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The GERMAN Speaking World

A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION TO
SOCIOLINGUISTIC ISSUES

S E C O N D
E D I T I O N

Patrick Stevenson
Kristine Horner
Nils Langer and
Gertrud Reershemius

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The German-Speaking World

The German-Speaking World is an accessible textbook that offers students the opportunity to explore for themselves a wide range of sociolinguistic issues relating to the German language and its role in the world.

This new, second edition has been fully revised to reflect the many political and social changes of the last 20 years, including the impact of technology on language change. It continues to combine text with practical exercises and discussion questions to stimulate readers to think for themselves and to tackle specific problems.

Key features of this book:

- Informative and comprehensive: covers a wide range of current issues.
- Practical: contains a variety of graded exercises and tasks, plus an index of terms.
- Topical and contemporary: deals with current situations and provides up-to-date illustrative material.
- Thought-provoking: encourages students to reflect and research for themselves.

The German-Speaking World is the ideal textbook for undergraduate students who have a sound practical knowledge of German but who have little or no knowledge of linguistics or sociolinguistics.

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The Spanish-Speaking World

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The German-Speaking World

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Sociolinguistic Issues

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Preface to the second edition

A great deal has happened in the 20 years since the first edition of this book was written. Both the German language itself and the contexts in which it is used have changed, in some respects quite dramatically. On the one hand, some topics that were particularly salient at that time now appear of marginal or purely historical interest, while new phenomena and topics have arisen that need to be addressed. On the other hand, many issues and questions covered in the original text continue to be relevant today, but their discussion needs to take account of contemporary conditions. In particular, of course, technological changes have meant both that language is used differently now, in a vast range of digital media and platforms, most of which didn't exist in the mid-1990s, and that linguistic research can be undertaken with great ease online, as well as through the more conventional means in physical libraries.

This new edition retains the basic structure of its predecessor, in that it consists of 12 chapters divided into three parts dealing respectively with the position of German in the world, particular aspects of language use and sociolinguistic controversies. Some passages have been carried over, updated where necessary, but much of the text is completely new. There are two main reasons for this. First, it became clear in the process of considering how best to revise the book that more radical changes were needed than simply, for example, replacing out of date statistics or adding references to new sources. Second, reviewers and users of the original edition had suggested that a more uniform and consistent structure for each chapter would make the book easier to use.

The most significant change in terms of the composition of the new edition is that it has been written not by an individual author but by a team. Again, this was, in part, due to the rapid expansion of the field of sociolinguistics over the last 20 years; each author brought their own expertise to bear on a particular set of topics. A collaborative approach to writing a textbook also seemed appropriate in that the combined classroom experience of colleagues working in different institutions was likely to bring a broader range of insights into what would appeal to students and how to make the book as flexible and adaptable as possible.

Patrick Stevenson, author of the first edition, acted as 'project manager' and editor of the entire text of this second edition. Individual chapters were written by Kristine Horner (Chapters 1, 2, 9 and 12), Nils Langer (Chapters 4, 5, 10 and 11) and Gertrud Reershemius (Chapters 3, 6, 7 and 8). Imogen Cobden, who was studying German at the University of Southampton while the book was in preparation, revised the list of keywords, the index, and the bibliography.

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Phonetic symbols

A complete list of the symbols in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) can be found on the website of the International Phonetic Association: www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/content/ipa-chart.

Detailed descriptions of the phonetics and phonology of German, with helpful examples, are in Fagan (2009), Chapter 1, and Johnson and Braber (2008), Chapter 4.

Here we list only those symbols that are used in this book, in each case with an example from (standard) German.

[a]	Stadt
[a:]	Staat
[ɛ]	elf
[ɪ]	Liste
[i:]	bieten
[ç]	Mädchen
[d]	du
[k]	kann
[p]	Panne
[pf]	Pfanne
[r]	rot
[s]	fast
[ʃ]	Fisch
[t]	Tisch
[ts]	Zeit
[x]	doch
[z]	sein

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We would like to thank our editor at Routledge, Sam Vale Noya, for her encouragement and support throughout the process of producing this new edition of the book. We are also grateful to Imogen Cobden for her help in revising the list of keywords, the index and the bibliography and to Rosie Bailey Stevenson for helping with the design and creation of some of the figures.

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Introduction

THE AIM OF THIS BOOK is to offer students the opportunity to explore for themselves a wide range of sociolinguistic issues in relation to the German language. It is intended principally for undergraduate students of German who have a reasonably advanced knowledge of the language, but who may have little or no knowledge of linguistics in general or sociolinguistics in particular. Relevant theoretical concepts are introduced where necessary and helpful, but the emphasis throughout is on encouraging readers to think for themselves and to tackle specific problems. To this end, each chapter is punctuated with short reflective tasks and questions designed to stimulate readers to pause and think about specific issues raised in the text, and concludes with a number of proposed research activities and annotated suggestions for further reading.

The book has been written with a typical semester-length course in mind, and it could therefore be worked through as the principal course text. However, although there is a progression within each chapter and through the three parts, it is hoped that the structure of the book is sufficiently flexible to allow it to be used in various ways to suit particular needs. For example, individual parts or chapters can be selected to complement other material, and students or tutors can decide for themselves which tasks to attempt. The tasks at the end of each chapter are graded in terms of the time required to tackle them (see the description of 'How to use this book' in the next section) and can be adapted to meet readers' interests.

Part 1 takes as its starting point the question of what we mean by 'German-speakers' and 'the German-speaking world'. The three chapters in this first part of the book invite readers to investigate and reflect on fundamental 'macro-sociolinguistic' issues about the status and function of the German language in relation to its speakers, the enduring importance of the relationship between language and national identity and the changing position of the German language in the wider world.

Part 2 aims to encourage readers to explore social and regional variations in German from a 'micro-sociolinguistic' perspective. In other words, the focus shifts from the role of the language as a whole in national and international contexts to the forms and functions of individual features and varieties, in the past and in the present. This involves, for example, identifying distinctive features of regional speech varieties, tracing the emergence of standard German and analysing ways in which the contemporary language is changing, investigating the impact on language use of increased social diversity and digital technologies, and exploring visual representations of language.

Part 3 shifts the focus again, this time to a consideration of broader social impacts of the German language. These final chapters focus on people's attitudes towards the language and their perceptions of how it is changing, on controversies about language in education in

increasingly diverse societies and on debates about proficiency in ‘national’ languages as a requirement for acquiring citizenship.

A particular challenge confronting anyone writing about German is how to refer to ‘Germany’. This issue is tackled explicitly in Chapter 1, and readers are invited to reflect on its historical and contemporary complexity. In the interests of readability, however, a pragmatic solution has been adopted in the writing of the book. With reference to the periods before 1949 and after 1990, the simple name Germany is used, in spite of the fact that it refers to very different geopolitical entities at different times. For the period 1949–1990, either the formal designations German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) are used or (depending on context and for ease of expression) the informal East and West Germany.

One final point: this book is not intended as an introduction to sociolinguistics as such. Where concepts and terminology are used that might be new to readers, they are either briefly explained or used as the basis of tasks requiring readers to find out for themselves what the terms mean. The most important concepts are given in **bold** the first time they appear in each chapter, and they are briefly defined in a list of keywords at the end of the book, which provides a simple guide to the way they are used here. However, a fundamental purpose of the book is to demonstrate that there are few, if any, hard and fast answers to sociolinguistic questions and to encourage readers to reach their own conclusions. Therefore, the list of keywords does no more than provide a quick source of reference and act as an *aide-mémoire*.

* * *

The suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter are usually quite specific and are intended to direct readers to useful material on particular points. However, it might be useful to consult some or all of the following books, which provide a wealth of background reading, useful information and explanations of important points, both in general terms and specifically in relation to German.

Crystal, David (2010) *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, David (2008) *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, Oxford: Blackwell.

These are excellent general reference books, which should provide answers to any questions on linguistic terminology and concepts used in the description and analysis of language.

Holmes, Janet (2013) *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, London: Routledge.

Mesthrie, Rajend, Joan Swann, Ana Deumert and William L. Leap (2009) *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Meyerhoff, Miriam (2011) *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, London: Routledge.

Wardhaugh, Ronald and Janet M. Fuller (2015) *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Amongst the many introductory textbooks on general sociolinguistics, these four are perhaps the most accessible, and they offer a wide range of illustrations and practical activities.

Fagan, Sarah (2009) *German: A Linguistic Introduction*, Cambridge: CUP.

Johnson, Sally and Natalie Braber (2008) *Exploring the German Language*, Cambridge: CUP.

Both of these textbooks offer a broad survey of topics in German linguistics, including chapters on sociolinguistic issues, with plentiful useful examples. Johnson and Braber offer a lively and very readable introduction and provide practical exercises and suggestions for further reading; Fagan goes into greater depth and – despite the title – writes for the more advanced reader.

Durrell, Martin (2003) *Using German: A Guide to Contemporary Usage*, Cambridge: CUP.

A practical and very helpful guide to structures and styles of contemporary German, including chapters on contemporary change and regional variation.

Salmons, Joseph (2012) *A History of German: What the Past Reveals About Today's Language*, Oxford: OUP.

Stedje, Astrid (2007) *Deutsche Sprache gestern und heute*, Stuttgart: utb.

For those who want to delve more deeply into the history of the German language, Salmons gives a comprehensive and scholarly but readable account, while Stedje offers a very accessible illustrated survey of the historical development of German from its origins to the present day.

In addition to these book publications, you will of course find many useful sources online. A good place to start for the most up-to-date developments and information on current research is the Institut für Deutsche Sprache (www.ids-mannheim.de).

How to use this book

Each chapter is written in such a way as to give the reader an introduction to and overview of a particular topic and also to encourage the reader to think actively about the topic and to look for ways to find out more. This is done in two ways. First, the text is interrupted at various points by short, simple questions that are designed to make the reader pause and reflect on specific aspects of the topic and that can normally be answered without consulting other sources (or at most with a quick internet search). Second, at the end of each chapter there is a list of tasks and activities that invite the reader either to reflect on what they think they have learned ('reflective tasks') or to undertake some further research in order to explore particular issues in greater depth. Some of these are fairly straightforward and can be carried out individually ('research tasks'); others require rather more time and effort and lend themselves to group work ('project ideas'). There could be many different outcomes of these various activities: for example, group discussions in class; presentations; posters, reports, essays or even dissertations; individual or collaborative blogs.

Each chapter draws heavily on a wide range of sources, but for ease of reading these are cited within the text only when they are referred to explicitly and at greater length. The Bibliography lists all relevant sources consulted by the authors and provides a good starting point for research on the tasks and activities. The 'Annotated further reading' section at the end of each chapter offers some initial suggestions for ways of following up on particular topics discussed in the text.

Part 1

The position of German in the world