional dialects have been reported to be subject to a rapid process of levelling or convergence with the standard variety (cf. Streck, 2012; Schwarz, 2015; Kehrein, 2012; Auer/Breuninger/Pfeiffer, 2017; Auer, 2018). Stuttgart is therefore well suited for investigating whether and to which degree dialectal features enter the repertoire of 'new speakers' of German.

1.1.   The Stuttgart study: data and methods

93 speakers were audio-recorded in 2009-2012 in youth centres and schools in informal group conversations in their peer networks, mostly with an adult ethnographer present. They were born and/or raised in Germany. 28 of them produced enough speech to be analysed in detail, 22 male and 6 female. Almost all of them attended either *Hauptschule* or *Werkrealschule* (the lowest hierarchical level in the German school system), a few had started vocational training. They all lived in high-immigration neighborhoods (Bad Cannstadt, Stuttgart Nord, Hallschlag) and were 13-19 years old at the time. Their language background was mostly Turkish/Kurdish, but also Albanian and Bosnian/Croatian. Two speakers had an Italian background, and one a Russian, Portuguese, Romani, and Arabic language background, respectively. All were fluent speakers of German. In the informal situations in which they were recorded, most of the speakers showed distinct multiethnolectal grammatical features (cf. Siegel 2018 and Auer/Siegel, to appear, for a detailed analysis).[6]

For the purpose of this study, the data were searched for regional features. Disregarding low-level phonetics, the following features were found:[7]

Palatalization of /s/ (feature I.a)

One of the stereotypes of Alemannic (and hence also of the Stuttgart city dialect) is the backing (palatalization) of /s/→/ʃ/ before /t, p/ in the syllable coda (unless a morphological boundary intervenes), for instance in the second person singular verbal suffix –*st*: Standard German (Std.G.) *(du) weisst* ~ Alem. *(du) weisch(t)* 'you know'. Palatalization is still widespread not only in the traditional dialects but also in the regional dialects and, among older speakers, even in the regional standard.

Due to this high prevalence, the feature is also among those which are easily picked up when people from other parts of Germany move to the southwest. The process of accommodation often starts with the tag question *weisch?* ('you know?', ~ Std.G. *weiss+st (du)*) (cf. Auer/Barden/Großkopf 1998). Hence, if a young person of migrant background shows any orientation to the local dialect, this is the phonological feature that would be expected to be accommodated first.

Diminutive (feature I.b)

The Alemannic diminutive derives from the MHG suffix /liːn/ (Std.G. –*lein*) and is realized in Stuttgart as –*le* (phonetically between [lə] and [le]). Other Upper and Eastern Middle German dialects also have /liːn/-derived diminutives, but of different shape (such as syllabic /l/). In contrast, the diminutive which is most frequently used in the standard today is –*chen* ([çən]), originally derived from Low German /ken/.

Negation (feature II.a)

Negation ('not') is expressed by *nich(t)* in Std.G. In the south of Germany (appr. south of a line from Cologne in the west to Dresden in the east), including Stuttgart, the corresponding dialectal/regiolectal form is *ned(de)*.

Neuter article/demonstrative pronoun (feature II.b)

The neuter singular article/pronoun Std.G. *das* is realised as *des* in southern Germany (in a large area reaching up northward almost as far as the negation particle *ned*). Just like the negation particle, the feature is therefore not specifically Alemannic, but typical of all southern dialects/regiolects.

Relative pronoun (feature II.c)

The German standard variety makes use of the forms of the demonstrative pronoun to introduce relative clauses. *Der/die/das* and their case-marked forms function as relative clause markers in addition to encoding one of the arguments of the relative clause. In contrast, the southern (and partly middle German) dialects use an uninflected relative marker *wo* (homophonous with the local question word, 'where'). This marker can be combined with the relative pronoun (*der wo* etc.), resulting in relativizer doubling as in:

> *be vau das ist halt so für die leute, <u>(die) wo </u>keinen abschluss haben*
>
> 'BV [a certain type of school] is – like – for those people <u>who (lit.: where)</u> do
>
> not have a school exam.'
>
> instead of Std.G.
>
> *be vau das ist halt so für die leute, <u>die</u> keinen abschluss haben*

This regional non-standard form occurs roughly in the same area in which the negation word *ned* is used. In the Alemannic dialects of the Stuttgart area, the simple relativizer *wo* is dominant (not the doubled form *der wo* etc.).

<u>Word-final stop vs. fricative realization in *–ig* (feature III)</u>

In the Upper German (Bavarian and Alemannic) dialects/regiolects as well as in the standard spoken in these areas, word-final /g/ preceded by the unstressed vowel /i/ is realized as a lenis stop ([ɪg̊]). The (northern) pronunciation of standard German has a fricative ([ɪç]) instead. For some time, this northern standard form has spread southward in the standard (though not in the dialect).

In sum, we found three local (Alemannic dialect) features (group I), three supralocal (southern German regiolectal) features (group II) and one southern German features also used in southern standard German (III).

1.2.   Quantitative results

For (Ia), (IIa) and (IIb) the tokens were sufficiently frequent to calculate mean percentages of dialectal realizations across speakers; see Fig. (1) (for all speakers for whom at least 10 tokens were available). In the case of features (Ia) (s-palatalization), only the 2nd person suffix in the high frequency verbs 'be', 'know', 'can', 'will' and 'have' was calculated, due to the feature's high frequency.
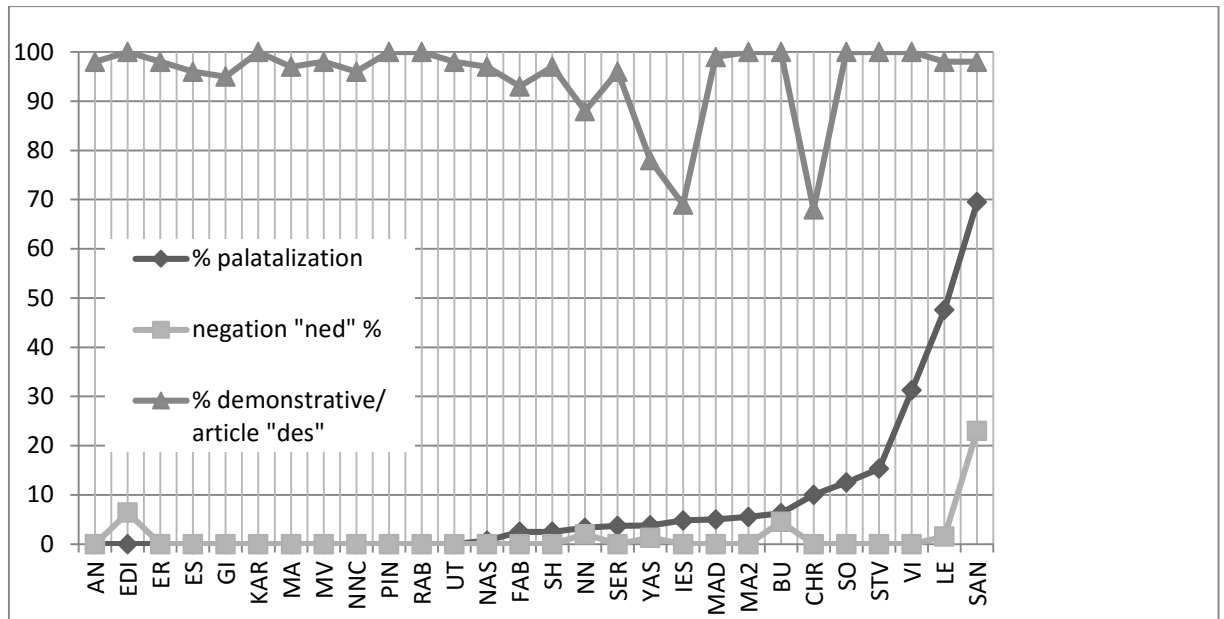
Fig. (1). Relative frequency (percentage) of three non-standard (dialectal/regiolectal)
features in a group of 28 adolescent speakers with migrant family background in
Stuttgart, ordered according to the dialectal realization of the variable 'palatalization'.

Palatalization of /s/ was found among speakers with migration background in 7.7% of
all cases on an average. Only three speakers (VI, LE, SAN) show frequencies of more
than 30%, with SAN out-performing all others (70%). 13 speakers showed no trace of
this feature.

Obviously, it is relevant to compare these results with a non-migration control
group. In the case of Stuttgart, two studies can be used for this purpose, which cover
both ends of the dialect-standard continuum. Beaman (2018a, b, and ongoing PhD
research project) carried out a panel study, comparing the speech of the same Stuttgart
speakers in 1982 and 35 years later (2017), as well as a trend study with different age
groups of dialect speakers. Spiekermann (2008) investigated the way in which educated
Stuttgart speakers speak standard German, comparing interview data from the 1960s
with those from the year 2000.

Beaman's results prove that s-palatalization is still highly prevalent today in the Stuttgart dialect, although less frequent than 30 years ago. In her panel study (pers. comm.), she found a palatalization rate of 92.6% in 1982, as opposed to 65.9% in 2017, in the same six high-frequency 2nd person verb forms investigated in the present study. In her trend study (Beaman 2018b) for the same six verb forms, palatalization decreased from 76.9% in 1982 to 56.5% in 2017-2018 in the age range under 30 (which is still about eight times the values found among the speakers with migrant background). In the Stuttgart standard variety, on the other hand, palatalization seems to be on the way out: Spiekermann (2008: 186) reports a palatalization rate of 20% in 2000, as opposed to 44.5% in the early 1960s. However, even this value is almost three times as high as the results in the multiethnolectal group of speakers.

The dialectal form of the negator is used even less in our group of speakers (on an average, less than 1%). Only speaker SAN sticks out again with a relative frequency of almost 25% of *ned* instead of *nich(t)*. For the Stuttgart dialect, Beaman (pers. comm.) found a sharp decline of dialectal/regiolectal *ned/nedde* from 73.6% in 1982 to 27.5% in her trend study among the generation under 30. In the regional standard variety in Stuttgart, Spiekermann (2008: 186) reports a frequency of 14.5% (with no tendency to decline any further, i.e. some kind of bottom line seems to have been reached here). Hence, the dialectal form of the negator is clearly under attack from the standard form *nich(t)*, but it has not disappeared entirely from today's repertoire. Speakers of migrant background, however, hardly use this feature at all.

The results for the variable *des ~ das* show exactly the opposite picture. Here, almost all speakers with migration background consistently use the southern German variant *des* (95%), only two of them do not quite reach 70%. In the dialect, Beaman's trend study (pers.comm.) reports a moderate decline from 96,7% in the 1980's to 78.6%

in the younger generation today. In the regional standard, the southern forms accounted for 44% of all cases in the early 2000s, although this represents a massive decline by 25% when compared to the early 1960s (cf. Spiekermann 2008, 186). Hence, although *des* for Std.G. *das* is much in use in the non-immigrant population of Stuttgart, young speakers with migrant background use it even more often – in fact, almost categorically.

The other variables were not frequent enough to calculate speaker-related means. Looking at the data set as a whole, the following picture emerges:

The dialectal <u>diminutive</u> was calculated in the high-frequency word Std.G. *biss+chen* 'a little' ~ Alem. *biss+le* /bɪslə/ only (n = 196).[8] Diminutive /-le/ is a stereotypical feature of the dialect/regional dialect in Stuttgart just like palatalization, but in the word *biss+chen* it is probably less salient than in other lexical contexts, as the derivation is not transparent here any longer (the stem *biss-* does not exist in modern German). Across speakers, the dialectal feature occurred in 20,5% of all instances. However, a closer look at the data reveals that 34 of these tokens were produced by one single speaker (again LE), the remaining six by two more speakers. The feature is avoided by the large majority of speakers.[9]

In the Stuttgart dialect today, the diminutive in *bisschen* is realized as *bissle* in 59,2% across all age groups, according to Beaman. Here, too, dialect levelling has set in. According to Beaman's trend study (pers.comm.), the dialect forms decreased from 95,7% in 1982 to 50,0% among those under 30 today.

For the syntactic variable <u>relativizer</u> (IIc), it is necessary to distinguish between two types of syntactic heads. When the head is a noun (which was quantified for masculine head nouns only, n=29), the dialectal forms were used in 66% of the tokens, almost always the double form *der wo* (there was only one case of *wo*). When the head is a demonstrative pronoun, as in

> *der, wo cool ist…*[10]

for Std.G.

> *der, der cool ist…*
> 'the one(s), who is/are cool…'

the dialectal (*wo*) accounted for 79% of the cases (n=57). Doubling is avoided in this context, since it would lead to a sequence of two subsequent *der* (*der, der wo*), and hence to a haplology.

Beaman's panel study results (2018c) documents a decline in use of the non-standard relativizers from 28% in subject position and 66% in object position in 1982 to 7% and 57% in 2017, respectively. *Wo* remains particularly frequent in the dative case, here declining only slightly from 81.8% in 1982 to 74%. As expected for this dialect, Beaman found a strong avoidance of the double relativizer (type *der wo*) (11% in 1982, 2% in 2017).

For both syntactic contexts it can be said that the non-standard form is in general use among the speakers with migration background. The high numbers are not due to the special behavior of single speakers; rather, the non-standard forms occur throughout the group.

Variation between the <u>fricative and stop pronunciation in word-final *–ig*</u> was first investigated in the high-frequency word *richtig* 'correct'. Here, the speakers overwhelmingly follow the northern pattern (93,5%, n = 139). Even speaker SAN (the most dialectal speaker) only uses the northern form. In order to check whether the particular phonological make-up of the word *richtig* (which contains the same fricative /ç/ in the coda of the first syllable) could be responsible for these results (in which case we could speak of a regressive distance assimilation), an additional sample of 100 cases of *–ig* was selected by chance from the data. In this sample, too, stop realizations accounted for 5% only.

1.3.   Discussion

Among the young speakers with migrant background recorded in our study, dialectal/regiolectal features either occur almost categorically, or hardly at all. While the local (dialectal) features palatalization (Ia) and diminutive (Ib) and the supralocal (regiolectal) feature negation (IIa) are only used very rarely and/or by very few speakers, the supralocal features demonstrative/neuter article (IIb) and relativizer (IIc) mostly occur in the non-standard form. In their realization of –*ig* (III), the speakers consistently follow the northern standard (fricative). This relative homogeneity becomes visible when the results are compared with Spiekermann's results for the Stuttgart standard variety as spoken by educated non-immigrant speakers. Three features were investigated in both studies and can be compared directly:[11]
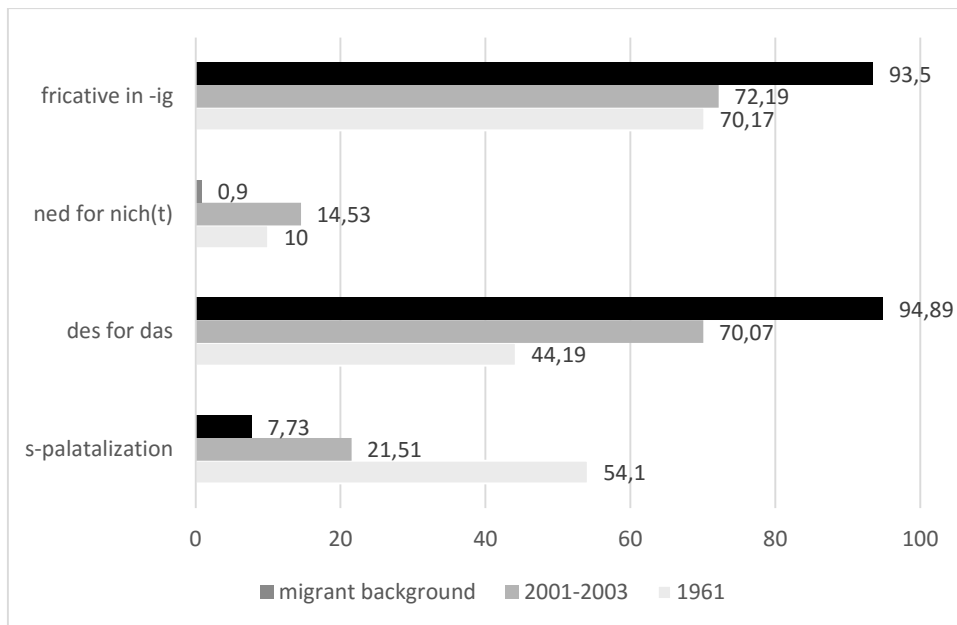

Fig. (2): Frequencies of four variables in the speech of adolescents with migration background in our study ("migrant background") , and in the standard speech of educated Germans without migration background in 1961 and 2001-3 in Stuttgart (from Spiekermann, 2008). Note that the percentage for the for the variable /-ig/ refers to the

overall frequency in the data set, while the three others were averaged across speaker means.

Despite the informality of the recording situation and their lower educational background and younger age, the speakers in our sample use almost no palatalization (15% less than in Spiekermann's data), and no dialectal negation (13,5% less than in Spiekermann's data). Quite the opposite holds for *des* and fricative pronunciation in *–ig,* where the values are much higher than in Spiekermann's educated standard speakers (70%/72%). The distribution is therefore clearly more dichotomized than in the speakers without migrant background.

It is also instructive to compare the results with Beaman's results on the Stuttgart dialect as spoken today (here for the generation below 30 in her panel study only).[12] Fig. (3) summarizes the results for the features palatalization (Ia), diminutive (Ib), negation (IIa), neuter article/demonstrative (IIb) and *(der) wo*-relativizers[13]:
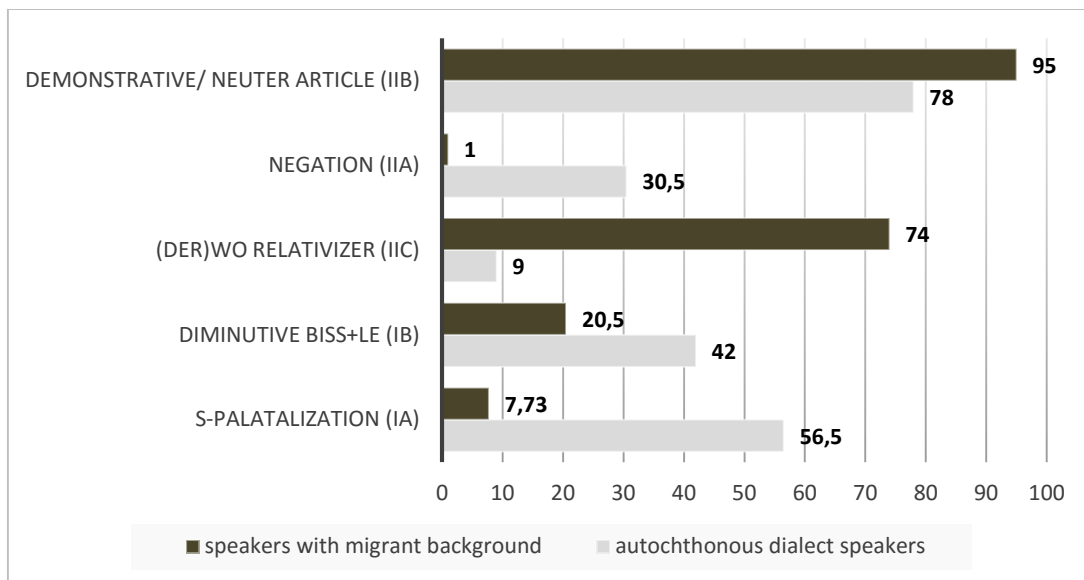

Fig. (3): Frequencies of five dialectal/regiolectal variables in the speech of adolescents with migration background and in the dialect of 29 Stuttgart speakers aged below 30 without migration background (from Beaman, 2018a; 2018b; 2018c). (Note that the percentage for the speakers with migrant background for the variables diminutive and

relativizer refer to the overall frequency in the data set, while all others are averaged across speaker means .)

Beaman's study show that *s*-palatalization, –*le*-diminutives, *des* as the neuter article/demonstrative and the negator *ned(de)* are still much in use among young Stuttgart speakers today when they speak dialect. When compared to the standard speakers in Spiekermann's study, the dialectal values for palatalization and the negator in Beaman's study are much higher, as expected. (The demonstrative/article *des* is in the same frequency range, which may indicate that this feature has become a feature of the local standard variety in the meantime, in addition to belonging to the city dialect.) Again not very surprising, Beaman's young dialect speakers palatalize pre-consonantal /s/, and use the (supra-)local, non-standard forms of negation and the diminutive considerably more often than their counterparts with migration background. The opposite, however, holds for the non-standard relativizer which has all but disappeared in the young Stuttgart dialect speakers without immigration background, while it is highly popular among the speakers with migrant background. In the case of *des* instead of *das*, the control group also appears to be more regional in their speech than the speakers of migrant background.

The results appear to be contradictory at first sight, particularly for the features with a general southern German geographical distribution. They are partly almost non-existent (negation (IIa)), and partly used with high frequency (*das* ~ *des* (IIb) and the *wo*-relativizer (IIc)) among the speakers with migrant background. This apparent contradiction can be resolved if we assume that the speakers have selected features from the 'feature pool' of German and integrated them into their multiethnolectal speech in a process of reallocation (as also reported by Hinskens, van Meel and van Hout 2014 for Dutch dialectal features): what appears dialectal to dialectologists (and presumably also

to many dialect speakers), is in fact seen as part of their own speech style by the speakers with migration background. This interpretation is plausible as both the *wo*-relativizers and the demonstrative/neuter article *des* have low sociolinguistic salience. Salient features of Swabian are avoided throughout.

It should be noted here that although the speakers use the non-standard relativiser much more often than the non-migrant young Stuttgart dialect speakers, they do not opt for the simple *wo*-relativizer (as these speakers do), but for the doubled relativizer *der wo*. This makes an explanation in terms of accommodation to the dialect highly unlikely. Not only do our speakers overgeneralize the feature, they also by far prefer a variant that is unusual in the Stuttgart dialect.

An explanation for the frequent avoidance of the standard German relativizer both in the dialect[14] and in the multiethnolect must be sought on the structural level. The standard German relativizer requires agreement between number and gender of the head of the relative construction, and case marking according to its argument role in the subordinated clause. It fulfills two functions at the same time and is therefore syntactically non-transparent: on the one hand, it introduces the subordinated clause and on the other hand it represents one of the arguments in it. The solution preferred by Swabian dialect speakers is to use a generalised relativiser (*wo*) instead (functionally comparable to Engl. *that*), a solution also chosen by the multiethnolectal speakers after a pronominal head. This simplifies the system considerably. Replacing the construction

> *der* [head], *der* [relativizer]…

by *der* [head], *wo* [relativizer]…

(each with its morphological variants for gender, case and number), additionally avoids a sequence of two homophonous grammatical function words.

The multiethnolectal speakers' preferred strategy for relative clauses depending on full nouns is different, however: it separates the two functions of the Std.G. relativizer (*wo* serves to mark subordination, the pronoun represents an argument in the relative clause) and thereby makes the construction more transparent.

The almost total replacement of *das* by *des* needs a different explanation. It may be found in the fact that this variant is not only dialectal, but also increasingly part of the regional standard spoken in Stuttgart (see above, Fig. 2). The speakers may have overgeneralised the variable to almost categorical usage, since its regional restrictions are unknown.

The *des*-variant of the pronoun is additionally attractive for structural reasons. It highlights the difference between the article/demonstrative on the one hand (*des*), and the complementizer on the other (*dass*). In Std.G., both are homophonous (although spelled differently). The complementizer is never realised as *des* in the data; hence, the two grammatically distinct function words are expressed by different phonological forms.

Let us finally have a look at the two speakers who stand out by using dialectal features much more frequently than the others. These are LE and SAN, who both palatalize (much) more often than average; LE also uses the dialectal diminutive considerably more often than the others, and SAN is almost the only speaker who uses the dialectal negation word with some frequency. LE has a Kosovo-Albanian, SAN an Italian family background. Both were 19 years old at the time of the recordings and had lived in Stuttgart all through their lives after immigration.

Independent evidence suggests that Italians adopt Alemannic dialect features more than other migrant groups (see below and also Schmid, in this volume). This may be due to the existence and wide-spread use of dialects in Southern Italy and their (at

least hidden) prestige, which may have been transferred to the German situation, and/or their better integration into German society (the Italians were the first 'guestworkers' to come to Germany in the early 1960s). This is in line with SAN's speech behavior, which contrasts with that of the remaining group.

But the same explanation cannot be applied to LE. Here, indeed, we find a speaker who uses a dialectal feature – palatalization – for creating social meaning. Evidence for this can be found in his situationally differentiated use of the variable. Palatalization occurs significantly more often when he addresses the fieldworker and, above all, when he quotes himself talking to 'Germans'. In this latter case of reported speech, the percentage of palatalized forms goes up to 64% (as compared to his average of 21%). When interacting with his friends, he avoids palatalization.

We do not have a sufficient number of narratives from the other speakers in our sample to exclude the possibility that Swabian palatalization (or other dialect features) is exploited in such a discourse-functional way in the group at large (which would suggest that the feature is well known but not deemed adequate for in-group interaction). Indirectly, LE's socially meaningful way of using palatalization confirms the view that Swabian dialect features are deemed inadequate for in-group interaction among young people of (Turkish, ex-Yugoslavian, Albanian) migration background.

In sum, there is only very marginal evidence in our data that young speakers with migrant family background accommodate local Stuttgart features. For the huge majority of them, this is not the case. For the speech style chosen within the group, most local or regional dialect/regiolect features are avoided, and standard features (in addition to multiethnolectal features) are chosen.

3.   Dialect use by second/third generation migrants: the view beyond Stuttgart

3.1.   In the Alemannic-speaking area

Can this finding be generalized to other parts of Germany? Empirical studies are unfortunately sparse, so that the answer to this question needs to remain tentative.

There are two unpublished studies on the southwest of Germany (Alemannic-speaking dialect area) that pertain to the question. Foffi (2010), in an unpublished master thesis, studied the Alemannic dialect competence of ten German speakers without migration background and ten Italian-German bilingual speakers (aged 24-35) in a dialect translation task. All bilingual speakers' families had immigrated into Germany, but the speakers were born and had grown up in the southwest of Germany; they lived in the city of Freiburg or in a small town close to the Swiss border (Lörrach). The bilingual speakers produced a considerable amount of dialect responses. Two features are comparable to those in Stuttgart, i.e. s-palatalization and the dialectal diminutive. Palatalization in the second person singular verb forms (variable (Ia) above) was chosen categorically in both groups of speakers (compared to less than 8% in the Stuttgart group investigated here). The diminutive was produced in 40% of all cases in Freiburg by the Italian-German speakers (100% among the speakers without migration background), while we only found 20.5% in Stuttgart in this group.

Of course, dialect competence cannot be equated with spontaneous speech. Yet, the results suggest a relatively good familiarity with the dialect. The speakers reported to the (Italian) interviewer that they felt well integrated in Germany and were 'both German and Italian'. Most of them reported to have mainly German friends, and to speak German dialect at least in some domains of their lives (mainly with friends).

Together with the fact that they all had their roots in the south of Italy where the dialects are alive and enjoy some (hidden) prestige, this high degree of integration may explain the rather good dialect competence of the speakers. In the Stuttgart data, the special role of Italo-Germans is confirmed by speaker LE.

Another relevant study in this context is an unpublished PhD thesis by Prediger (2016). Subjects were 51 Russian-Germans (with L1 Russian), with an average immigration age from Russia of 17,18 yrs. On an average, they had lived in Germany for 16,55 years. Three age groups (18-25; 26-40; 41-60) were investigated. All speakers lived in smaller places around Freiburg or in the towns of Lahr and Bühl (Low Alemannic dialect area.) The speech samples were taken from sociolinguistic interviews. In addition, questionnaire data on social identity and positioning were used.

Attitudes vis-à-vis the local dialect were ambivalent among Prediger's respondents: 46% thought it sounded nice, 36% disagreed with this statement. Most of the speakers did not claim to speak German dialect well (questionnaire answers, Prediger, 2016: 89). Nevertheless, while almost nobody reported to speak Alemannic dialect 'always' or 'predominantly' in any domain, a substantial number of 30% of the respondents said that they spoke 'partly dialect, partly standard' in the family, 26% with friends, 48% in the neighborhood and 17% at work (Prediger, 2016: 94).

These self-reports are reflected in the language spoken in the interviews, where Prediger found a considerable amount of dialect forms (Fig. 4). The four most frequently used variables in the list are particularly interesting, as they also occur in Stuttgart.
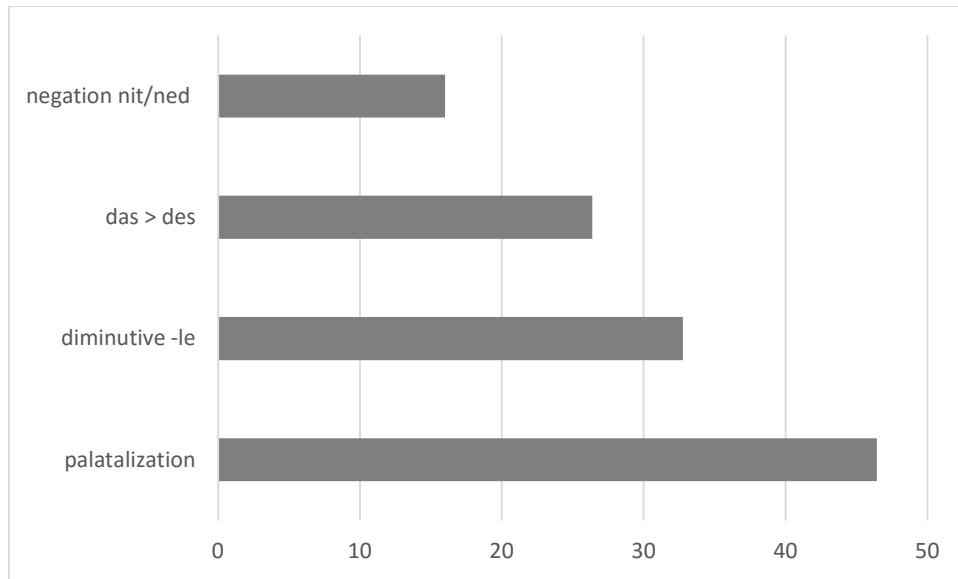
Fig. (4): Average percentages of dialect realizations in the speech of 51 Russian-German immigrants (from Prediger, 2016: 138, figure redrawn).

Frequencies for these four variables range between an average of almost 50% (palatalization) and 16% (dialectal negator). The pattern is completely different from the one found in the Stuttgart, where three of these features were more or less absent, while one (*des* for *das*) was used almost categorically.

There are some indications that better integration into German society (as perceived by the subjects of the study) is linked to more dialect usage: when the subjects are grouped according to their answers to the (questionnaire) item 'Which culture do you feel attached to most?', the ones that clearly opt for German culture always use more dialect than the others (see Fig. 5).[15] The effect is most pronounced for the two features which are stereotypically associated with the Alemannic dialect, i.e. palatalization and choice of the diminutive.
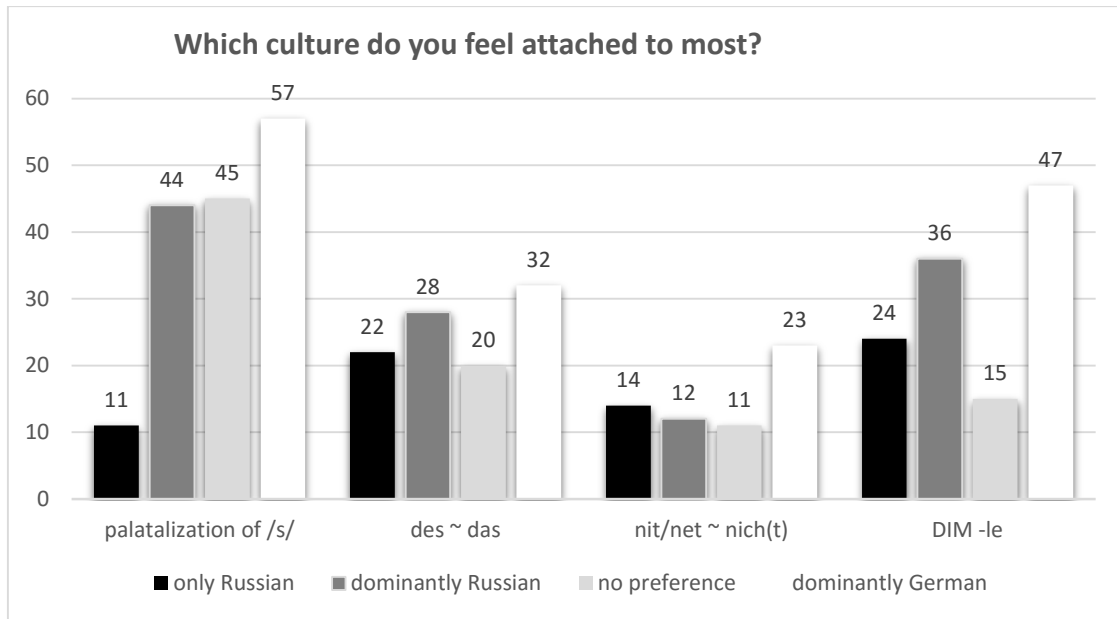
Which culture do you feel attached to most?

Fig. (5): Self-assessment of cultural affiliation and percentage of usage of four dialectal/regiolectal features among 51 Russian-German migrants to Germany (from Prediger 2016: 231, figure redrawn)

Both Foffi's and Prediger's result show that the Stuttgart results cannot be generalized to other ethnic groups (and perhaps to smaller towns, let alone rural areas).

3.2.   Outside the Alemannic dialect area

Outside the Alemannic dialect area, only two (published) studies deal with issues of dialect use among speakers with migration background.

Inken Keim's thorough and detailed ethnographic studies (cf. Keim, 2002 and 2007; Keim/Knöbl, 2011; Keim, 2011) focussed on a group of twelve girls with (mostly Turkish) migrant background born in Germany. Data were recorded around the turning of the century in a neighborhood of Mannheim which is today dominated by migrants and people with migration background but used to be a working class area in which a strong version of the city dialect has still survived. Analyses of further young speakers

(such as a young Turkish man, cf. Keim and Knöbl, 2011) followed in subsequent years.

Keim herself describes the unmarked, informal register of German among the adolescents as (my translation) "a simplified form of the regional vernacular, shaped by the Rheno-Franconian dialect, which shows a number of [ethnolectal] features" (2011: 166; also see Keim, 2007: 437). However, the dialect features found in the data transcripts in her publications (hence excluding prosodic and low-level phonetic features) are minor. The features that occur regularly are *des* for *das* (which is used pervasively), and the negator *ned* which alternates with *nich* and *nisch*. Another regiolectal feature that seems to play a role are shortened vowels instead of Std.G. long vowels, particularly in some high-frequency words such as *oder* 'or' and *aber* 'but'. Coronalization (the replacement of the Std.G. palatal fricative [ç] by ([ɕ] or [ʃ] in syllable coda) is almost categorical, but as it is a feature of the Mannheim dialect as well as the German multiethnolect, it cannot be taken as evidence for dialect accommodation. Other dialect features occur (very) rarely.

But beside this in-group style, these young speakers were also observed to occasionally switch into the (strong) Mannheim dialect in order to contextualize short stretches of talk as belonging to a playful modality (cf. Keim/Knöbl, 2007: 192), as being (playfully) antagonistic (cf. Keim, 2007: 308), or for enacting social personae linked to the dominant (adult/mainstream German) world (cf. Keim, 2007: 248, 252-3, 269 for examples). By doing so, they "distance themselves from it and show that this is not part of their 'own' language" (Keim/Knöbl, 2007: 102-3, my translation[16]). The (strong) Mannheim dialect is for them a symbol of the "stupid German" (Keim, 2007: 443).

Of course, code-switching between (strong) Mannheim dialect and their own locally
flavored (and at the same time (multi-)ethnolectal) speech for discourse-functional
reasons is only possible on the basis of a good knowledge of the linguistic resources
available in the Mannheim repertoire. These speakers can easily switch into the persona
of what is for them an 'authentic' dialect speaker; but they make it very clear that this a
process of othering, and that this is not 'their' language.

      Wiese/Freywald (2019) report on the occurrence of various features of the
Berlin vernacular ('dialect') in their 'Kiezdeutsch corpus' (17 Germany-born core
speakers from Berlin Kreuzberg, a high immigration neighborhood), such as the
'confusion' of dative and accusative, some non-standard/vernacular ablaut forms, or the
use of the tag question *wa?*. They compare their Kiezdeutsch data with recordings from
six speakers without migration background who live in a neighborhood with less
immigration (Hellersdorf). When numbers are given, the regional features in
Hellersdorf always outnumber those in Kreuzberg considerably. An impressive example
is the realization of the first person singular, which, in Berlin, has three possible
realizations:

      Std.G. *ich* [ç] (palatal fricative)

      Berlin vernacular ('dialect') *ik* [k] (stop)

      multiethnolectal ('Kiezdeutsch') *isch* [ɕ] ~ [ʃ] (coronalised fricative)

      Fig. (6) shows the distribution of these three forms. The distribution is
complementary: while the neutral Std.G. form is the most frequent one in both groups,
the Hellersdorf youngsters almost never use ethnolectal *isch*, while the Kreuzberg group
almost never uses local vernacular *ik*. This points to a strong linguistic divergence
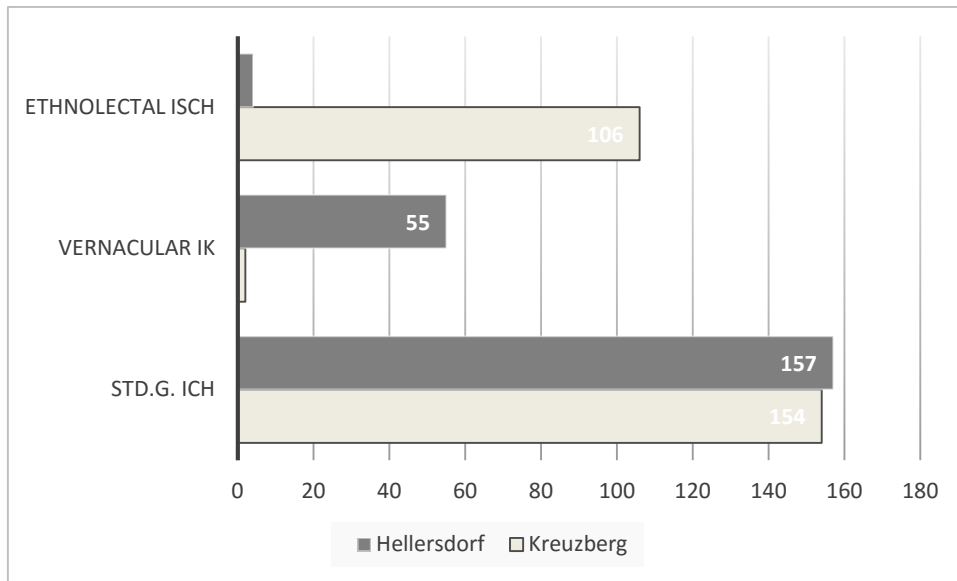(segregation) of the groups.

Fig. (6). Realization of the first person singular pronoun among young speakers in a high immigration (Kreuzberg) and in a lower immigration neighborhood (Hellersdorf), occurrences per 10 000 words (Wiese/Freywald, 2019, redrawn).

Keim's work in Mannheim and Wiese and Freywald's work in Berlin (i.e. in large(r) cities in Germany) is compatible with the Stuttgart results: in both cases, there is little accommodation of the local vernacular/dialect. The Mannheim study also confirms that the demonstrative/article *des* (for Std.G. *das*) has become reallocated to the multiethnolect. The ability of the speakers to switch into strong Mannheim dialect suggests that, as in the case of our speaker LE discussed above, at least some young people with migrant background have acquired the dialect sufficiently to use it for discourse functions, but that they see it as antagonistic to their own identity.

4.   General discussion

In this paper, I brought together the available evidence on the use of German dialectal or regiolectal features by young people with an immigration background in Germany,

zooming in in particular on the results of a study carried out in the city of Stuttgart among speakers with mostly Turkish, Albanian or ex-Yugoslavian backgrounds. These results showed a remarkably homogeneous way of speaking from which the (salient) local features of the Swabian dialect are almost completely absent. While the dialects are in a process of levelling in urban contexts among young speakers of German family background as well, the speakers surpass them by far. In this latter respect, the results differ from what has been reported for other European places, such as Zurich (by Schmid, in this volume) or Marseille (by Evers, in this volume). This divergence complements the emergence of multiethnic ways of speaking with new grammatical and phonological as well as lexical and pragmatic features that have no basis in the autochthonous varieties.

However, this conclusion must be qualified in two ways:

- While the above description is based on the available evidence from young people of mainly Turkish family background and can probably be extended to speakers with an ex-Yugoslavian/Albanian background, the same developments do not seem to hold for speakers with an Italian or Russian (language) background. For other major groups of migrants (e.g. from Poland, Romania, and other EU countries) no studies exist.

- There are some regional features that are used recurrently by young people with the above-mentioned migration backgrounds (sometimes even more than by German monolingual speakers) and which seem to have become part of 'their language'. It stands to reason that at least in the Swabian case (but also in Mannheim) these features are not salient for the speakers as dialect features, indexing local or regional belonging, but are perceived as general vernacular

German and therefore compatible with an multiethnically flavored speaking style.

Explaining this process of linguistic divergence is of course difficult, given the limited research that has been done. At least three explanations are possible.

First of all, it might be hypothesized that the speakers' exposure to the dialect is simply not sufficient for acquisition. This appears at first sight highly plausible, given the fact that the young people we recorded in high-immigration neighborhoods of Stuttgart usually have friendship networks in which monolingual Germans are rare – and the few German-only speakers accommodate the language of their multilingual peers, not vice versa. The neighborhood in which they live is perceived by them as dominantly non-German ('more foreigners than Germans', or 'this neighborhood is Turkish', to quote just a few relevant statements from the data). Input from the media is in standard German. As the city dialect is highly levelled, and young monolingual Stuttgarters speak it less and less, the dialectal input would need to come from older speakers who the speakers in our sample will rarely be in contact with. This situation of limited input could change when they enter the job market.

Under less segregated conditions and in smaller places, where dialects are clearly part of the linguistic ecology (such as in smaller towns), dialect acquisition seems to be stronger but does not reach the same level (of competence) as in monolingual speakers (as studies by Foffi and Prediger show, see above); after all, in Germany the dialect is often transmitted in the family (if at all), and it is exactly this context which migrant families cannot provide.

On the other hand, Keim's Mannheim study proves that second generation Turkish speakers may master the local dialect sufficiently for code-switching into it for discourse-related reasons. In addition, it should be noted that even easy-to-acquire

dialect features, such as lexical forms of the type *weisch* for Std.G. *weisst du* 'you know' in Stuttgart, or *ik(ke)* for the Std.G. pronoun of the 1st sg. *ich* in Berlin, are rarely found in the data. From classroom recordings, we know that some of the teachers do use these regional features. Hence, it is implausible that insufficient exposure to local speech forms is the whole explanation.

A second explanation would consider the social status and prestige of the dialects in the linguistic repertoires of non-migrant speakers. There can be no doubt that the dialects in Norway (see Røyneland, in this volume) or Switzerland have a status that is largely different from those in Germany. The dialects in these countries are identical with the spoken language, and not speaking dialect is not an option in everyday communication. In Germany, on the other hand, the visibility and prestige of the dialect varies from place to place. While, for instance, the Low German dialects are completely invisible in an urban context, the Mannheim city dialect is still used by Mannheimers to a greater extent; yet, the dialect is socially marked and associated with lower class speech (see Keim 1995). This is in line with Mannheim's history as an industrial town which had a strong, dialect-speaking working class. In Berlin, where no dialect in the strict sense of the word exists, the few features that characterize the local vernacular today are also associated with the working class, but its hidden prestige is higher due to its additional indexing value as part of the 'Berliner Schnauze', a witty interactional genre that originated from the lower-bourgeoisie (see Auer 2019). Stuttgart, with its much more recent transformation into a high-tech industrial center, lacks the association of urban vernacular (or dialect) with the lower classes. Yet, the dialect here has receded to domains of private life, while in public, mainly standard German (or a locally flavored standard) is spoken. These hints may suffice to demonstrate that speaking dialect (or using dialect features) is not a matter-of-course in Germany. The exact social

meanings attached to the dialect and the constraints on its usage that follow from it are tricky to understand and to master. At the same time, speaking dialect is not vital for everyday communication and can be avoided easily. Unfortunately, no studies are yet available on the speech of people with migration background who live in rural places where the dialects still have a stronger position (see Ekberg and Östman, in this volume).

Finally, a third explanation (pursued by Jaspers 2006:141 for the Antwerp Flemish dialect[17]) explains linguistic divergence (both the non-use of regional features and the use of ethnolectal innovations) as a symbolic expression of mutual processes of exclusion and distancing that characterize the interaction between *Ausländer* (as the young people with immigration background often call themselves, regardless of whether they have a German passport or not, i.e. 'foreigners') and *Deutsche* (in their terminology not including migrants with a German passport) (see Cornips, in this volume). Through the use of multiethnolectal features, the speakers can profile their own identity; through their reluctance to use (salient) dialect features, they can distance themselves from 'the Germans', to whom the dialects are seen to 'belong' and who may sometimes also claim to be their owners.

References

Auer, Peter. 2004. "Non-standard Evidence in Syntactic Typology – Methodological Remarks on the Use of Dialect Data vs. Spoken Language Data." In *Dialectology Meets Typology,* edited by Bernd Kortmann, 69-92. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Auer, Peter. 2018. "Dialect Change in Europe – Leveling and Convergence." In *The Handbook of Dialectology*, edited by Charles Boberg, John Nerbonne and David Watts, 159-176. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Auer, Peter. 2019. "Longue durée and Social Styles: Shifting Indexicalities in the Berlin Vernacular from the Perspective of Historical Sociolinguistics." In *The*

Sociolinguistic Economy of Berlin, edited by Theresa Heyd, Ferdinand von Mengden, and Britta Schneider, 21-50. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Auer, Peter, Birgit Barden, and Beate Großkopf. 1998. Subjective and Objective Parameters Determining Saliency in Long-term Dialect Accommodation." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 2 (2): 163-187.

Auer, Peter, Julia Breuninger, and Martin Pfeiffer. 2017. Neuere Entwicklungen des Alemannischen an der französisch-deutschen Sprachgrenze im Oberrheingebiet. In *Räume, Grenzen, Übergänge*, edited by Helen Christen, Peter Gilles, and Christoph Purschke, 27-44. Stuttgart: Steiner.

Auer, Peter and Vanessa Siegel. To appear. Grammatical gender in the German multiethnolect. *Journal of Germanic Philology.*

Beaman, Karen V. 2018a. Swabian: Thriving or Dying? Language Variation and Change over 35 Years. Presentation at International Congress of Linguists (Cape Town, South Africa, Jul. 2-6, 2018).

Beaman, Karen V. 2018b. "Mobility and Dialect Identity as Factors in Language Change: Findings from a 35-Year Panel and Trend Study in Swabia." Presentation at the Urban Language Conference (Graz, Austria, Nov. 1-3, 2018).

Beaman, Karen V. 2018c, "ds beschte Daitsch wo s gibt" - Variation in the Use of the *wo*-Relativizer in Swabian German." Presentation at NWAV 47 (New York University, Oct. 18-21, 2018).

Fleischer, Jürg. 2004. "A Typology of Relative Clauses in German Dialects." In *Dialectology Meets Typology,* edited by Bernd Kortmann, 211-243. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Foffi, Silvia. 2010. Alemannischer Dialekt und Identität bei Italienern der zweiten Generation in Südbaden. Unpublished Master Thesis, U. Freiburg.

Hinskens, Frans, Linda van Meel, and Roeland van Hout. 2014. "Variation in the Realization of /ɛi/ by Dutch Youngsters: From Local Urban Dialects to Emerging Ethnolects?" *Dialectologia et Geolinguistica*, 22 (1), 46-87.

Jaspers, Jürgen. 2006. "Stylized Standard Dutch by Moroccan Boys in Antwerp." *Linguistics and Education* 17, 131-156.

Keim, Inken, ed. 1995 [repr. 2011]. *Kommunikative Stilistik einer sozialen Welt ‚kleiner Leute' in der Mannheimer Innenstadt.* Berlin: de Gruyter..

Keim, Inken. 2002. "Sozial-kulturelle Selbstdefinition und sozialer Stil: Junge Deutsch-türkinnen im Gespräch. " In: *Soziale Welten und kommunikative Stile. Festschrift*

für Werner Kallmeyer zum 60. Geburtstag, edited by Inken Keim and Wilfried Schütte, 233-260. Tübingen: Narr.

Keim, Inken. 2007. *Die ‚türkischen Powergirls'. Lebenswelt und kommunikativer Stil einer Migrantinnengruppe in Mannheim*. Tübingen: Narr.

Keim, Inken. 2011. "Form und Funktion ethnolektaler Formen – türkischstämmige Jugendliche im Gespräch. " In *Sprache und Integration*, edited by Ludwig M. Eichinger, Albrecht Plewnia and Melanie Steinle, 152-188. *Tübingen*: Narr.

Keim, Inken and Rolf Knöbl. 2007. "Sprachliche Varianz und sprachliche Virtuosität von türkischstämmigen ‚Ghetto'-Jugendlichen in Mannheim." In *Standard, Variation und Sprachwandel in germanischen Sprachen,* edited by Christian Fandrych and Reinier Salverda, 157-200. Tübingen: Narr.

Keim, Inken, and Knöbl, Ralf, 2011, "Linguistic variation and linguistic virtuosity of young ‚ghetto'-migrants in Mannheim, Germany." In *Ethnic Styles of Speaking in European Metropolitan Areas*, edited by Friederike Kern and Margret Selting, 239-264. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Kehrein, Roland. 2012. *Regionalsprachliche Spektren im Raum: zur linguistischen Struktur der Vertikale.* Stuttgart: Steiner.

Prediger, Alexander. 2016. Erwerb und Gebrauch alemannischer Dialektmerkmale durch russische Muttersprachler. Unpublished Ph.D., U Freiburg.

Schwarz, Christian. 2015. *Phonologischer Dialektwandel in den alemannischen Basisdialetken Südwestdeutschlands im 20. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart: Steiner.

Siegel, Vanessa. 2018. *Multiethnolektale Syntax. Artikel, Präpositionen und Pronomen in der Jugendsprache*. Heidelberg: Winter.

Spiekermann, Helmut. 2008. *Sprache in Baden-Württemberg*. *Merkmale des regionalen Standards*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

Streck, Tobias. 2012. *Phonologischer Wandel im Konsonantismus der alemannischen Dialekte Baden-Württembergs*. Stuttgart: Steiner.

Wiese, Heike and Ulrike Freywald. 2019. "Regionalsprachliche Merkmale in jugendsprachlichen Praktiken im multilingualen urbanen Raum." In *Language and Space. An International Handbook of Linguistic Variation, Volume 4: German*, edited by Joachim Herrgen and Jürgen E. Schmidt, 995-1012. Berlin: De Gruyter – Mouton.

[1] The term multi-ethnolect is used here despite of the terminological problems surrounding it, which cannot be discussed here. As the data on which Section 2 is based were collected from young people living in a strongly multi-ethnic neighborhood and in immigrant families, the term seems justified here. The German multi-ethnolect has de-ethnicised to a certain degree and has started the spread into some urban, non-immigrant milieus of young speakers. This spread needs a separate sociolinguistic investigation.

[2] This is the definition the official statistics in Germany work with. In this text, no terminological distinction is made between speakers with and without German citizenship and the term 'migration background' refers to both of them.

[3] Source: *Statistisches Amt, Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart* (https://statistik.stuttgart.de/statistiken/tabellen/7392/jb7392.php).

[4] In 2017, the respective numbers were 11.5%/12% (official numbers by the *Statistisches Bundesamt*), a total of 19.3 million people.

[5] Source: Statistisches Amt, Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart (https://servicex.stuttgart.de/lhs-services/komunis/index.php?uid=99andobjectid=20613). The numbers do not include mixed families, i.e. those in which one parent has no immigration background.

[6] The data were collected by Vanessa Siegel and Daniela Picco. Anna Farina and Linnéa Weitkamp helped in the analysis. Many thanks to all of them!

[7] Colloquial features of spoken German that can be observed throughout the country were of course not considered (cf. Auer 2004).

[8] The Std.G. suffix –*lein* is not possible in this word.

[9] I also tested the variable in other lexical contexts. No single instance of the dialectal diminutive was found. It should be said, though, that the bulk of the examples (66 out of 80) occurred in the word *Mädchen* ('girl'). The others were *Mäppchen, Kärtchen, Stückchen, Würstchen, Zäpfchen, Männchen, Brötchen* and *Herzchen*.

[10] The theoretically possible neutral variant *das, wo…* was only found with a local meaning, referring to a neuter place description. No case marked (dative or accusative, let alone genitive) forms of the relativiser are attested.

[11] Spiekermann's informants in the 2001-3 group were five grammar school teachers and students of German philology, hence the sample is small. The 1961 data (which consisted of the speakers classified as standard German in the so-called *Pfeffer corpus*, cf. Spiekermann 2008: 94-97) also include five speakers from Stuttgart, here with a grammar school degree. Spiekermann's informants were of mixed age, and were recorded in a formal interview situation.

[12] The variable /ig/ was not investigated by her.

[13] Only the data for the subject relativizer were used, as no instances of object relativizers are attested in my data. The total number of 9% is the sum of 7% for the single relativizer *wo* and 2% for the doubled relativizer of the type *der wo*.

[14] For a survey of the dialectal relativization strategies in German dialects, see Fleischer (2004).

[15] Prediger does not calculate levels of significance.

[16] Cf. Keim 2007: 436 for explicit metalinguistic statements by the Turkish girls on this topic

[17] He says: „Antwerp dialect was highly associated with disgruntled working class whites and […] easily evoked images of racism" (2006:141).