1   INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This investigation explores the linguistic consequences of the expulsion of Germans in 1945/46 from the Wischau/Vyškov speech enclave in the Czech Republic. This was part of the wave of population transfers of ethnic Germans at the end of World War II, which remain to this day a highly sensitive topic in Czech-German relations. In the context of language obsolescence, this study examines the causal connections between this historical trigger, processes of identification, the wider sociolinguistic context, and the system-linguistic structure of the language variety, adopting and expanding the theoretical framework developed by SASSE (1992b). This study is largely comparative in approach, looking at the parallel communities which emerged after the expulsions, i.e. both the few stayers in the enclave, who until 1989/90 lived under communism, and the majority of expellees forcibly relocated to the capitalist Federal Republic of Germany. This is the first (and probably last) detailed linguistic study of this small, rural and vestigial group of speakers, whose language variety will invariably become obsolete over the next few years with the death of its last speakers. The aim of this investigation is, therefore, not so much to carry out last-minute documentary salvage work, but rather to make a contribution to the field of language obsolescence based on the parallel receding communities of the former Wischau enclave, and to develop our understanding of the sociolinguistics of Central and Eastern Europe more generally.

Adopting an holistic (interdisciplinary) approach and taking "the interplay and the possible causal connections of the phenomena investigated into account" (SASSE 1992b, 9), this study examines the multifaceted consequences – socio-psychological, sociolinguistic, and language-internal – of the expulsion of most Germans from the enclave in 1945/46. Since it is essential not to see language in isolation from its community of speakers, this study draws on relevant cognate disciplines and, in this way, follows the recent trend towards a closer alignment of the fields of history and linguistics. There is a clear vein of interdisciplinarity running throughout this work, which also explores historiography, politics, cultural studies, and ethnography.[1] More specifically, this study seeks to:

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[1] Since the 1950s, generative (Chomskyan) approaches to linguistics have largely prevailed. However, in more recent years, there has been an increased interest in further approaches to the study of language which combine methods and/or frameworks not confined to traditional disciplinary boundaries and which, in this way, can offer different and enhanced insights into language. Interdisciplinary approaches to the study of language have been a mutually beneficial endeavour, giving academics from both sides insights into their discipline which would not have been possible without the advent of interdisciplinarity. KAMUSELLA (2009, xv–xx) contains a detailed discussion of interdisciplinary studies of language, but as he states, colla-

−   determine strategies of group identity construction, with particular (but not exclusive) reference to the significance of language as a residual marker of identity;
−   identify and examine social factors and domains of language use which have acted as catalysts in the process of obsolescence;
−   ascertain and attempt to explain system-linguistic (structural) change in the speech variety.

With these principal aims in mind, Chapter 2 presents and problematises the methodological approach taken. Key information is given on the consultants who took part in the study. The chapter explores the sensitivities surrounding the research project, issues of authenticity, and the role played by the high age of the consultants. It also considers the methodological elicitation and analysis of language biographies, largely elicited in the form of personal and group interviews, and which form the bulk of the empirical work for this study. This chapter also reveals how links were forged with relevant subjects through official associations and committees which exist to promote the German minority in the Czech Republic. Ties were also strengthened with international research groups and institutes conducting work which may usefully inform this study. For this purpose, the *Atlas der historischen deutschen Mundarten in der Tschechischen Republik* was identified as a potentially very valuable source of information. Moreover, important archival research was undertaken in Mannheim at the *Institut für Deutsche Sprache*, and the *Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung*, as well as in Munich at the *Wissenschaftliche Bibliothek im Sudetendeutschen Haus*, managed by the *Collegium Carolinum*, and in Regensburg at the *Osteuropa-Institut*.

Although the focus of this study is the older generation of the Wischau communities, Chapter 3 positions the study in its historical context, and provides details on the so-called 'Eastern Colonisation', moving through to the Habsburg Empire and the rise of Czech nationalism. This is important as it provides the historical backdrop to the 'markers' of identity explored chiefly in Chapter 4 and contextualises the following chapters. Without at least a cursory appreciation of the pre-history, it is difficult to understand fully some of the references made in Chapter 4.

Markers of identity are examined through the lens of autobiographies, and structured according to their contribution to the categories of identity construction identified by BERGER (2010b, 321): functionalism, agency, and symbolism of identity construction. Section 4.1 explores the functionalism of the two communi-

boration between historians and linguists has, up until very recently, been sparse. Recent ventures which have sought to address the problem include Robert Evans's et al. seminar series in the Hilary Term 2008 at the University of Oxford, which emphasised the need for combined study of *Language and History*, and Nils Langer's pioneering work on the interrelationship between language and history, including the establishment of the Historical Sociolinguistics Network and the edited volume LANGER / DAVIES / VANDENBUSSCHE (2012). See also BERGER (2010b, 314), who emphasises the need for interdisciplinary collaboration in the investigation of enclaves in particular.

ties' identity construction as attributable to two main areas: the perceived discrimination of Germans in the post-1918 New Republic, and the perceived injustice of collective guilt as justification for the mass relocation of Germans in 1945/46. Section 4.2 details the multifarious channels used to propagate a community identity. In particular, the micro-level Wischau communities are explored, as well as the relationship between them and the wider Sudeten German community. By way of an excursus from the micro-level study, wider state-level acts of identity as relevant to the Wischau cause are also considered. Section 4.3 considers the complex symbolic construction of identity amongst the two Wischau communities. It reveals dialect and the notion of 'Heimat' to be significant symbols for the stayers. By contrast, the arrival, subsequent economic contribution to the Federal Republic, and loss of culture are cornerstones of the expellees' identity. Finally, wider reflections on identity construction for the two Wischau communities are presented in section 4.4.

Chapter 5 provides details on the social catalysts which contributed to the current state of language obsolescence for stayers and expellees at the micro- and macro-level. In particular, issues pertaining to demography, and the changing roles of the standard and dialect varieties are considered.

Chapter 6 considers aspects of the Wischau dialect, borrowings from Czech and features most probably attributable to language obsolescence. All areas of the dialect are shown to have undergone changes which may be attributable to the dominance of Czech. In addition, however, it is shown how language obsolescence can lead to the abandonment of linguistic norms without the incorporation of a contact language's grammatical features. The latter are discussed in the context of DAL NEGRO's (2004) *Normenzerfall* ('disintegration of norms').

Finally, Chapter 7 concludes the study and offers a synopsis of Wischau in its moribund state.

Philological study of these sorts of historical 'relict' communities has traditionally been possible with meticulous examination of linguistic atlases and other scholarly works in libraries. In today's digital age, however, it is perhaps unsurprising that the internet provides a rich resource for scholars of all disciplines. A search on the internet revealed the existence of the *Gemeinschaft Wischauer Sprachinsel e.V.*, a small organisation consisting not just of expellees from the old enclave, but of Wischau community members who continued to live there. Technological advances proved instrumental in making contact with these Germans originally from and/or still in the Czech Republic – it led to a study which is underpinned by empirical data with members of the Wischau community. More importantly, however, it showed beyond doubt that not all autochthonous Germans in 'the East' had, in fact, been relocated after World War II, and that these groups still identified strongly with their homeland. This was the case despite the ostensibly successful integration of expellees boasted about in official circles; the seventy years which have passed since the relocation of Germans to the West; the seismic changes to the political and ideological frameworks experienced (the fall of communism); and more recent attempts to construct transnational, 'European' identities with the eastward migration of the European Union, as Richard Cou-

denhove-Kalergi (1894–1972), founder of the Pan-European movement in the 1920s, envisaged in his 1953 treatise *Die Europäische Nation*.

Ethnicity and nationalism, principles for political organisation and statehood legitimisation from the twentieth century, have therefore continued to be important factors in the construction of modern-day identities (KAMUSELLA 2009, 569; O'REILLY 2001, 2). Ethnicity is played out in the observance of customs, identification with traditions, language, or religion. More intangible aspects of ethnicity manifest themselves in myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories, differentiating elements of common culture, association with a specific homeland, a sense of solidarity (WOLFF 2001, 66). Whatever form it takes, ethnicity still plays a crucial role in determining group identity and, by extension, serving to determine the boundaries between one group and another. In other words, the exclusionary principles of nationalism still manifest themselves in modern identities.

Problems surrounding more constructions of identity in the German context have been the subject of investigations by, for example, BERGER (1997), who investigates the notion of 'normality', and Germany's attempts to become a 'normal' nation since the early 19th century and, indeed, up until the present, with Germany's multiculturalism being one of the concerns surrounding identity construction today (BERGER 1997, xiii ff.). See also STEVENSON (1995), who, for example, delves into *Gegenwartsbewältigung* ('coming to terms with the present') from a linguistic perspective, investigating the problems surrounding linguistic accommodation in a reunified Germany.

Enclave communities, communities surrounded entirely by a different ethnic or linguistic group, make for interesting case studies in the context of ethnicity and nationalism because they are, by definition, surrounded by an out-group. This juxtaposition of different allegiances, traditions, and other ethnic ties can be a source of great strain and pressure, and has typically played an important role in the construction of enclave identities. Whilst ethnic ties in enclaves may be reinforced or propagated by a kin-state, identity construction need not be confined to this top-down approach. Identities may also be constructed at more local levels through discursive practices. In this sense, studies into identity construction require multi-level analyses which investigate not just collective identity discourses 'from above', but which acknowledge the crucial role played by ordinary people themselves – 'from below'. As BERGER (2010b, 321) puts it, "multi-agency is key when it comes to the construction of collective identities in enclaves" but any framework which seeks to investigate identity construction in enclaves must take a broader scope and look at questions such as "with which means were identities constructed" and "to which end were identities constructed", which he terms "symbolism" and "functionalism", respectively. Enclaves further constitute an irritant to the nation-state ideal that dominated the twentieth century. The linguistic and cultural homogeneity of a state displaced other forms of political organisation, notably class and the development of empire. Yet the existence of cultural and linguistic enclaves did not dovetail with the monoethnic ideal.

The European Union has been a success story in terms of affording linguistic minorities a voice and raising their profiles (HOGAN-BRUN / WOLFF 2003, 6). More broadly, accession to the European Union is thought to lead to longer-term stability politically and economically (KRZYŻANOWSKI / GALASINSKA 2009, 4). In May 2004, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia all became member states of the European Union. These were followed by Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. Before accession, invisible minorities had assumed marginalised positions in their respective societies, and had often been outright denied. Despite these new possibilities, however, accession to the EU has come too late for these minority groups, with newly afforded rights being of little value to a minority that has suffered years of assimilatory policies. In effect, the positive aspects of EU accession have not been successful in reversing the steep decline of some minority groups, such as Germans in the Czech Republic, and restoring these languages to their former functional usage (HOGAN-BRUN / WOLFF 2003, 12). Furthermore, as HOGAN-BRUN / WOLFF (2003, 5) note, the "low economic and social status of a minority language" typically associated with marginalised language communities "can make it unattractive to learn and to retain through the generations, especially when it is seen as an impediment for upward social mobility". Minority communities therefore face a linguistic conundrum: on the one hand they seek to preserve their culture, as manifested most noticeably in language, but at the same time, they must temper this desire to maintain heritage with the practical aspects of social mobility and integration, which may mean deserting the practical usage of the language variety (HOGAN-BRUN / WOLFF 2003, 14).

The circumstances surrounding cases of language shift amongst minorities in the Central European context have been particularly interesting because of the added ideological and political shifts that accompanied the rise and fall of communism. In the post-war period of the 1940s, ethnic Germans, for example, suffered collective victimisation and explusion. Some 200,000 were expelled from Hungary, officially because of their affiliation with the *Volksbund*, an organisation which was deemed to be principally Nazi, but also on the grounds of their language and German roots. This expulsion of Germans from Hungary had a significant impact on the German minority elite in Hungary, comprising intellectuals as well as major economic and political players. It was communist policy to deny and neglect minority groups, and remaining Germans typically assimilated to the matrix Hungarian language. Post-communist delevopments have been largely positive: minorities are constitutionally recognised and are afforded state protection, and a host of regulations and laws have been designed to protect its minorities. The German minority has an educational structure in place, and parts of the curriculum are even taught through the medium of German (WOLFF / CORDELL 2003, 101 f.). Communist Poland pursued similar assimilatory policies, which sought to eradicate foreign influences and promote assimilation. Use of the German language between large groups of people was banned, history was 're-interpreted', and German place names were replaced with Polish ones. Post-communist developments resulted in significant legal provisions for minority groups, and funding has

supported cultural and educational exchange (WOLFF / CORDELL 2003, 106 f.).
However, Romanian minority policy during the post-war communist period was
rather different. On the one hand there were no expulsions, with the effect that
community and network structures remained in place. On the other, Romania pur-
sued a more positive stance towards minorities within her territory. This afforded
Germans access to education in their language, publications in German, and cultu-
ral events. That said, the 1960s saw less favourable developments for minorities in
Romania, when the country was considered an homogeneous nation-state, but the
impact of these later developments on the German minority were not as hard as on
other minority groups. Consistent with the overall better protection afforded to
minority groups after the fall of communism in other Central European states,
Romania too enshrined minority rights in the constitution and implemented a host
of laws designed to protect minority groups (WOLFF / CORDELL 2003, 112 f.). Of
these three Central European countries, however, it is probably the German mino-
rity in Poland that has the best future, given its size and concentration of members
in the Opole Voivodeship. This concentration has ensured that community net-
works have remained intact (WOLFF / CORDELL 2003, 116).

Given the sensitivities surrounding the minority groups described here, it is
unsurprising that empirical sociolinguistic studies of these groups have traditio-
nally been few and far between. The distrust of outsiders, whilst a natural defence
mechanism common to most speech communities, especially smaller, rural ones,
is particularly pertinent for minority groups who have suffered from discriminato-
ry policies in their 'host' countries, and had to endure a largely invisible existence
during the communist period as, officially at least, 'there were no Germans' (for a
detailed discussion of the impact of this policy, see Chapter 5.1.1.3). The denial
that Germans had remained in the country served in itself to ensure assimilation of
Germans to the matrix population. However, it also had ramifications for acade-
mic research, hence the dearth of research and publications for Wischau at the
micro-level, and also for other German communities in communist countries in
general. Until the fall of communism in 1989/90, sociolinguistic work such as
CHLOUPEK / NEKVAPIL (1986) on Central and Eastern European languages was
uncommon, and hampered by political and ideological thought.[2] Sociolinguistic
research, after all, had the potential to yield unwelcome results and discredit local
governments. As HARLIG (1995b, 2; cf. HARLIG 1995a, 35 ff.) contends:

> East European countries had a form of government with strong propagandistic goals, for
> which the reporting of bad social news would be embarrassing or annoying; […] these count-
> ries had a legal system, and a scientific establishment, which had the ability to discourage or
> restrict investigation and publication of such facts and analyses.

Language ideology and the tradition of the Prague Linguistic Circle also played
their part. With its perceived superiority, the literary language alone was deemed

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2   For a longer list of publications focusing on sociolinguistics completed in the former Czecho-
     slovakia, see HAMMER (1995), who suggests that the type of restrictions on sociolinguistics
     described here had generally been relaxed by the mid-eighties.

worthy of academic study amongst scholars, although as TRUDGILL (2000, 193) points out:

> It is of course deeply ironic that, in societies where the proletariat were supposed to be the leading class, it was paradoxically still the dialects of the upper-class elites which were the focus of approval.

This staunch prescriptivism was coupled with a deep aversion to the new Labovian methodology, which prevailed generally amongst the purist Czech linguists (HAMMER 1995, 114 f.).

As KAMUSELLA (2009, 4 f.) further explains, between the end of World War II and the fall of communism, scholars in the West concentrated their efforts on Eastern Europe, understood as the Soviet Union, and tended to neglect the Central European states. Despite an initial interest in Central Europe after 1990, the transition to capitalism 'normalised' these states such that, as Kamusella maintains, these states became less interesting to academics, and of more interest to businesses and entrepreneurs.

It is true, however, that in the last twenty years we have seen a steady increase in linguistic studies of Central and Eastern Europe, offering new scope to refine our knowledge of the interactions between language and society. PAULSTON / PECKHAM (1998) provide an overview of the historical and social contexts of minorities throughout former communist states in Europe, and language and educational policies impinging on them. There is some discussion given to language maintenance and shift, but it is not the central focus of the volume. A more recent and comprehensive overview of the demographics, history, political, legal and sociolinguistic situation of minorities in Central and Eastern Europe is given in EICHINGER / PLEWNIA / RIEHL (2008). KONTRA (2000) was a pioneering special issue of *Multilingua*, which brought together a number of articles specifically on language contact in East-Central Europe, predominantly the cases of Serbo-Croatian, Hungarian and Slovakian. See also NEREO (2011), a collection of articles on language shift, Czech dialect accommodation, and language policy in Romania.

It is the post-communist transformations in Central and Eastern Europe and their impact on peoples' identities that also forms the focus of GALASINSKA / KRZYŻANOWSKI (2009). Within this volume, special reference is made to semi-private and private spheres in which discourse is produced and, in this way, reflects identity construction 'from below'. GALASINSKA (2009), for instance, explores an internet forum discussion amongst Polish migrants (to the UK) following the accession of Poland to the European Union. Within this context, she investigates how the post-2004 narrative of Polish migration is used as a form of resistance to the national grand narrative of Polish migration, thereby linking micro-level discourses to macro-level grand narratives. GALASINSKI (2009), in his contribution, investigates how his interviewees in Polish border towns articulate the social and political transformations they have experienced. Social change, as KRZYŻANOWSKI / WODAK (2009, 25) maintain, cannot fully be explained or understood without recourse to the discursive strategies used by the communities

that experience that social change. More recently, KAMUSELLA / NOMACHI / GIB-
SON / BAVIDGE (2016) have explored the relationship between language and iden-
tity construction since 1989 from sociolinguistic, political-historical, and policy
perspectives.

It is in this vein that the first part of this study has been conceived (Chapter 4).
To ascertain an authentic view of identity construction from former members of
the Wischau community, we must investigate the discursive strategies employed
by community members that have experienced significant social change. The his-
torical events which unfolded in the Czech lands, most notably those taking place
after World War II, raise important questions regarding the repercussions they had
on the construction and negotiation of identity amongst community members.

At the same time, we must not neglect the language varieties themselves – the
impact social change had on the development of the language variety spoken by
the Wischau community. These issues, together with gaps in research within the
discipline, the suitability of the selected case study, and time restrictions all moti-
vate the latter part of the investigation (Chapters 5 and 6).

Firstly, the investigation of language obsolescence in European space, save
for the pioneering work carried out on the East Sutherland dialect of Scots Gaelic
by DORIAN (1965), and that on terminal Albanian dialects such as Arvanítika in
Greece by SASSE (1991) and TRUDGILL (1977), is somewhat of a rarity.[3] More
'exotic' language varieties tend to dominate the discipline.[4] German in particular
is not typically considered to be under threat. As a relatively young area of socio-
linguistics – MCMAHON (1994, 284) and DRESSLER / DE CILLIA (2006, 2258), for
example, suggest that the subdiscipline did not begin to develop until the seven-
ties – the theory of language obsolescence is therefore still very much in develop-
ment (DAL NEGRO 2004, 17; DORIAN 1989a, 2; SASSE 1992b, 7).[5]

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3   See also DORIAN (1973; 1978a; 1980; 1981). For work on Breton, see DRESSLER / WODAK-
     LEODOLTER (1977), KUTER (1989) and, on Oberwart Hungarian, GAL (1979). MCMAHON
     (1994, 314) discusses the use of biological metaphors in linguistics and raises the important
     point that any analogy has its restrictions and has the power to mislead, infer or simplify. Be-
     cause of this I adopt the term 'language obsolescence' (rather than 'language death') through-
     out, although this term is not without its drawbacks: no evaluative connotation should be in-
     ferred from the use of 'obsolescence'. Whether the dialect is indeed 'old-fashioned' or of no
     functional use, as 'obsolete' may imply, will be discussed in detail in the chapters below. For
     an interesting discussion of 'death' and its euphemisms, see POUND (1936). It is also worth
     noting that there is no suggestion that the German language *per se* is in any way endangered.
     The term is applied throughout to the speech variety traditionally spoken in the Wischau spe-
     ech enclave (WOLFRAM 2002, 782).
4   Research published over the past fifteen years has focused, for instance, on the southern Pa-
     cific region (BRADLEY / BRADLEY 2002), Eurasia (JANSE / TOL 2003), and the Andean-
     Amazonian situation (WETZELS 2007). However, some more recent work has looked at Euro-
     pean examples of language shift (BRITAIN 2009; SZABÓ 2010; VANDEKERCKHOVE 2009;
     VANDEKERCKHOVE / BRITAIN 2009).
5   The earliest work, however, although looking exclusively at the sociolinguistic situation,
     appears to have been conducted by SWADESH (1948).

Secondly, it was assumed that historical events would be felt much more acutely in a speech community which was isolated, relatively small, and located in a rural setting. Detailed studies investigating the speech variety of the Wischau enclave do not exist, and it has only been afforded relatively little scholarly attention with snippets of documentary evidence being recorded in works with a clear comparative focus such as BERANEK (1936) (published before the expulsion), KRANZMAYER (1956), and SCHWARZ (1962). They offer a broad linguistic overview of South Moravia, Bavarian-speaking regions, and the Sudetenland respectively. A longer list of literature for the Wischau enclave is given in PREIBSCH (1930, 118 ff.), whose list dates back to as early as 1793(!), but it consists chiefly of pocketbooks or popular, local papers dealing with the Wischau enclave from an historical perspective. For these reasons, the Wischau enclave was specifically selected as a case study as it bears all of the requisite features (it is surrounded entirely by Czech speakers, it is relatively small, and rural) and has the scope of shedding important light on the very different paths taken by language obsolescence within the enclave (amongst members of the community exempted from the expulsion), and outside it (those expelled). As a micro-level study, it further offers scope for a detailed investigation of the community at an individual-level, largely avoiding the type of "simplification and strict, if arbitrary, classification" problematised by STEVENSON (1997, 193), and which are generally demanded by large-scale, macro-level studies. The significance of the Wischau enclave and further enclaves which suffered a similar fate in the Czech Republic is further underlined by calls made by the research community to tackle this issue (MUZIKANT 2005, 343).

Finally, and crucially, the investigation of moribund speech varieties is, by definition, subject to time restrictions. There is a sense of great urgency surrounding the research of this terminal speech variety, which is in a rapid state of decline, both inside and outside the old enclave. Previous investigations of this nature have been precluded by a number of factors over and above the obviously very pressing issues that faced post-war Europe. For example, Czech policy towards the German ethnic minority before the raising of the Iron Curtain in 1989 was restrictive. Similarly, there was a reluctance in the West (particularly the Federal Republic) to carry out linguistic research on a stigmatised group that was widely considered to be in receipt of more than its fair share of financial aid. The expellees were essentially taboo in the academic arena, since scarce financial resources could not be seen benefiting them in any way (MAZOWER 2000, 277). Previous investigations were therefore hampered by political and social hurdles. This meant that no longitudinal study was ever completed.

SASSE (1992b) proposed important material concentrating on a theoretical model and put forward a general "theory of language death", against which further case studies should be examined. This theory, he explained, should be further refined to accommodate new empirical evidence over and above the Arvanítika variety of Albanian he investigated in Greece (SASSE 1991). His model, demanding an interdisciplinary approach, included three interrelated areas of obsolescence which should be afforded attention in any investigation of death, i.e.

no particular area should – or indeed could – be competently examined in isolati-on, since there was a strong causal link between each item (SASSE 1992b, 10).[6]

The initial investigatory stage he proposed is the "external setting", looking at the extra-linguistic factors, cultural, ethnohistorical and economic, which causes pressure on, and triggers the contraction of, a speech variety. Secondly, the "Spe-ech Behaviour" component should examine the regular use of variables bound with social parameters – essentially applying the 'who, what, to whom, and when'-test described in FISHMAN (1965). Finally, the "Structural Consequences" should aim to discover the effects of the two previous stages on the language vari-ety itself.

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6   Previous approaches which sought system-linguistic explanations alone for structural changes
    are "unrealistic and counterintuitive" (SASSE 1992b, 10).