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On the social forces that determine what is standard in a language – with a look at the norms of non-standard language varieties

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Der Autor stellt das von ihm entwickelte und seit 1995 verschiedentlich publizierte und diskutierte Modell der sozialen Kräfte dar, die maßgeblich standardsprachliche Sprachformen setzen, und begründet und vertieft es. Diese sozialen Kräfte umfassen: die Modellsprecher und -schreiber (und ihre öffentlichen Texte); die Kodifizierer (und die von ihnen hergestellten Teile des Sprachkodexes); die Sprachexperten (und ihre Kritik und Alternativvorschläge zu Sprachformen der Modellsprecher und -schreiber und im Sprachkodex); die Sprachnorm-Autoritäten (und ihre sprachlichen Korrekturen sowie ihre Rolle bei der Anerkennung und Verbreitung der Standardsprachformen); die Mehrheit der Sprecher der betreffenden Sprachgemeinschaft (und ihr – allerdings nur indirekter – Einfluss auf die Setzung standardsprachlicher Formen).

Die Analysen und Definitionen basieren wesentlich auf der Normtheorie von Georg Henrik von Wright. Dabei werden auch Fragen der Gültigkeit und Legitimität vor allem des Sprachkodexes, aber auch anderer normativer Aspekte von Standardvarietäten erörtert. Außerdem werden Unterschiede der Normsetzung und Gültigkeit der Normen zwischen Standard- und Nonstandardvarietäten aufgezeigt.

Stichwörter:

Standardvarietät, Nonstandardvarietät, Modellsprecher und -schreiber, Modelltexte, Sprachkodifizierer und Sprachkodex, Sprachexperten und Fachurteile, Sprachnorm-Autoritäten und sprachliche Korrekturen, Gültigkeit von Normen, Legitimität von Normen.

1. Preliminary remark

The model I will present in the following¹ has proved useful in dealing with the various standard varieties of German. I have developed it in the course of writing a book on the national varieties of German or, if you wish, on German as a pluricentric and plurinational language (Ammon 1995). It served as a basis for defining which language forms can reasonably be considered to be standard in the various German-speaking countries, especially Germany, Austria and German-speaking Switzerland, and why. The model proved reasonably adequate, descriptively as well as explanatively, for that purpose. It is certainly more generally applicable to other languages, beyond German, as hinted at in the following. It seems astonishing that such a model has not been suggested before, since it appears quite trivial once presented. It has also proved to be useful as a basis for practical research into language standardization, e.g. for the *Variantenwörterbuch des Deutschen* (Ammon et

¹ Title and text are not quite identical with my presentation at the conference at Lugano on 14 February 2014. Instead, the text is partially based on a paper I presented, upon invitation by Michael Gordin, at Princeton University, NJ, on 26 September 2013.

al. 2004), and to be theoretically explorable to considerable depth in various directions (cf., e.g., Ammon 1989, 1991, 1995, 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2015).

2. On the concept of "authority" and some related concepts

I will begin by some clarifying remarks on the concept of "authority" to which the following reasoning frequently refers. Basic knowledge of the concept is readily available on the Internet; even the Wikipedia article "Authority" provides useful hints. *Authority* can mean either an attribute of an individual, group or institution (having authority), or it can mean an individual, group or institution who or which has this attribute (being an authority). Both cases, however, imply a social relationship which is asymmetric or perhaps anti-symmetric (not ruling out authority vis-à-vis oneself). Also, authority entails a power relationship, i.e. the chance to make someone do what she otherwise would not (to follow Max Weber's explication [1922] 1976: 28). This does not have to be the power to effectively prescribe something for someone to do or to abstain from – it may just be the power to entice someone into doing something.

Authority and power can be based on various conditions, e.g. simply on military force. Here however, I will only deal with authority which presupposes skills or knowledge or rather acknowledged skills or knowledge. A widely known general categorization of what authority can be based upon was again suggested by Weber ([1922] 1976: 122), namely based upon "charismatic", "traditional" or "rational-legal" circumstances. With respect to authority presupposing skills or knowledge, a rational-legal basis appears indispensable. Actually, Weber referred to "rule" (*Herrschaft*), but his categories can, I believe, by analogy be transferred to *authority*.

Authorities, i.e. individuals, groups or institutions who or which have authority, cannot only make someone do what s/he otherwise would not, but can also issue social norms and enforce them. Those issuing the norms can be different from those who enforce them (e.g. legislative versus executive authorities). I will deal here mainly with authorities who issue norms, namely language norms. One could call them "language-norm authorities (in the wider sense)" – the addition in brackets will become clear presently when I introduce "language-norm authorities in the narrower sense". I will, however, also touch on individuals, groups or institutions who are not language-norm authorities themselves, but only participate in issuing norms while needing support from actual authorities to establish them as such. Examples are dictionary authors who need the support of authorities like school boards or the ministry of education to establish their dictionary, or rather its content, as a norm. Only when their dictionary has thus become "authoritative", have they joined the circle of "language-norm authorities in the wider sense". Since I refer to them

before and after such establishment, they have been assigned the more vague term "social forces". (Another possible denomination might simply be "authorities", differentiated from "norm authority", but this could be a source of confusion).

There are, however, also authorities with whom I deal, who directly enforce language norms, i.e. prescribe or forbid choices of certain language forms. Examples are school teachers, especially of language classes, or copy editors. One could call them "language-norm authorities in the narrower sense" to distinguish them from those "in the wider sense", who do not directly control choices of language forms for use. However, when confusion seems unlikely, I limit the term "language-norm authority" to those in the narrower sense, and also sometimes subsume all authorities under "social forces" (SOCIAL FORCES $\supseteq$ AUTHORITIES $\supseteq$ NORM AUTHORITIES $\supseteq$ LANGUAGE-NORM AUTHORITIES $\supseteq$ IN THE WIDER SENSE $\supseteq$ IN THE NARROWER SENSE).

Norms themselves can be analysed further. Georg Henrik von Wright's book *Norm and Action* (1963: especially 70-92), for example, offers systematic and detailed suggestions for norm analysis. It comes in handy that he focuses on the type of norms which are central to my topic, namely prescriptions (cf. Ammon 1991, 1995). I use his terms for the superior and the inferior part in a normative relationship, the former of which we know already, namely "norm authority", the latter being "norm subject". The main components of norms distinguished by von Wright are the following (my enumeration, but his order):

- a) "The norm content" (the act which ought or ought not to be done; linguistically described as, roughly speaking, the vocabulary, grammatical rules, etc. to be applied),
- b) "The norm character" (the being permitted, forbidden, etc. to act),
- c) "The condition of application of the norm" (the situations in which the norm content can be done). This needs to be supplemented by component f) which he calls "norm occasion" (the location and time at which the norm is in force, e.g. in certain language classes in school).

The components (a), (b) and (c), but not (f), are the "norm kernel". The other components we know already. Besides the norm occasion, they are d) the "norm authority", i.e. "the agent who gives or issues the prescription" and e) the "norm subject", "to whom the prescription is addressed or given" (von Wright 1963: 75, 77). Further conditions for norms to exist are "sanctions" attached to them, i.e. the (credible) threat of punishment for disobedience or violation, and the "promulgation" of the norms, i.e. making them known to the norm-subjects (von Wright 1963: 125f.).

Von Wright (1963: 189-207) also gives a useful definition of the "validity of a norm", which he relates to hierarchies of norm authorities. For a norm to be valid, the norm-authority needs to be entitled to issue and enforce it by a

superordinate authority (e.g. the school board or the head master vis-à-vis the teacher).

Another aspect relevant to our topic is the "legitimacy" of a norm. It can perhaps be conceived as the norm being "accepted" by the majority of the entire community, or even "adopted", i.e. internalized as a guideline for one's own actions. (For the difference between the acceptance and the adoption of a norm, see Bartsch 1985: 84, 102-105). Finally, acceptance or adoption by the majority does not have to be reasonable, but can and should be questioned as to whether it stands to reason.

Some of the remaining unclarity about these terms and concepts will be reduced as I proceed; other unclarity may be due to structural and cultural differences between societies.

3. The social forces and authorities who or which decide what is standard in a language and their roles in such decisions

3.1. Overview

From my studies of numerous standard varieties and their societal functions (cf. e.g. Ammon 1989, 1995), I have come to identify the four social forces pictured in figure 1 as playing a prominent role in decisions as to which language forms count as standard or, in short, which are standard in a language. These four forces could perhaps also be called "authorities in language", quoting the title of James and Lesley Milroy's famous book ([1985] 2012), though the Milroys follow somewhat different paths in dealing with the standard language question than I do here. From the wealth of studies of language norms I would just like to mention Klaus Gloy's (1975) as particularly inspiring, though it too follows different paths from my own.

All of the four forces discussed below meet the criteria for authorities I have hinted at above. However, as explained above, I only label one of them in this way, or more specifically as "language-norm authorities", because it is the only one endowed with the power to directly prescribe the choice of language forms ("language-norm authorities in the narrower sense", as defined above), while the others can only provide recommendations or models. Since the others can nevertheless, depending on circumstances, make someone do what s/he would not otherwise do, they are authorities too, but "language-norm authorities only in the wider sense".

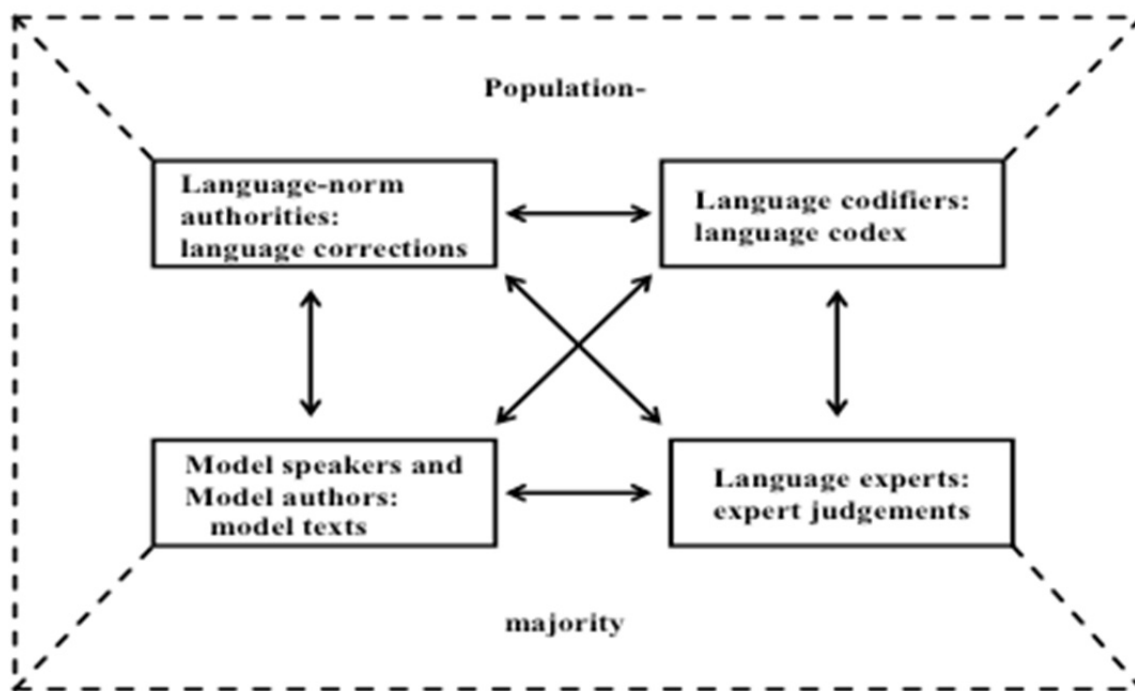


Fig. 1: The social forces directly involved in decisions through which language forms are (or count as) standard in a language (translated from Ammon 1995: 80)

Figure 1 is meant to be a theoretical model of how standard varieties are institutionalized in society. It is based on the assumption that the institutionalization of their norms is fundamentally different from that of the norms of non-standard varieties, which – depending on the concept of 'institutionalization' – could even be seen as not being institutionalized at all. Again following Henrik von Wright (1963: 8f.), though somewhat loosely, both kinds of language varieties can be classified into different types of norms. Non-standard varieties, like, for example, regional dialects or youth slangs, are what one can call *customs*. For these, it is typical that norms are developed by the community as a whole or anonymously, such that there are no precisely defined individual or institutional language-norm authorities (e.g. grandmothers, peer groups or clubs), who or which control obedience to language norms and that norm violations are usually only punished by excluding violators from the group or just not considering them group members. The group is in this case the language-variety community as a whole, i.e. the totality of the speakers of the respective dialect or youth slang.

In contrast, standard varieties, like for example American Standard English or Austrian Standard German, are institutionalized prescriptions. For these, it is typical that they have special social forces for developing and special language-norm authorities for issuing and controlling language norms as well as particular sanctions for norm violations. The language-norm authority is typically tied to a particular profession, like, for example, that of school teacher, radio director or copy editor, who can attach sanctions to the norms, i.e. punishment of the norm subjects for norm-violations. In our three cases, for

example, this could include giving bad marks to students, firing radio presenters or rejecting manuscripts offered for publication by authors, respectively, among other possibilities. There are parallels to the law and its enforcement, though the institutions are fundamentally different. Standard varieties are something between legal norms and customs. This will become obvious as we will now have a closer look at the social forces that institutionalize and form standard varieties.

3.2. *Model speakers, model authors and model texts*

If we ignore figure 1 for the moment, we can roughly characterize what is "standard in a language" or what is, in other words, the standard variety, as what is "normal" language usage in public speaking and writing. Improving communication in the public sphere has, after all, been among the major purposes of developing language standards, especially to bridge dialect diversity. The public sphere is therefore naturally one of the primary arenas where the norms of standard varieties become established. The social forces which play a major role in this arena are what I call the model speakers and authors (cf. figure 1). Their main members are, as a rule, professional speakers and authors in the mass media: newsreaders and journalists for major, especially national, radio and TV channels or newspapers and journals. They produce the model texts. They confirm the existing standard variety norms on the one hand, but are the sources of new norms or of norm changes on the other hand. Once language forms have come to be used regularly in these arenas, they are standard. However, one has to distinguish "use" of language forms from "citation" of language forms in order to identify citation of non-standard forms which, in writing, is often indicated by quotation marks. It should, however, be noted that even forms which are used regularly in model texts are standard only according to this one social force and not the others which also have a say in making language forms standard (see figure 1). Only if all four forces are in agreement as to the form being standard can it be called something like a generally agreed-upon standard.

In the past, the model speakers and authors were the actors in prominent theaters and the most renowned fictional writers. However, non-fiction ("*Sachprosa*") has, as Heinz Kloss (1978: 46-55) rightly pointed out, become more and more important as the model texts of standard varieties over the course of time. The reason is that with the establishment of standard varieties, fictional authors have come to like and to use blatantly non-standard forms to an extent which have made their texts doubtful sources of language standards. Similar restrictions apply to theater and also movies as sources of standard pronunciation. These proved unreliable in this respect as early as the middle or the end of the 19th century, when the major theaters in Berlin were meant to serve as the source of German standard pronunciation. At that time, it became clear that, at best, tragedies, but not comedies could be used for that purpose.

Even pronunciation in tragedies had to be filtered and supplemented to arrive at useful standard norms (Siebs 1898; Besch 2003). Such difficulties have made fiction marginal as a source of language standards, though not entirely useless, especially for stylistic variation.

Non-fiction has, however, become the main source. This is especially true of news on TV and radio or in newspapers and magazines, but also of other non-fictional literature. The main purpose of these texts is information rather than entertainment which inclines them towards language forms that are widely understood. Linguistic units, for example words that are regularly used in such *model texts*, tend to become *standard*. If they lack codification, to which I will turn presently, they can be called *standard by mere usage* (German *Gebrauchsstandard*). This is not the same as "colloquial standard", which can be codified and is a stylistic specification, while standard by mere usage is a "normative level", as I suggest calling it, for which non-codification is definitional. It is even possible that the entire standard variety is uncoded and, thus, standard by mere usage. This is typical of incipient standard varieties such as, for example, in the late Middle Ages in Europe, when "vernacular languages" started to become "standard languages", i.e. standard varieties were developed for them.

It can be useful to distinguish a *standard language* (SL) from a *standard variety* (SVY) and again from a (single) *standard form* (SF) (*standard variant* or *standard constant* if there is no complementary non-standard variant, i.e. no "standard – non-standard variable"), with the latter being an element of the former in each case: $SF \in SVY \in SL$, e.g. *program* (or *behavior* or *truck*) $\in$ American Standard English $\in$ the English language.

3.3. *Language codifiers and language codex*

Before turning to the language-norm-authorities (in the narrower sense), I will deal with the codification of standard varieties, because it interacts closely with model texts and their production by model speakers and authors. Codification is another crucial difference between standard varieties and non-standard varieties. A *language codex*, which contains the results of codification and is usually published, is fundamentally different from a mere linguistic description, which can also exist for non-standard varieties. For language codices, it is definitional that they serve as guides for correct language use or for language correction. Such prescriptive function may very well counteract the intentions of the authors who have compiled the codex and who mostly typically claim that they just wanted to provide a description. However, actual functions, not authors' intentions, are decisive for a dictionary, a grammar or the like to be a language codex. It is also irrelevant when classifying such an object as a language codex whether it has been instigated or even produced by an institution of the government or the state, like an academy, or by private individuals. Thus, Noah Webster's or Konrad Duden's dictionaries for

American English or German German (different from Austrian and other national German) are no less valid codices than the dictionaries of the *Académie Française* in France or the *Real Academia Española* in Spain (for a worldwide overview of state agencies language by language, in which English is ominously missing, see <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_language_regulators>, checked 17/08/2013).

However, their status as a codex derives not only from being used prescriptively, but also from being *validly* used that way. The *validity of a codex* presupposes that its prescriptive use is condoned by some superordinate authority, which in many cases is part of a hierarchy of authorities reaching up to the highest level of the state (cf. chapter 1 above; von Wright 1963: 189-207). This can be illustrated best from the perspective of the language-norm authorities, to whom I turn in the next chapter. A teacher, for example, can justify her language corrections from a valid but not from an invalid codex. Such a valid codex for American Standard English is, I assume, the newest edition of the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, while some dictionary from the 19th century probably is not. The validity of such a dictionary as a codex is demonstrated by the superordinate authority (let us assume this to be the local school board) condoning its being used as a basis for language correction for Standard American English, which again is condoned by higher authorities perhaps reaching up to the state government. It is thus even legitimized, though indirectly, through acceptance by the majority of the population.

Interestingly, the existence of a language codex has recently been called into question for fully-fledged standard languages such as English, in particular. This is different from the lack of a codex for incipient standard languages, which I have pointed out above. Is there really no language codex in the explicated sense in English? This is at least how I understand Martin Durrell's (1999) insistence that there are no dictionaries or grammars for English, at least not in Britain, which serve or could validly be used for guiding or correcting language behaviour (cf. also Besch 2003). I am certainly ill-equipped to challenge this view, being neither a member of the language community nor an anglicist. Nevertheless, this view appears wrong to me and seems to derive from too narrow a concept of a language codex.

One aspect of such narrowness may be the assumption that such a codex has to be controlled by a state agency, which indeed is absolutely absent in this case. Another assumption may be that the codex should be well defined, which however is entirely unrealistic. It is particularly true for large language communities and languages which have been standardized for a long time that their codex can be widely diffused and its delimitation extremely fuzzy. It usually comprises some core volumes and an indefinite number of peripheral publications including style manuals, tapering out into teaching materials. In

recent times, online materials have also become widespread including automatic correction programs not only for orthography. The administrative court in Germany (*Bundesverwaltungsgericht*), the highest legal authority on such questions, informed me – upon request – in a letter (3 July, 1986) that for language correction at school, the Conference of the Educational Ministers of the German States (*Kultusministerkonferenz*) is the highest authority. This Conference enacted a much-discussed orthographic reform of German in 1996 in the form of general rules on which, in the meantime, various dictionaries have been based, though with slight differences due to rule ambiguities. Among these publications the *Duden* Dictionary can be found. This has the longest tradition and is therefore generally considered the most authoritative. The dictionaries do, of course, include much more than only orthographic information. One could infer from this that not even the codex core is precisely defined. In addition, one must assume that this is even less the case in the periphery of the multitude of publications which serve as the immediate sources of corrections in most cases. Maybe such indefiniteness and fuzziness is particularly great in English, which could nourish the impression that there is no such thing as a codex at all. I guess, however, that language corrections can effectively be defended on the basis of certain dictionaries being called "authoritative", which would be sufficient proof for the existence of a language codex. It seems to me that the diffuse language codex for English raises its head most visibly through the various college and online editions. To deny its existence because of unclear delimitation would be similar to denying the existence of grammatically correct sentences in English because there are so many borderline cases. Prototype semantics shows how to deal with fuzzy concepts.

A clear perception of the language codex or codices for English is additionally difficult because of the extensive pluricentricity or, as I would call it, "plurinationality" (Ammon 1995: 95-100) of the language, i.e. the existence of six different "inner-circle" countries – cf. Kachru (1986), namely Britain, United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. Some have their own fully developed language codices, i.e. comprehensive dictionaries including specifications of grammar, pronunciation, styles and pragmatics, while others share at least parts of them with other countries. Yet English is by no means the only plurinational language (for an overview see Clyne 1991; Ammon 2005b; for German, Ammon 1995; Ammon et al. 2004).

Another fact which perhaps blurs the perception of language codices follows from what I have said in chapter 2.2, namely that they are not the only valid source of language correction. Model texts are valid, too. In fact, these are the only valid source for the *standard by mere usage* and are an additional valid source for the codified standard insofar as they are in line with the language codex, which they usually are in most respects. Thus a student can defend her usage of a word against a teacher on the basis of its being regularly used in

renowned newspapers. I have no evidence of such disputes between norm subjects and norm authorities, except the few I have had in school myself. I assume that such disputes are frequent and have also been studied, but I do not know of any such studies. These disputes are rarely carried to the law courts. However, a case in point has been reported from Switzerland (Schlöpfer 1979), where a boy failed the admission test to a selective high school because he wrote the following sentence, in which I have underlined the variants which the testers evaluated as "incorrect", i.e. non-standard (the variants claimed as "correct" added in brackets): *De Gügge (Hahn) hockt (sitzt) auf dem Dach vom Schopf (des Schuppens)* (The rooster sits on the roof of the shed). The boy's father presented the court with the *Duden* orthographic dictionary, an officially acknowledged part of the Swiss codex of German, which contained the three rejected forms, but had them marked as "schweiz." (Swiss (German)) yet not as non-standard. Upon that the court ruled that they had to be accepted as correct and the boy passed the exam. In Germany, these words could certainly not have been defended as standard.

Finally, dictionaries or grammars may not be perceived as codices, because they can also contain numerous non-standard forms. They are, however, marked as such, but such marking is often ambiguous with respect to norm levels. "Colloquial standard" is a case in point; stylistic marking as "vulgar" is another. It tends to be interpreted as non-standard – in line with the primary function of the standard for public communication. Codifiers are cautious about clear demarcations, because they are aware of the fact that "standard" is not a neatly delimitable concept. Regional and stylistic variations can both overlap with norm levels.

To close this chapter, a final word on the codifiers. They can in principal be any linguist, formally trained or self-trained, institutionally or privately employed, members of an academy or not, etc. They only have to produce a dictionary, grammar or similar publication that becomes a valid guide for correct language use or language correction. Today however, codifiers are mostly reasonably well-established linguistic authors in close cooperation with renowned publishers or members of a language academy.

3.4. *Language experts and expert judgments*

Whenever a new edition of the language codex or a part of it appears, it will be reviewed by language experts, i.e. linguists. I call this separate group "language experts (with respect to codification)". They are different from the codifiers, but both groups overlap if codifiers review parts of the codex written by others. The language experts are, generally speaking, all those whose reviews of the language codex are, or have a chance of being, taken seriously. They have a potential impact on what is or what is not standard in the respective language if their criticism of the codex flows into its next edition. They are, for that reason, a separate force that determines what is standard in

the language. An obvious case in point happened in Austria. The 35th edition of the Austrian Dictionary (*Österreichisches Wörterbuch* 1979), which is the officially declared core codex for Austrian standard German, contained numerous new words and idioms. Many of them were unmarked which meant that they were meant to be standard or were standard according to the dictionary. It did not take long before some renowned university linguists came up with sharp criticisms. Peter Wiesinger of the University of Vienna published a long list of dictionary entries which in his view either should not have been included in a dictionary of Austrian Standard German or should have been marked as borderline standard. Table 2 contains a few of his examples. What is important for our topic is the fact that the subsequent editions of the Austrian Dictionary were partially revised in line with Wiesinger's and other critics' suggestions. These revisions can hardly be explained other than being because of their impact, though the codifiers themselves have never openly admitted that. They also took care not to follow all of the critics' suggestions, whether for good reasons or just to demonstrate their autonomy.

1979	1985/1996
To be abandoned altogether according to Wiesinger	
<i>Goaß</i> (landsch.) [regional] "Geiß"	[abandoned]
<i>Harpfen</i> (landsch.) "Gestell zum Trocknen von Heu und dgl."	(mda.) [dialect]
<i>Bersch</i> (landsch.) "Bursche"	(landsch. derb [coarse]) / (landsch. salopp [casual])
<i>blad</i> (wien.) [Viennese] "dick"	(W mda. abw. [pejorative]) / (W landsch., mda., abw.)
To be marked as non-standard according to Wiesinger	
<i>gatschig</i> "matschig"	(mda.)
<i>beiläufig</i> "ungefähr"	[no marking]
<i>brocken</i> "pflücken"	[no marking]

Table 2: Some entries in the Austrian Dictionary under the impact of criticism by a language expert

3.5. Language-norm authorities and their prescriptions

Any individual who has the power, however established, to effectively correct other individuals' speech or writing is a language-norm authority, like for example any grandmother vis-à-vis her grandchildren or any older vis-à-vis her younger siblings. For standard varieties there are, however – as I pointed out in the previous chapters – *professional* language-norm authorities with language correction as part of their professional tasks, like school teachers, radio and TV directors, copy editors and also superiors in offices, especially of the state administration, but also in private companies. They are typically not only entitled to correct their language-norm subjects' language behaviour, but

even obliged to do so. Not only do their corrections usually aim in the direction of the standard variety, but in most cases this is the only valid direction, i.e. the only one in which the norm authority is entitled to correct by her superordinate authorities – though there are of course exceptions. Language-norm authorities thus have an important function for promulgating and stabilizing a standard variety. They may also delay the spread of innovations by not keeping up with the developments in the model texts or codices.

Normally however, they have no say in what is standard in the language. Yet there are such possibilities in the case of their coordinated action. This in fact happened at the time of the above mentioned 35th edition of the *Austrian Dictionary* (1979), which teachers' unions publicly rejected as a guideline for their language correction in school. They thus supported the criticisms made against this edition (cf. chapter 2.4). It seems likely that they strengthened the resistance against it, thus accelerating the appearance of a new, revised edition (after only six years), i.e. they were a force in deciding about Austrian Standard German. Another example is the protests of teachers' unions in Germany against the recent spelling reform, though without success. Criticism from teachers' unions tends to be taken seriously as representing the practitioners when dealing with the standard variety.

Single language-norm authorities have, however, no direct impact on the standard norm. This can be made clearer by distinguishing the *existence* of a norm from its *validity*. Norm authorities can perhaps impose a language form on their norm subjects so that it exists as a norm for them, but not make it a valid norm. Thus, I remember from my school days a teacher who had got poor training in war times and who taught the class to spell the conjunction *dass* (*daß* before the spelling reform 1995) [that] with a single plain s. This norm then existed for the class, but it was not valid as such because the teacher was not entitled by his superordinate authorities to teach this spelling which became apparent when parents started to complain.

This example, as well as that of the Swiss boy in chapter 2.4, suggest that in the case of conflicts about language norms, codices can protect subjects against norm authorities. There is, of course, the opposite possibility too, i.e. for norm authorities to defend their corrections or sanctions. Open conflicts are, however, the rare exception. The rareness of open conflicts and the minuteness of most sanctions may be among the reasons why the prescriptive nature of standard varieties is often not seen at all, though it becomes more obvious for immigrants or in teaching as a foreign language, where the majority of rules for following the norm have not been acquired informally.

Specifying the particular corrections which language-norm authorities are entitled to make in a move towards the standard variety regarding norm subjects, contents, characters, the conditions of application and particular occasions can be a difficult task, even if done for only a small segment of the

language community. This task presupposes, among other aspects, detailed linguistic descriptions as well as text-type and context specifications – though simplified shortcuts may be sufficient for practical purposes.

3.6. The interaction of the four social forces

All of the four social forces I have isolated above interact with each other (indicated by the two-pointed arrows in figure 1). The model speakers and authors have been trained by language-norm authorities on the basis of the language codex, which they sometimes check for their texts. The model speakers and authors are, in turn, perceived by the other three forces and carefully observed by the codifiers who, as a rule, use their texts as the most important source for codex revisions or supplements. This is necessary, because the model speakers and authors tend to change the language forms they use in the course of time, in spite of keeping in touch, though mostly indirectly, with the codex. Changes are most frequent and more salient in vocabulary, but also occur in grammar, pragmatics and pronunciation over the years. The model authors and speakers lead the pack of the four social forces as to innovations, with the codifiers following suit – though they may, as we will see, be the transmitters rather than the immediate creators of innovations. Even the language-norm authorities use the model speakers' and authors' texts, mostly inadvertently, as a guideline for their language correction. In addition, the language experts rely on them in their criticism of the codex.

The interaction of all four social forces can be extremely complicated in larger language communities and in those with a long history of having a standard variety. It is easier to perceive and to analyse in the case of smaller language communities with only recent or incomplete codification (cf. for completeness of codification Ammon 1989: 86-89). Examples are Australia compared to the USA or Britain, Austria compared to Germany or some of the Hispano-American countries compared to Spain, (cf. the case of the 35th edition of the Austrian Dictionary as an easy-to-study example of interaction; chapters 2.4; 2.5).

3.7. The role of the majority of the population

The majority of the population (excluding the four social forces) has or is no "authority in language", which is why it has no immediate impact on what is standard in a language or on the form of the standard variety. This majority does not include the "language experts" as specified above, but does include the – often numerous – lay linguists who bewail the decline of language culture (Cameron 1995), the "intrusion of foreign words", etc. It would be wrong to deny that they can have an impact on what becomes standard, but if so, this occurs only indirectly, via the other social forces. Such impact can also come from any other subset of the language users, who do not care, at least not openly, about "language decline". However, their usage provides no direct

model for model speakers and authors or codifiers. This is demonstrated by the fact that some widespread use over centuries has not become standard. An example in German is the possessive-circumscription of the genitive which still is non-standard, (e.g. "(dem) Vater sein Hut" instead of "(des) Vaters Hut" [father his hat – father's hat]) – a decision which linguists have to evaluate as to its reasonability.

However, the degree of impact varies, of course, depending on the attitude of the authorities, especially regarding democratic openness. Thus codifiers in former East Germany (GDR) incorporated more features of "common people's" pronunciation into their dictionary of standard pronunciation than codifiers in former West Germany (FRG) (cf. Ammon 1995: 334-336). In addition, the new codification of pronunciation for reunified Germany (Krech et al. 2009), done under the auspices of the former East German codifiers (at the University of Halle), has been empirically based on the preferences of the entire population. This was done by presenting speech samples of model speakers, namely TV newscasters, to representative samples of the population and by following their preferences in the choice of variants for codification as standard. The codifiers were, however, entirely autonomous in their decision to proceed in this way.

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