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## Die(a-lect) Another Day: The Role of Luxembourgish as it Compares to French and German in Luxembourg Today

Devon Leigh Emig

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DIE(A-LECT) ANOTHER DAY: THE ROLE OF LUXEMBOURGISH AS IT  
COMPARES TO FRENCH AND GERMAN IN LUXEMBOURG TODAY

by  
Devon Leigh Emig

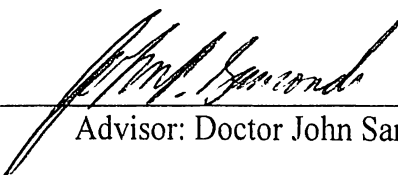
A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College

Oxford  
May 2011

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For David, whose constructive criticism and fresh ideas were always greatly appreciated.

## ABSTRACT

DEVON LEIGH EMIG: Die(a-lect) Another Day: The Use of Luxembourgish as it Compares to French and German in Luxembourg Today  
(Under the direction of Christopher Sapp)

This paper examines the use of Luxembourgish in both oral and written communication. It explores the use of Luxembourgish in newspaper announcements, and the ways in which individuals use language to communicate with others. Data was collected over a period of time from a Luxembourgish newspaper that accepts announcements in all three of the nation's official languages. Language choice in television programming and book publications were then considered in examination of language choice and audience. Book publication lists were obtained from the National Library of Luxembourg catalogue, and were sorted by city of publication and by year. Television programming was available via the RTL (Radio Television Luxembourg) website. The exploration of both written and oral media serves as a distinguishing point for a language with a small written history. Next was considered language in government through examining the language use of the government website, as well as speeches made and interviews given. This provided a rounded view of how the government presented itself to the public. Finally, this paper delves into the study of Luxembourg Luxembourgish both at home and abroad and into the different manners of study available. The paper therefore provides an overview of the use of Luxembourgish as compared to French and German in several different realms of communication, as well as providing brief sociolinguistic commentary on its use or on the use of French or German. It finds that Luxembourgish is thriving as an oral medium, as well as in informal written communication. The use of Luxembourgish is lacking, however, in book publication.

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## Chapter 1: A Brief History of the Ruling Powers and Language Use in Luxembourg

Luxembourgish was the primary language used in birth and wedding announcements in 1979 (Hoffmann 129), though it fell drastically behind French in use in death announcements. Over thirty years later, I have found that the use of Luxembourgish is only increasing in use in both birth and wedding announcements, and has significantly outstripped French in death announcements, a feat deemed unlikely by Fernand Hoffmann in 1996 (131). Chapter 2 further examines these findings and possible explanations of those findings. Luxembourgish has also taken center stage on television, as my own statistical renderings of the daily programs indicate that over 80 percent of programming each day is broadcast in Luxembourgish, with the remaining percentage split between French and German, the latter receiving the clear majority. These percentages and a brief analysis of the different programs can be found in Chapter 3.

Literature in Luxembourgish is also on the upswing, as Luxembourgish tests its wings and settles itself into broader ranges of genres. While my research in Chapter 4 indicates that French literature still holds the majority for literature published in Luxembourg, it is unclear how the situation may change in the coming years. In politics, Luxembourgish is used by all members of Parliament, and is used in debates, speeches, and interviews. Though French seems to hold the majority in published speeches, the data in Chapter 5 indicates that interviewers favor Luxembourgish, and this favor of Luxembourgish may swing the language of politics before long. Finally, Luxembourgish and Luxembourg as topics of study are appearing at various institutions both in and outside the Grand Duchy, a topic explored more fully in Chapter 6.

It is my intent in this thesis to show proof of the linguistic tendencies described in the last paragraphs. Through an exploration of media, politics, and language and culture studies at home and abroad, I will explore the state of Luxembourgish with respect to the two other official languages of Luxembourg, French and German, and their linguistic roles. I will prove that Luxembourgish is a viable option and linguistic force for Luxembourgers today, and that Luxembourgish shows no limits in its social use.

### 1.1 The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is a small country located between France, Germany, and Belgium and known as the "crossroads of Europe". With a population just over 503,000 people and an area of 2,586 square kilometers, it is one of the smallest nations in the world, and the only nation that still exists as a Grand Duchy (CIA). It is estimated that over one-third of the population is immigrants (CIA); the largest minority group, accounting for 13.3% of the population, is Portuguese (CIA).

Luxembourg was founded by Count Siegfried of Ardenne, who acquired a lookout tower that stood on a steep cliff that overlooked a crossing point on the Alzette River in 963 AD (Chalmers 8). At this point Luxembourg and all its citizens spoke a High German dialect no different from their neighbors. The tower fell to Henry of Namur in 1136, and he then linked the Luxembourg territory to three others, all still German-speaking. Almost eighty years later the marriage of Ermesinde of Luxembourg and Walram of Limburg further extended the region to include another four territories, this time including speakers of Walloon (a Romance language), establishing for the first time a situation of linguistic plurality that was to continue throughout



centuries of rule by various nations before the eventual independence of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

## 1.2 Linguistic Plurality

In the early-mid 1300s John the Blind, then ruler of Luxembourg, married Elizabeth of Bohemia, further extending the boundaries of Luxembourg. In 1340 John the Blind became the first ruler to establish definite language conditions for Luxembourg, dividing the country into two "quarters", the *quartier allemand* (German Quarter) and *quartier wallon* (Walloon Quarter) (Newton, "Luxembourg" 8). The quarters were divided by language, and the language of the administration matched that of the quarter, with the exception of Luxembourg City, in which French was the norm although it was located in the German Quarter (Chalmers 20).

The son of John the Blind turned Luxembourg into a duchy and gave it to his half-brother in 1354, which was later acquired by Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy in 1443 (Newton, "Luxembourg" 8). In 1496 the marriage of Philip the Fair (great-grandson of Philip the Good) to Isabella of Castile "began for Luxembourg a Spanish overlordship" (Newton, "Luxembourg" 9). A series of attacks from France placed Luxembourg under French control in 1684, at which point German was virtually banned by King Louis XIV ("Information" 2). The administration was made completely French for the first time in Luxembourg history, a tradition that was to remain for many years.

Spain regained and maintained control over Luxembourg from 1698 to 1714, when the Grand Duchy came under Austrian rule. The years between 1740 and 1780 under Austrian rule are known as Luxembourg's "Golden Age", a time of prosperity and progress, but in 1795 Luxembourg fell once again to France and with it French administration, under whose power it

remained until the Congress of Vienna, when it once again became a grand duchy and became property of William I, monarch of the new "Kingdom of the Netherlands" (Chalmers 8). Official decrees under the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1830, 1832, and 1834 established linguistic freedom allowing Luxembourg citizens to choose between French and German. For the first time in Luxembourg's history, citizens were allowed to choose the language in which they expressed themselves, ungoverned by residence or ruling power. Luxembourg was recognized as bilingual on an individual, and not regional, level. Though French was ultimately given preference in administration, German quickly became the written language of politics and was granted exclusive domain in primary education, and French was restricted to secondary education (Chalmers 20).

### 1.3 An Independent Luxembourg

The London Treaty of 1839 finally gave Luxembourg its independence, and reduced its size to its current state. This small portion of the once vast nation was seated in the German Quarter. While this could have allowed the superiority of the German language over French, as most citizens still spoke German as their primary language, though they were well versed in French, a few Luxembourg notables were able to maintain the use of French in the government system through coercion, power, and the advantage of an indifferent and distant ruler ("Information" 2). However, the London Treaty of 1839 also served as a springboard for the idea of Luxembourgish as a national language and a source of national identity. Luxembourgish, the native language of Luxembourgers stemming from a Mosel-Franconian dialect, appeared in newspapers and political speeches as early as 1848, as public consciousness of the language grew. Luxembourgers responded favorably to hearing their native tongue, especially in political

speeches. C.M. Spoo, a parliamentary representative, utilized Luxembourgish as "the voice of the people" in his first speech to the House of Deputies to make political waves. Though Luxembourgish was subsequently officially denied a place in the political debates of the House of Deputies, Spoo's oration raised awareness of and excitement for Luxembourgish outside of government (Hoffmann 112).

In 1843, as a response to waves of German and Italian immigrants and Luxembourg emigration, Luxembourgers were concerned about their unique language situation falling under the influence of the new large German population. The people therefore introduced French as a compulsory primary school subject alongside German, returning the two languages to equal footing among citizens ("Information" 2). The Constitution of 1848 gave citizens once again the linguistic freedom to choose between French and German (Chalmers 20), but in 1855 Luxembourgish reentered the scene in the form of a popular play called *Dicks*, written by popular playwright Edmond de la Fontaine (Hoffmann 116) which explored the nuances of Luxembourgish speech and the advantages and peculiarities of the country's polyglottism. In 1906 the first Luxembourgish dictionary was published. Though the dictionary was not monolingual and, in fact, gave definitions in standard German, it showed nevertheless that Luxembourgish was on the rise. In 1912, a mere six years later, the language made its first appearance as a subject taught in primary schools (Chalmers 20) and made its debut on the grand duchy's administration records as part of that year's Education Act, which required one hour per week of lessons at the primary level of Luxembourg culture, literature, and language (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 182).

From 1912, Luxembourg was able to maintain its linguistic plurality and relative self-governance until 1939, when Germany invaded with the intent to make Luxembourg part of the

Third Reich, overthrowing the government and suppressing both French and the local language now referred to as Luxembourgish (Newton, "Luxembourg" 16). In 1941 citizens of the grand duchy defied German authority by listing their mother tongue as "Lëtzebuergesch" (Luxembourgish) on a census taken by German officials ("Information" 3), despite being told that this would not count as a legitimate answer (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 188). This was one of the first acts of nation-wide patriotism in Luxembourg, and it secured the place of Luxembourgish as a topic of frequent discussion, innovation, and concern for the next seventy years and beyond.

#### 1.4 The Current State of Languages in Luxembourg

In 1984 the Language Law regulating language use made Lëtzebuergesch (Luxembourgish) the national language of Luxembourg and listed French and German as administrative languages. The law also mandated that any query submitted to the government in any of the three official languages must, insofar as possible, be answered in the same language ("Information" 3). This broke the monopoly French had previously held over the administration, which had returned full force at the end of the Second World War, and relieved some of the hatred and pessimism towards German held over from the occupation of Luxembourg by Germany for much of the Second World War. The language was further recognized in 1989 by the European Lingua programme (Chalmers 21), securing its importance and relative permanence as an official language, and the Luxembourgish spelling reform of 1999 helped cement the "correct" form of the language, making it possible for more textbooks, grammars, and dictionaries to be published (Chalmers 21).

With regards to matters of citizenship, the recent law on Luxembourg nationality that became valid in January 2009 requires "an adequate active and passive knowledge of [Luxembourgish] among the prerequisites for acquiring Luxembourg nationality, thus recognising it as a factor in integration" (Chalmers 21). Imposing a language requirement for nationality stresses the importance of Luxembourgish to daily life in the grand duchy, as does the creation of an accreditation program for "teachers of Luxembourgish and of Luxembourg culture" in 2009 (Chalmers 21).

As one can see from the history of Luxembourg, the nation has both been plagued with and benefitted from a plethora of administrations, all of whom governed by their own means and in their own languages. The almost constant changes in power reinforced the multilingualism of Luxembourg by necessity, and this aspect of life in Luxembourg was allowed to flourish. When given the choice, as Luxembourgers were in 1830, they chose not to adopt one language over the other, but to allow both languages to maintain an essential position in the daily lives of Luxembourgers. To date, German remains the unofficial primary language of the press while French holds that unofficial spot with regard to the administration, though new trends may in the coming years alter these unofficial trends. Luxembourgish is spreading in use while holding fast to the areas of dominance typically ascribed to it.

## Chapter 2: Language Use in Birth, Death and Wedding Announcements in Luxembourg

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I investigate the use of Luxembourgish, French and German in the Luxembourgish newspaper *D'Lëtzebuenger Wort* (Wort.lu). *D'Lëtzebuenger Wort* is a Luxembourgish newspaper, published by Saint-Paul Luxembourg in Luxembourg City since 1848. It is written primarily in German, though it has small sections in both Luxembourgish and French. With a circulation of 81,003 copies a day and a daily readership of almost 176,200, it is easily Luxembourg's most popular and most read newspaper. Because of this, it is the best and largest single source of obituaries, birth announcements, and wedding announcements in Luxembourg. Obituaries, birth announcements, and wedding announcements will be studied intensely in this chapter, in order to examine language preference and the reflected societal value of the respective languages, namely, French, German and Luxembourgish.

### 2.2 Obituaries

Between October 11, 2010 and October 31, 2010 there were a total of 306 death announcements published in *D'Lëtzebuenger Wort*. Of those, 71.8% were written in Luxembourgish, 27.5% were written in French, and only 0.7% (two entries) were written in German. During this period, 54.0% of announcements were written for men and 46.0% for women. Announcements written for women tend to be written in Luxembourgish, as 75.7% of all women's death announcements were in Luxembourgish while only 22.9% were written in French and two were written in German. Men, on the other hand, had slightly more

announcements written in French (31.3%), though Luxembourgish still took the majority with 68.7%. There were no German-language announcements for men. Of the 306 entries, there were 192 individuals whose death was announced. Several individuals received multiple announcements from different parties, with as many as 14 announcements for a single person (See Section 2.2.4 ). Third parties (not the family or individual friends of the deceased) wrote 28.4% of announcements. Of those, 68.9% were in Luxembourgish and 31.1% were in French.

### 2.2.1 The Role of the German language in Obituaries

German is only rarely used as the primary language of an obituary in Luxembourg. Of the two announcements written between October 11, 2010 and October 31, 2010, both were written for women, both of whom were old enough to be listed as "grandmothers" and were arguably alive during World War II when German played a much larger role in the daily lives of Luxembourgers and French was outlawed. One was written in honor of a woman who died in Trier, Germany.

Where German predominates is in literary and biblical quotations used in many death announcements in Luxembourg. Over 50% of quotes used in death announcements are written in German, and German quotations accompany death announcements that are written in both French and Luxembourgish. Most, though not all, are quotes that are religious in nature, indicating that although Luxembourgish is the language with which church officials communicate with the public (See Section 2.2.3), religious texts themselves are written in a language other than Luxembourgish, and a significant amount, at least, are in German.

### 2.2.2 French and its implications

Whether an announcement was written in French often reflected either the nationality of the individual or his/her position in society or the government. Most announcements written for individuals with Portuguese names (Luxembourg has a large Portuguese immigrant minority -- see Chapter 1) were written in French, as most Portuguese immigrants learn French instead of Luxembourgish to communicate on a daily basis. This applies to both males (e.g.. Antonio Lopes, who received two obituaries in French) and females (e.g.. Sonja Majerus, who received one obituary in French). Position in society also played a role, as citizens with prestigious titles, such as Dr. Aloyse Stumper, received multiple announcements, all of which were written in French. Members of the church seem to be the exception to this coordination between prestige and French, as will be explored in Section 2.2.3.

Announcements written by third parties to honor their deceased colleagues or organization members were most often written in French when coming from prestigious, government, or international organizations or companies. Examples include the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, the Institute for Global Financial Integrity, and Le Collège Échevinal le Conseil Communal le Personal Communal de la Commune de Roeser, all of whom honored deceased colleagues or members with death announcements in French. These third-party announcements made up 32.1% of all announcements written in French.

### 2.2.3 Luxembourgish: the language of the people

That such a large percent (71.8%) of all announcements were written in Luxembourgish indicates that Luxembourgish truly is the language of the people. Announcements that specifically mentioned spouses or parents of the deceased together with the name of the deceased



accounted for 41.8% of all announcements. Of those, 78.9% were in Luxembourgish. Family members wrote 71.6% of all announcements, and 73.1% of those were in Luxembourgish.

Clearly, the preferred language of personal death announcements is Luxembourgish.

Luxembourgish, being the language most native Luxembourgers use in the home, adds to the sense of personal involvement and familiarity. The writers of the announcements are not only reaching out to the community, but sending a personal note to the deceased honoring them as well. However, only a few quotes used in death announcements are written in Luxembourgish, reflecting the small amount of original literature in the language.

Clubs and informal organizations also tend to write in Luxembourgish when writing an announcement to honor a deceased member or colleague. The use of Luxembourgish over French draws attention to the informal relationship of participant organizations as opposed to the more formal relationship of coworkers. These announcements will sometimes begin "Dear \_\_\_\_\_" or include only the first name of the deceased, whereas announcements written by corporations always write the first and last name of the deceased. Formal announcements often extend sympathies to "the family", but participant organizations will sometimes mention specific family members, or simply indicate that those writing the announcement will miss the deceased. This reiterates the familiar tone afforded by the use of Luxembourgish.

Announcements written for church officials, like pastors, are also written primarily in Luxembourgish. Of the twenty-one announcements written in honor of the two pastors in Luxembourg who died in October, only three were written in French; the rest were written in Luxembourgish and were written by committees or groups of church members. While this says more about the relationship between pastors and their congregations than anything else, it also reiterates the idea of Luxembourgish as a language that reflects personal relationships.

Having examined the social implications and role of each language, we will now look at specific examples of individuals who had multiple obituaries written in their honor.

#### 2.2.4 Case Studies

Den Här Paschtouer Joseph Schilling (or the Reverend Joseph Schilling) received seven obituaries from various parties on October 11 and 12, 2010. Three obituaries written by different factions of the Wuelesser church indicate the extent of Joseph Schilling's involvement in the Wuelessen church community was considerable, and strongly suggest that Wuelessen was the last parish in which he served. Three parishes, Wuelessen, Lalleng, and St-Pirmin, mentioned masses to be held in his honor. Berbuerg and Lellig, the two parishes in which Schilling served from 1980 to 1984, even wrote announcements in his honor and in appreciation of his devotion. He was remembered by the Wuelesser "Singing Friends", the people of the Parishes of Wuelessen Parish, Esch/Lalleng, Berbuerg, and St-Pirmin, the Kierchefabrèck (church institution) Lellig, and the Kiercherot (church committee) Wuelessen. All of these obituaries were written in Luxembourgish. Six of them extended sympathies to his family, and all mentioned remembering him fondly or with great respect. They indicate personal relationships between Schilling and the members of his congregation, even when they represent themselves collectively.

Lara Carvalho de Almeida was twelve years old when she died of cancer, according to the obituaries in her honor listed on October 11 and 12, 2010, of which there were ten. Of the ten obituaries, five were written in French. One was from *La Fondatioun Kriibskrank Kanner (Aide Aux Enfants Atteints d'un Cancer)* (The Foundation for Children with Cancer), which expressed regret for her death while praising her courage and affection for those close to her and paying

respect to her family. The other four are written by or on behalf of family members in Luxembourg and in Portugal. Her father uses a French quote, "Je ne suis pas loin, juste de l'autre côté du chemin" (I am not far, just on the other side of the path), indicating that for her family, French is the language in Luxembourg that they use to reflect respect and intimacy. It seems that Lara's family emigrated from Portugal, making her part of the growing Portuguese minority in Luxembourg. Several immigrants learn French, as it is also a Romance language and therefore closer to their own native tongue, and never learn Luxembourgish. While this may be the case for Lara's family, it is not the case for Lara, who receives five announcements in her honor written in Luxembourgish from friends and from teams in which she participated. Even her classmates from "d'Schoul Deich" (the school of Deich) pay their respects to her family and promise never to forget her smile. Luxembourgish here is used, not necessarily as the opposite of her family's use of French, but rather to reflect the social realm in which they were familiar with Lara. As a twelve-year-old, all of Lara's classmates would be comfortable speaking Luxembourgish and German. Regardless of which language(s) Lara spoke at home, her schoolmates' use of Luxembourgish also establishes a sense of community and familiarity with the deceased.

Här Abbé Romain Ney (Abbot Romain Ney) received fourteen death announcements, of which only three were written in French. Two of the French announcements were written on behalf of the city governments, the town councils, and the personnel of the municipal authorities of Mersch and Differdange, a canton and a city in Luxembourg, respectively. The third was written on behalf of the city of Lorentzweiler, Luxembourg. These announcements in combination with the fact that Ney is never referred to as "Paschtouer" (Pastor), but always as "Abbé" (Abbot) indicates a more prestigious person, as French titles are often associated with

high social standing. The other, less official announcements for Abbé Ney were written in Luxembourgish by a range of people and groups. Both the people of Mersch and of Differdange have announcements separate from the government announcements in honor of Abbé Ney. He served in Mersch from 1985 to 2002 and in Differdange from 2002 until his death, and the people of those areas still remember and respect Ney. The people of Lorentzweiler also wrote an announcement in his honor, as mentioned above, although Ney only worked there from 1980 to 1984. Perhaps the time that has passed between 2010 and his service in Lorentzweiler accounts for the distanced tone (indicated by language, as mentioned earlier, and by the announcement itself) of the obituary, or perhaps Ney held a higher position in Lorentzweiler than in other cities. Committees on which he had recently served also wrote announcements, in Luxembourgish, and the "women and mothers of Differdange" wrote an announcement for Abbé Ney in Luxembourgish. This reiterates the notion that abbots, as servants of the people, and as persons with whom people communicate on a more personal level, will have more written in honor of them in a personal language. This holds true for Ney even as he is referred to as "Abbot".

Dietmar Busch, also called Dit (or Ditt) received six death announcements, two of which were in French. The first announcement in French was from the faculty, staff and students at the technical school where Dietmar Busch worked, the second was written on behalf of his sister and her family. Three other announcements, written by specific persons, are in Luxembourgish. In these announcements, the authors are listed by their first names. One refers to Busch as a colleague, one as a friend, and one simply says "Thank you". These are also the announcements in which Dietmar is referred to as Dit(t), which shows the relationship between the authors and the deceased as a personal, first-name-basis relationship. Finally, there is an announcement in Luxembourgish from the Youth Theater Group, in which Busch had participated since its

beginning when he was still a school-child. This announcement also refers to Dietmar as Dit, and recreates memories of Busch within the group.

Jo Gaffiné, Scout leader, fireman, and educator, received ten announcements from colleagues, family, and friends, all in Luxembourgish. The Luxembourgish Scouts in St-Christophe Beggen wrote an announcement for Gaffiné, who had been their previous leader. Two groups of firefighters extended best wishes to the family of Gaffiné, who had been a long-standing member. Another two came from the National Association of Social Educators, where Gaffiné had worked. Still more came from friends, wanting to pay their respects to the deceased and extend condolences to his family, in particular his wife and daughter, who also wrote an announcement. The announcement written by (or perhaps on behalf of) his daughter began with a quote in German, as did the announcement ascribed to no one, but giving the official birth and death dates as well as announcing a place and time for Gaffiné's ceremony. This is an example of literary or biblical quotations written in German used by Luxembourgers in death announcements otherwise completely in Luxembourgish. The announcement written by the Scouts in St-Christophe Beggen also contained a quote, this one in English, from the founder of Boy Scouts. That one of the quotes in Gaffiné's announcements was in English at all shows a certain level of education attributed to Gaffiné. Luxembourgish children learn German and French in elementary school, and begin with other foreign languages later in school. The knowledge of English indicates higher education. The range of organizations who wrote announcements for Gaffiné indicates the wide range of use of Luxembourgish within society.

The announcements for Pierrot Christen are interesting in that only one was written by his family, but all six are in Luxembourgish. The others are written by organizations of which he was a member. All are very simple: they list his position in the organization, promise to maintain

a good memory of him, and send regards to his family. None mention specific people, but rather only list the organization. Because none of these are government institutions, and none seem to be where Christen was employed, they may use Luxembourgish to show the close relationship between the organization and its members and the deceased. All of the announcements written for Christen are personal, although aside from the one from his family, none were written on behalf of individuals.

### 2.3 Birth Announcements

During the same time period as the death announcements, October 11, 2010 to October 31, 2010, there were 80 birth announcements published in *D'Lëtzebuerger Wort*. Of these, only one was written in German. Eleven (13.8%) were written in French, and 68 (85.0%) were written in Luxembourgish. Three of those written in Luxembourgish began with German quotes. Again, evidence shows Luxembourgish to be the language of the people. However, *how* the different languages are used in birth announcements is not nearly as segmented as in death announcements.

Many birth announcements in Luxembourgish include the names of siblings as well as parents, and most are worded to seem as though the siblings wrote them. Of the announcements written in Luxembourgish, 44.8% were written in this manner, with another 7.5% mentioning the names of siblings alongside the parents, as in the example below:

Mir si frou, d'Gebuert vun eisem Meedchen  
Marie  
matzedeelen  
Hatt ass gesond a monter  
den 23. September 2010  
an der Maternité G.-D. Charlotte  
op d'Welt komm

**Sarah, Amélie, Noémie, Prema a Jeff HEYART - Marie**

(address)  
(address)

We are pleased to announce the birth of our daughter  
Marie

She came healthily and merrily  
on the 23 of September, 2010  
at the Maternitie of G.-D. Charlotte  
into the world

**Sarah, Amélie, Noémie, Prema and Jeff HEYART - Marie**

(address)  
(address)

The names Sarah, Amélie, Noémie, Prema and Jeff are the parents and siblings of Marie. Heyart is their last name. Because name order varies among other birth announcements, and because within this announcement, siblings are not distinguished from the parents, it is unclear who among Sarah, Amélie, Noémie and Prema is Marie's mother. What is clear is that siblings are recognized in Luxembourgish-language birth announcements and are often given the privilege of announcing the birth of their new sibling to the community. By comparison, only 27.3% of birth announcements in French were worded as if written by siblings, though siblings were mentioned alongside the parents with equal frequency (27.3%), which means that in announcements written in French, siblings were mentioned in over half the announcements, just as in Luxembourgish-language announcements. This would indicate that language use is a matter of preference, and not of formality, as it was before.

In addition, though there were birth announcements written by or on behalf of parents whose last names would indicate either Portuguese or another foreign heritage, there were also several announcements written in French in which the last names of the parents were either French or German in origin. Without further information on each individual, it is impossible to say whether those with last names of origins other than French or German are, in fact, immigrants, and whether they are first, second, third, etc., generation immigrants. Similarly, there were couples with last names indicating foreign origins that were written entirely in Luxembourgish. Therefore, it would be imprudent to say that only immigrants use French, or that immigrants use only French in birth announcements.



## 2.4 Wedding Announcements

Wedding announcements, in contrast to birth and death announcements, were all written in one language. Between October 11, 2010 and October 31, 2010, there were 18 wedding announcements, all of which were written in Luxembourgish. The names listed indicated a wide range of ethnicities, but every single announcement was written in Luxembourgish. Weddings, being more of a community event than births or deaths, would be written in a language that reflects the language preference of the people, specifically of the community. That Luxembourgish is the only language used in wedding announcements indicates that it is the language of the community and the language with which persons in the community connect to and speak to one another.

## 2.5 Conclusion

German, while an official language, seems restricted to quotations within the announcements or to announcements for persons with a close association with Germany. In death announcements, French, the more socially prestigious language, is used more often to show respect or reverence, or is used because the deceased or family of the deceased is an immigrant to Luxembourg. Contrastingly, in birth announcements the use of French seems to be a matter of preference rather than of prestige or nationality. Finally, Luxembourgish is a language of communication between the people, as indicated by the higher percent of birth announcements in the language compared to death announcements, and an even higher percentage of wedding announcements in

Luxembourgish than birth announcements. It is a language that expresses familiarity and a language with which one celebrates or relates personal news.

The monopoly Luxembourgish has over death, birth, and wedding announcements seems to be a result of a desire to connect to people on an individual level.

Luxembourgish creates a feeling of familiarity and comfort, which Luxembourgers strive for in times of grief and of joy. This alluring feeling is utilized in other media to personalize the experience between media personalities and consumers, appealing to the sense of familiarity and comfort by bringing Luxembourgish into the homes of Luxembourgers across the nation en mass. In the next chapter, I explore the use of Luxembourgish as it compares to the use of French and German on the national television channels of Luxembourg.

## Chapter 3: Television Programming in Luxembourg

### 3.1 RTL

RTL, or *Radio Tële Lëtzebuerg* (Radio Television Luxembourg), as it was originally known, is the second largest television, radio, and production company in Europe and the largest independent distribution company outside the United States (RTL Group). It has forty television stations and thirty-three radio stations in ten countries and a complete monopoly on Luxembourg television and radio. For Luxembourgers it has a website where one may find radio and television programs, archives, and live streaming. One can also find a plethora of written news stories ranging from local to global in scale.

The entire site is in Luxembourgish. There are no language options for French, German, English, etc. All the navigation tabs are in Luxembourgish, such as the tab marked “*Kichen*” or “*Cooking*”, which links the reader to a page of news articles, all in Luxembourgish. All news articles on the RTL website, regardless of topic, are in Luxembourgish. Their radio program, while broadcasting songs in their original language, conducts most interviews in Luxembourgish and is otherwise entirely in Luxembourgish. Most advertisements, too, are screened in Luxembourgish. Television programs are primarily in Luxembourgish as well, with little variation.

RTL Luxembourg broadcasts two primary channels, called 1. RTL and 2. RTL, as well as one satellite channel Astra 23,5 Ost (Astra 23.5 East). The schedules for 1. RTL and 2. RTL are available online starting with the current day and extending for two weeks, and the website offers a live streaming of 1. RTL. The 1. RTL schedule produces between seventeen and eighteen hours of programming before beginning reruns of the

day's programs. The 2. RTL schedule includes between fifteen and a half hours and seventeen hours and thirty-five minutes of programming before beginning reruns.

### 3.2 Languages in RTL Programming

RTL broadcasts only in the three official languages of Luxembourg: French, German, and Luxembourgish. The extent of the use of those languages varies widely, and French and German both take a back seat to Luxembourgish in this particular arena. Primarily an oral medium, television is an environment in which Luxembourgish, whose writing system is still relatively new, can thrive. Television shows in Luxembourgish are also appealing to viewers who consider Luxembourgish their native language. At the same time, it would be pointless to limit programs exclusively to Luxembourgish, as most adult citizens also speak French and German. French and German have, therefore, been given specific spheres in which they exist, based upon where they would be most appealing to an audience. However, these spheres in which they broadcast have Luxembourgish counterparts, thus neither French nor German have a complete monopoly on any aspect of television programming, furthering the idea of Luxembourgish as a language which is no longer limited to informal situations.

#### 3.2.1 German

German is used exclusively on *RTL Shop*, a televised home shopping network similar to *QVC*, which is broadcast on both 1. RTL and 2. RTL, as the RTL corporation is the parent network of *RTL Shop*. This network is based in and broadcast out of Germany, explaining the use of German instead of Luxembourgish. The network is streamed by 1.

and 2. RTL between one and four hours daily, the longest sessions taking place on Sundays and the shortest on Wednesdays on 1. RTL. *RTL Shop* is normally broadcast during the work and school day, which indicates it being geared towards citizens who are home for large parts of the day, like retired citizens or housewives. This is the demographic most likely to respond to such advertisements, whereas children and teens would not. *RTL Shop* is also different from later programs in that it requires neither constant viewing nor a specific time commitment, making it more accessible and viewer-friendly.

### 3.2.2 French

French is used even less often than German, being restricted to five-minute recaps of news stories, called "*5 minutes*". These show twice daily on 1. RTL, except on Sunday when they are run three times, and three times a day on 2. RTL except on Sundays when the amount of runs varies from two to four, depending on other programming. Outside of these occurrences and interviews with native French speakers, there is no French programming. However, the five-minute news recaps are shown at strategic times. The first is shown at 18:30, one hour before the nightly news, and the second is shown at 22:00, just before *De Journal* begins at 22:05. On Sundays *De Journal* begins at 23:05, and "*5 minutes*" plays at both 22:00 and 23:00. This indicates that "*5 minutes*" is not meant to serve as the full news report, but it may target those who feel insecure in their ability to speak Luxembourgish or who perhaps speak no Luxembourgish at all, as is the case with many immigrants who choose to speak French, a language either closer to their native language or that they already know, instead of

learning Luxembourgish. Still, it is clear that the preferred language of news broadcasting, or at least of the news broadcaster, RTL, is Luxembourgish, as the full news program uses this language.

### 3.2.3 Luxembourgish

Luxembourgish is by far the most used language on 1. and 2. RTL, with between twelve hours and thirty-five minutes and fifteen hours and fifty minutes broadcast in Luxembourgish daily. Programs broadcast in Luxembourgish include *Planet Music*, a program highlighting the newest “Top Hits” in music, *De Journal* (The Journal), a news program covering news for Luxembourg City, Luxembourg, Europe, and the world, and *RTL Radio Web TV*, a shopping program similar to *QVC* and *RTL Shop*, among others. The television programs are aimed at children, such as the program *Planet Kids*, and adolescents as well as adults, indicating that Luxembourgish is a language whose use is not marked by age or education, unlike French and German.

### 3.3 Television Shows

*RTL Radio Web TV* and *RTL Shop* are played constantly on 1. RTL between 7:00 and 15:00 Monday through Saturday, and *RTL Radio Web TV* is broadcast again from 17:00 to 18:00, amounting to nine hours of home shopping programs daily. Sundays include between seven and eight hours of home shopping programs, including the hour 17:00 to 18:00.

*De Magazin* is another set of RTL programs shown on 1. and 2. RTL. *De Magazin* programs are primarily pop culture shows ranging from cooking shows

including *Kachtip* (Cooking Tip) and *Dinner fir 20* (Dinner for 20), to shows full of decorating tips like *Trendmag*, to culture and art programs like *Kloertext* (Clear text). These programs, aside from being broadcast in Luxembourgish, are much like what one would expect to find on an American television station. Luxembourg even has a reality show called *Success-Story* in which Luxembourgers present their new inventions to a panel of judges and compete through several rounds until one winner is selected and given a monetary prize.

*De Journal* represents the news broadcasting side of RTL. The French-language news recap "5 minutes" is part of this section, as well as segments pertaining to weather, local and international news stories, and recaps of sporting events. The rest of these programs are in Luxembourgish, indicating the extensive vocabulary of Luxembourgish and its use in formal, informative communication.

### 3.4 Advertisements

During a two-hour period (18:00-20:00) on Friday, February 4, 2011, there were thirty commercials on 1. RTL, as shown on their live stream <http://tele.rtl.lu/waatleeft/livestream/>. All of them were in Luxembourgish, though relatively few advertised products made in Luxembourg. This displays a commitment of companies to reach citizens of Luxembourg on a personal level, an advertising ploy that probably helps sales but also increases and broadens the range of use of Luxembourgish. Of the thirty commercials, thirteen were car commercials advertising eight different cars (five were repeated). The commercials primarily advertised the cars as luxury cars, which could reflect the wealth of the citizens of Luxembourg. At least one of the eight car

commercials was played during six of the seven commercial breaks, and attempts were made to avoid playing the car commercials back-to-back, though this was not always successful. One advertisement line-up, for example, looked like this:

(Commercial break 17:42)

1. Toyota (auto)
2. RTL.lu Driving
3. Lancia (auto)
4. P&T Tele
5. Peugeot (auto)
6. Citroën (auto)

The advertisements were completely Luxembourgish, and even the company slogans have been either rewritten or translated into Luxembourgish. Peugeot, for example, ends a Luxembourgish commercial with the slogan "Fir Datt D'Autofueren Emmer E Pleséier Ass" (So that driving is always a pleasure), which I believe to be a remodeled version of the slogan "Peugeot. Live the pleasure" (Database of Slogans).

The two commercials that were not car commercials were for *P&T Luxembourg*, the Luxembourg postal service, and *RTL.lu Driving*, a feature on the RTL website. Advertisements for different RTL features or shows were the second most common type of commercials; six of the thirty advertised RTL. Though occurring less than half as often as car commercials, these represented the largest contribution by a single company - unsurprising, since RTL is also the channel broadcaster. Still, all other companies had a maximum of two commercials during the two-hour period. The subjects of these other advertisements ranged from dishwashers to banks to dairy products, showing a range of topics typical of daytime television. The use of Luxembourgish seemed to in no way limit the products able to be advertised.



### 3.5 Conclusion

The large discrepancies between Luxembourgish compared to French and German show what I believe to be a strong commitment on the part of RTL to the spread and use of Luxembourgish as a language. Using Luxembourgish as the primary language of communication is more appealing to viewers because it is the language of daily life. Luxembourgish is appealing to all Luxembourgers and is less alienating than French or German, as it is their mother tongue. The use of French and German is constrained to specific demographics, namely French as the language of the business class and German as the language of the retirees, many of whom spent time under Nazi rule and had little or no training in French, and housewives, though it must be conceded that retirees and housewives are the prime demographic for home shopping in any language.

In this chapter, we have seen that the Luxembourgish language is robust in the primarily oral medium of television. Chapter 2 also found overwhelming use of Luxembourgish in newspaper announcements. However, the use of written Luxembourgish lags behind in more formal types of writing. In the next chapter I examine the trends of literature published in Luxembourg in the last thirty years.

## Chapter 4: Language Trends in Books Published in Luxembourg

### 4.1 Luxembourgish as a written language

In contrast to the auditory communication of Luxembourgish via television programs, literature in Luxembourgish lags behind as the form of media in which the lowest percentages of Luxembourgish are found. Partially as a result of its history as an oral language, and partially due to the failed literary endeavors of the immediate post-war era, Luxembourgish literature is struggling to establish itself. The idea of Luxembourgish as a national language and a source of national identity grew as Luxembourg gained independence in 1839. This led to the appearance of Luxembourgish in newspapers and political speeches as early as 1848, and in 1859 Luxembourgers found their own national slogan in Luxembourgish: "Mir wëlle bleiwe wat mer sin!" (We want to remain, that which we are!), which was taken from the last verse of the song "De Feierwon" (The fire-wagon *or* the railway train) published by Michel Lentz in celebration of the first railway through Luxembourg (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 182). Its first literary achievement, a poem by Antoine Meyer, was published in 1829. In 1855, *Dicks*, a play still considered by many to be Luxembourgish's finest literary achievement, played for the first time (Hoffmann 115). National poetry and satire followed, and several dictionaries were attempted, the first success of which, *Das Wörterbuch der luxemburgischen Mundart* (Dictionary of the Luxembourgish Dialect), was published in 1906 and written with German definitions. In January 1911, a group of college students who had banded together under the name *d'Letzeburger Nationalunio'n* (the Luxembourg National Union) published their first journal, entitled *De Jongletzeburger* (The Young-Luxembourger).

They also first proposed that the Education Bill of 1912 should include one hour-long lesson per week of Luxembourgish language, literature, and art for primary school students, which was indeed incorporated into the Education Bill of that year (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 182).

After World War II, a surge of nationalism resulted in a plethora of materials written in Luxembourgish. Unfortunately, though many felt the language was in need of some sort of supervision, it seemed each person had his or her own ideas as to what that supervision should be. Some felt the language relied too heavily on French and German, while others believed that natural vocabulary of Luxembourgish was too limited (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 185). Some felt Luxembourgers should revert to the "original" or "pure" Luxembourgish of *Dicks* and other 19th century works, while others felt that to ensure its vitality, the language must continue to flourish. The result was a multitude of works intended to further one particular view of how Luxembourgish should be developed, with the result that much of the work was, in fact, poorly written, and almost no pieces were considered good Luxembourgish literature, let alone great literature (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 186). The initial fervor subsided, and writers began again striving for quality work in Luxembourgish that was within the language's creative parameters, but there were fewer and fewer efforts to write solely in Luxembourgish until later years (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 204).

#### 4.2 Luxembourgish in recent years

Luxembourg hosts two publishing sites, one in Esch-sur-Alzette (the second-largest city in Luxembourg), and one in Luxembourg City. For my purposes, I considered

only the books published in Luxembourg, the capital city. Through the National Library of Luxembourg Archives, I recorded the titles of the first thirty percent (alphabetical by author) of books published in Luxembourg between 1979 and 2009 at five-year intervals. In doing so, I captured a glimpse of publishing habits with regard to language before the Language Law of 1984, the year 1984, and for twenty-five years after the Language Law came into effect. I considered evaluating the first 100 books of each year, but realized that in 1979, one hundred books represented almost one-third of all books published that year, while in 2009 it was closer to one-tenth. To avoid such a huge discrepancy, I settled on a percentage, namely thirty percent, and recorded a consistent percentage of books across time. With regards to which thirty percent were selected, listing the books alphabetically by title caused several occurrences of books entitled "Annual Report" written by several international banks and businesses. In an attempt to eliminate such large quantities of international reports (in 2009 over one-fourth of the top ten percent were thusly titled), the books were listed alphabetically by author. This too, caused multiple occurrences of reports written by banks and businesses, as well as duplicates of some books that had been published in multiple languages, but the extent of international reports decreased significantly.

In this chapter I discuss the varying percentages of books published in Luxembourgish, and discuss the social, and especially the political concerns with regard to language that probably affected the amount of writing in Luxembourgish.

#### 4.2.1 Publications in 1979

For the year 1979, my selection includes 103 published works. Eighty-one, or 78.64% of book titles sampled were in French. Of the remaining titles, 15.53% (16 books) were titled in German. Luxembourgish books accounted for 3.88% of all titles, only four books. At this point, Luxembourgish was not yet the national language; it was still considered a dialect by most Luxembourgers and by all foreigners. While Luxembourgish had been used in poetry and theater productions, Luxembourgers had yet to produce a novel in their mother tongue. Of the four books with Luxembourgish titles, two were books promoting the use and understanding of Luxembourgish, for example *Mir schwätze lëtzebuergesch* (We speak Luxembourgish) by Jul Christophory, a notable Luxembourg author. The other two books could also not be considered novels. French, contrastingly, was widely used, both in consideration of foreign immigrants and day laborers whose primary languages were Romance languages, and as a protest against and separation from Luxembourg's time as an occupied region of Nazi Germany. By this time, most of the nation spoke and read French on a daily basis. It is no surprise, therefore, that the vast majority of books from the 1979 sample were written in French and ranged from titles like *Trois amis* (Three friends) to *Banque de l'État* (Bank of the State), indicating complete flexibility with regard to subject matter.

German trails behind as the language all schoolchildren learned first, but as a language with very little social prestige, and was primarily restricted to titles similar to *Fortbildungskurse der Handwerksförderungsstelle der Handwerkskammer Luxemburg* (Further Training Courses for the Promotion of Handicrafts of the Chamber of Trade in Luxembourg) and *100 Jahre Pfarrkirche Schieren* (100 Years of the Parish Church in Schieren). In other words, they were restricted to teaching tools and history books,

though there were exceptions. Only two titles were published in a non-national language, accounting for only 1.94%. Both were in English: the first was a translation of another book published that year in Luxembourgish entitled *Who's afraid of Luxembourgish ? Lëtzebuergesch ?*, and the other was a bank report.

#### 4.2.2 Publications in 1984

1984 showed an upswing in Luxembourgish literature. Of the 1984 sample, consisting of 152 publications, 8.55%, or thirteen books, were written in Luxembourgish. German titles made up 13.16%, a minor change, and books written in Portuguese and English, among other foreign languages, took another 6.58%, reducing the percent of books written in French to 71.71% (109 titles). It is interesting to note that the percentage of books with German titles decreased slightly. In reality, public favor of German probably increased as it was named one of the three national languages of Luxembourg, thereby technically placing it on equal footing with French, which had held an almost monopolizing public favor since the end of the Second World War.

The strong surge of Luxembourgish titles was realized through the Language Law of 1984, which recognized Luxembourgish as an official language and as the national language of Luxembourg, while French and German were both officially proclaimed administrative languages. It also recognized and reacted to the existence of a growing subset of literature in Luxembourgish. Legally, the law put German on equal footing with French, which increased the level of respect associated with German within the nation, and the ease with which people could read and write in German allowed for the practical use of this language. The Language Law of 1984 also put Luxembourgish on the map,

and administrators were forced to respond to citizens in Luxembourgish, should a citizen make a request or inquiry in Luxembourgish. This included both oral and written communication, opening a floodgate of possibilities for written Luxembourgish. The naming of Luxembourgish as the national language of Luxembourg also brought on a surge of nationalism among the Luxembourgish people, and books like *Eist Duerf* (Our Town) and *Hei sin ech, wou bas Du?* (Here am I, where are you?) hit the shelves. These books, as indicated by the titles, were different than the French *Les nouveaux comptes sociaux des sociétés de capitaux luxembourgeoises* (The new social accounting of the Luxembourg joint stock companies) and the German *Wohnungspolitik am Knotenpunkt von Sozialfrage und Wirtschaftsfaktor* (Housing policy at the crossroads of social question and economic factor), in that they were more informal in subject matter. Books written in Luxembourgish were more likely to be enjoyed at home than read as scholarly pursuits. In 1985 the first novel *Hannert dem Atlantik* (Behind the Atlantik), by Guy Rewenig, was published in Luxembourgish. It seemed as though Luxembourgish was on its way to prominence.

#### 4.2.3 Publications in 1989

In 1989, however, the percentage of Luxembourgish titles dropped to 3.30%, only six titles of the 182 sampled. According to Newton, the novels published in 1985, though ground-breaking, did not live up to the eloquence of the few great writers of Luxembourgish who had written theater pieces and poetry, and interest in the Luxembourgish novel dwindled (191). The percentage of German titles also dropped significantly, though it did not disappear completely; only 3.30% of the 1989 sample had

German titles. The surprise this year was the number of titles in a language other than the three official languages of Luxembourg. Close to forty percent (38.13%) were neither German, nor French, nor Luxembourgish. Of this number, 63.64% (21 of 33 titles) were banking reports. While the publishing of many reports by the same international bank admittedly skews results, it is also important to note that in the 1984 sample, only 10.00% of international titles were published by banks. A new national banking law allowing client secrecy could have contributed to the amount of literature published by banks that year (Kershner, Landler).

#### 4.2.4 Publications in the 1990s

1994 showed a return of Luxembourgish titles, higher in percentage than in 1984 at 9.95% (19 books of 191 books sampled). Ten years after Luxembourgish gained official language status, Luxembourgers had become more accustomed to seeing their language in written form. Writers gained confidence in expressing themselves in Luxembourgish, and the public had gained confidence in reading Luxembourgish, which had previously been almost entirely an oral language. Some books resembled those published in 1984, bearing titles such as *L wéi Lëtztebuergesch. Lektiounen 1-8.* (L for Luxembourgish. Lessons 1-8.) while others dealt with scholarly topics, as in *Fréier Studenten aus der Franséischer Schwäiz* (Earlier Students from French Switzerland). The realms in which Luxembourgish could comfortably be used were expanding. Another important moment in Luxembourg's history, the opening of its first university, had occurred in 1993, and its first class of students and faculty were adjusting to the new system. The opening of a university in Luxembourg was another source of national pride



for Luxembourgers, even though as an international institution the languages of instruction were French, German, and English, but not Luxembourgish. Still, the founding of the nation's first university bolstered the pride of Luxembourgers for their land and their heritage. The opening of the university could have also attributed to the percentage of international titles published, which remained high at 21.47% in the 1994 sample. German titles, contrastingly, amassed a meager 2.62% (five titles), while French titles made up the remaining 65.97%.

The 1999 statistics were not significantly different, as 63.16% of the 190-book sample held French titles, while international and German titles contributed 21.58% (41 books) and 6.84% (13 books), respectively, with the increased number of German titles representing the only significant change. The percentage of Luxembourgish titles decreased slightly to 7.89% (15 books), but remained ahead of German.

#### 4.2.5 Publications in 2004

In 2004 the percentage of titles in Luxembourgish had a major upswing to 13.25%, more than doubling the number of books published in 1999 with 33 titles, the highest yet seen. Part of the reason for this surge of Luxembourgish writing could be attributed to the 20th anniversary of the Language Law of 1984, but much of it I believe to be simply a result of a rising level of comfort with the language. Politicians were using Luxembourgish in their formal addresses, including the speech on the state of the nation (see Chapter 5: Language and Government in Luxembourg) and a growing number of books were being translated into Luxembourgish, including international bestsellers like *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, or *Harry Potter an den Alchimistestein*, as it is

while 29 German titles made up 12.03%. The remaining 26.14% (63 titles) were international, and most were in English. Several of the titles were documentations of musical recordings made in Luxembourg. A second large group included titles which referred to matters of banking and finance, such as *Practice and innovation in microfinance* and *Investment Funds in Luxembourg*, highlighting the continued importance of banking in Luxembourg. Important to note, however, is that the number of Luxembourgish titles is steadily increasing, despite its use being constrained to an estimated 390,000 speakers worldwide.

#### 4.3 Conclusions

That the number of Luxembourgish titles published per year is steadily increasing (from 4 in 1979 to 19 in 1994, to over 30 in the 2000s), indicates that Luxembourgish is on the rise, the ebbs and flows of prominence of Luxembourgish literature make it difficult to determine how popular it may be in the coming years. It is clear, however, that new literature is being published in Luxembourgish on a variety of subjects. Notable is the amount of children's literature written solely in Luxembourgish (Kartheiser 74). Editions Guy Binsfeld, a publishing company in Luxembourg, currently offers twenty childrens' books through their website, eighteen of which are offered only in Luxembourgish ("Children's Books"), a trend evident in several publishing companies. To date, the most renowned original Luxembourgish literature dates from the late 19th century and includes theater pieces and epic poetry (Hoffmann 116). However, it is evident that Luxembourgers are making strides to capture the essence of their language through story-telling, and are acquiring a fondness for seeing their language printed, as

evidenced by the translation of titles like *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* into Luxembourgish. On the other hand, texts originally published in Luxembourgish are being translated into other languages as a means of stretching the reach of the country's literature (Kartheiser 74), emphasizing the importance of Luxembourg writers and their ideas, and not just their contribution to the Luxembourgish language. It is also clear that Luxembourgers are working to broaden the use of Luxembourgish through the number and styles of texts written, as the volume of texts in Luxembourgish continues to rise.

Luxembourgish also continues to rise in use in the political arena, where many speeches addressed to the nation or to the Members of Parliament are given in Luxembourg, despite the historical tendency towards French. Like in publications, Luxembourgish is still in the minority of official speeches given by the Members of Parliament, though the claims by many that Luxembourgish is the preferred language of debate in the House of Deputies must be further researched. In the next chapter, I explore the language tendencies exhibited by the government as an institution and by the individual members of this organization both in formal speech-making and in interviews conducted by a variety of radio stations and newspapers.

## Chapter 5: Language and Government in Luxembourg

### 5.1 Introduction

It is a widely accepted fact that in Luxembourg's Parliament, one may use any of the three official languages, French, German or Luxembourgish, to address the members ("Information" 4). For a considerable portion of the history of Luxembourg, French was considered the administrative language. As early as 1364 ("Information" 2), French held official administrative status, a privilege that was reinforced after The Treaty of London in 1839. The Language Law of 1984 also deemed French the "authentic" language for legislative acts, though they may be published in other languages ("Information" 4). The Language Law of 1984, however, also legally allowed Luxembourgish and German to be used when addressing the government, and required that any query submitted to the government must be answered, in so far as possible, in the language in which it was asked ("Information" 3). Since this time, an increasing number of speeches made in Parliament have been given in Luxembourgish. The article "About... Languages in Luxembourg" claims that "spoken French has gradually disappeared from Parliament....The fact is that these days the regular debates in Parliament are held in *Lëtzebuergesch*" (4). In 1996, Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, delivered his annual government address in Luxembourgish for the first time in the history of the Grand Duchy.

However, in other ways the Luxembourg government continues a heavy use of French. From interviews to information about the government itself, much of how the government expresses itself is in French. Only rarely does German appear, and the

relative lack of German is a tradition continued from centuries ago. My research finds that French is primarily used as the language with which the government distributes information about itself, as expanded upon in the coming sections. Contrastingly, the debates themselves and messages addressed to members of Parliament or to the citizens of Luxembourg that deal with Luxembourg-specific issues are a mix of French, German, and Luxembourgish, with occasional instances of English, as described below. This chapter examines language use on the government website, which includes organizational information speeches by and interviews with members of Parliament.

## 5.2 Languages on the Official Government Website

The government website of Luxembourg, *www.gouvernement.lu*, is an online resource that allows citizens and non-citizens alike to learn about and stay up-to-date on the government of Luxembourg. The website provides information about the government's undertakings, its budget for the past several years, speeches and interviews made by the members of parliament, and information about the various ministerial divisions of the government as well as its individual members. In various areas of the website Luxembourgish, French, and German can be found, though the primary language is French.

### 5.2.1. The Prime Minister and Members of Parliament

The Prime Minister of Luxembourg, *Le Premier ministre*, has his own personal information webpage on the government website, which is the only biographical webpage for a member of Parliament able to be accessed directly from the side bar. The page,

which automatically appears in French, offers alternate German and English versions available through separate links, a unique feature on a website that is otherwise almost exclusively French. For the other Members of Parliament, one must first access the Members of Parliament page: *Les membres du gouvernement*. The Members of Parliament page is written completely in French and lists each member along with his/her official titles and party affiliation. By clicking on the name of each member, the viewer is redirected to a webpage where the biography of that Member of Parliament may be viewed. These pages also provide English and German translations, but in all cases the German and English versions are secondary choices, and they include neither a list of the Member of Parliament's official titles nor a picture of said member, as can be found on the French version of the biography page. This is true also of the German and English versions of the Prime Minister's biography.

### 5.2.2. Luxembourgish

Very few sections of the government website provide information in Luxembourgish. The speech on the state of the nation, or *Discours sur l'état de la nation* is, though listed under a French title and with a brief description in French, itself completely in Luxembourgish. It is one of the few direct links on the Luxembourg Government website under which Luxembourgish can be found. Similarly, the declaration of foreign politics, or *Déclaration de politique étrangère* is formatted with the actual declaration given in Luxembourgish, as is *Déclaration sur la politique de coopération*, or the declaration on the policy of cooperation. That the actual speeches are in Luxembourgish reinforces the claim that speeches pertaining primarily to residents of

Luxembourg, most of whom speak Luxembourgish, are given in Luxembourgish. The webpage title and brief description of the page contents are, however, in French. This could serve either as a form of continuity, as all other page names and descriptions are listed in French, or as a means of providing the non-Luxembourg viewer with an idea of the webpage's contents.

### 5.2.3. French

All of the website pages not listed above are in French. The navigation tools and page listings are all in French, as well as the titles of the pages and brief informative paragraphs that describe each page's contents. Information about the set-up of the government is also entirely in French. For example, the Ministries and Administrations are divided into several subcategories, including the Ministry for Agriculture, Viticulture, and Rural Development, whose individual webpage is shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1: Ministry for Agriculture, Viticulture, and Rural Development Webpage  
**Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la Viticulture et du Développement rural**

**Ministre**

Romain Schneider, ministre de l'Agriculture, de la Viticulture et du Développement rural

**Contacts**

Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la Viticulture et du Développement rural □1, rue de la  
Congrégation □1-1352 Luxembourg

Tél: +352 247 82500 □ Fax: +352 46 40 27

Annuaire téléphonique du ministère

**Sites Internet du ministère**

Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la Viticulture et du Développement rural

Service d'économie rurale

Institut viti-vinicole

Office national du remembrement

**Attributions**

1. Politique agricole nationale et communautaire – Développement économique des secteurs agricoles et agroindustriels – Gestion durable de l'espace cultural – Contrôle de la qualité et de la sécurité des produits agricoles – Protection des animaux.
2. Agriculture – Service Sanitel – Administration des Services techniques de l'Agriculture – Laboratoire de Contrôle et d'Essais – Service d'Économie rurale – Administration des Services vétérinaires – Laboratoire de Médecine vétérinaire – Office national du Remembrement – Chambre d'Agriculture – Fonds européens agricoles FEAGA/FEADER – Organisme chargé de la Sécurité et de la Qualité de la Chaîne alimentaire (OSQCA).
3. Viticulture – Institut viti-vinicole – Fonds de Solidarité viticole – Marque nationale du Vin, des Vins mousseux et des Crémants de Luxembourg.
4. Horticulture.
5. Sylviculture.
6. Développement rural – Programme LEADER.

*<http://www.gouvernement.lu/ministeres/agriculture.html>*

As seen in Fig. 1, the entire page is in French, and the page provides information about the ministers involved, contact information for the ministry, the internet sites for the particular ministry, and aspects of governance for which the particular ministry is responsible for. All nineteen of the ministry pages are laid out thusly, and entirely in French. In contrast to the individual minister biographies, these pages do not have



English and German versions available, nor is Luxembourgish an option. These pages represent the largest amount of descriptive information provided solely in French, though there is at least some French on each page. Because there is French on each page, and because all of the pages contain titles and a brief description of the page's contents in French, it must be concluded that French is the primary language of the Luxembourg Government website.

### 5.3 Speeches in Parliament

It is a frequent claim that most of the speeches and debates made in Parliament are in Luxembourgish ("Information" 4). However, this claim is contradicted by my investigation of the government's website, which provides transcriptions of the last eight speeches made by the Prime Minister and the last eight speeches made by other members of Parliament. Of the sixteen speeches on the website on March 8, 2011, only three included any Luxembourgish. It may be the case that the less formal debates and discussions are primarily in Luxembourgish, and that the formal speeches tend to be in French. However, the relative lack of Luxembourgish in these speeches calls into question the amount of Luxembourgish used by the government. As in previous instances, the titles of the speeches are all listed in French, regardless of the language in which the speech is written.

#### 5.3.1 Prime Minister's speeches

The Prime Minister's eight most recent speeches, as listed on the government website <[http://www.gouvernement.lu/salle\\_presse/discours/index.html](http://www.gouvernement.lu/salle_presse/discours/index.html)> cover a wide

variety of topics, from *Discours à l'occasion de la remise du Collier du mérite européen* (Speech at the time of the handing-over of the Collar of the European merit) to *Discours à l'occasion de la réception de Nouvel An pour la presse luxembourgeoise* (Speech at the time of the reception of New year for the Luxembourg press), in a broad range of languages. The Prime Minister's speeches showed the greatest variety of language choice. Three of the eight speeches were given entirely in French, two were entirely in Luxembourgish, one was entirely in English, and two were multilingual. None contained any German.

The speeches in French covered a variety of topics, whereas the other languages were used in speeches dealing with certain areas of discussion. Of the two given in Luxembourgish, both dealt with Luxembourg-specific topics: one pertained directly to an issue concerning a member of Parliament, and the other dealt with the Luxembourg press. The speech given entirely in English was given for the Global China Business Meeting in Luxembourg, for which many English- and Chinese-speaking diplomats were noted as being in attendance.

The multilingual speeches utilized both French and English. The first dealt with the financial crisis of 2010 and began in English with an overview of the current financial problem and the plan to deal with it. The sentence "So let's turn to Luxembourg and revisit a few moments of our recent national history" served as the cue to switch to French, which was the language in which the rest of the speech (the majority of the speech) was delivered. The second bilingual speech dealt with security assurances from NATO, of which Luxembourg is a member. It was given primarily in English, with only the opening and closing paragraphs in French. The first paragraph explained why Prime

Minister Juncker, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, was the person giving the speech, and the final paragraph seemed to very briefly sum up the overarching theme of his speech. In this instance, it was not a change in topic that prompted a language change, but it seemed more to be the desire to begin and end his speech in a language more familiar and natural to his fellow members of government.

### 5.3.2 Speeches of other members of government

The eight most recent speeches given by other members of Parliament include a variety of languages, though less so than in the Prime Minister's speeches. Five of the eight speeches were given entirely in French, while only one was entirely in English, one was entirely in German, and one was truly multilingual. The speech given in German was given in Aachen, Germany at the time of the "Krönungsfestmahl", a festival in this city. That the speech was given in Germany could account for the use of German as opposed to Luxembourgish, English, or French. It is the only speech to utilize German between October 2010 and February 2011, the time range of the speeches listed. The speech entirely in English, *Discours prononcé à l'occasion de la première réunion des États-parties à la Convention sur les armes à sous-munitions, Vientiane* (Speech made at the time of the first meeting of States Parties to the Convention on cluster munitions, Vientiane) was a speech given to an international group of diplomats in Vientiane, Laos, and the international venue encouraged the sole use of English.

The choice of language for members of Parliament seems fairly situation-driven, and it is interesting to note that, as the Prime Minister gave speeches in three different languages, Jean Asselborn, Vice-Prime Minister of Luxembourg, gave speeches in

French, German, and English, implying that all members of Parliament in Luxembourg are to some extent comfortable hearing and speaking all three of the national languages *and* English. However, it seems that more often than not they choose to express themselves in French.

The multilingual speech *Discours à l'occasion de l'ouverture de la foire d'automne* (Speech at the time of the opening of the fair of autumn) utilized Luxembourgish, French, and a few choice expressions in English, reiterating the multilingual aspect of Luxembourg Parliament. In this speech, Luxembourgish was used at the beginning and end as the seeming introduction and conclusion. The first section explained the topic of the speech in detail and was several paragraphs long, as opposed to other multilingual speeches that were primarily in one language with only brief paragraphs in another language. The speech utilized French during the "body" of the speech, in which the speaker gave the factual percentages and reasoning for his claims, before returning to Luxembourgish for the post-factual arguments, which constituted another several paragraphs. "Ladies and Gentlemen, the world is now definitely flat!" and "There's no time for a rest!" were the two English expressions placed strategically to seize the listeners' attention, one after a point made in the French section, the other at the close of the speech, to emphasize the arguments made. This further proves the ease with which members of Parliament can listen to and speak multiple languages.

#### 5.4 Interviews of members of Parliament

The government website also hosts a list of the most recent interviews of members of Parliament by newspapers and radio stations, as well as the transcriptions of

each interview. As of March 8, 2011, forty-five interviews were listed on the site [http://www.gouvernement.lu/salle\\_presse/interviews/index.html](http://www.gouvernement.lu/salle_presse/interviews/index.html), and were given in French, German, Luxembourgish, and English. The language of the interview depended greatly on the language of the interviewing party. For example, *RTL Radio Lëtzebuerg* conducted ten of the forty-five interviews, all of which were in Luxembourgish, and *Le Jeudi* conducted four interviews, all in French. The *Luxemburger Wort* was the only newspaper to conduct interviews in more than one language. Of the six interviews conducted by the *Luxemburger Wort*, five were in German and one was in French. One-third of the interviews, or fifteen, were in German, while nineteen interviews, or 42.22% were in Luxembourgish. The interviews were all conducted by *Radio 100,7*, *RTL Radio Lëtzebuerg* and *DNR*, which are all radio stations broadcast out of Luxembourg. Only ten of the interviews were in French, constituting a mere 22.22% compared to German and Luxembourgish, which each held considerably higher percentages. There was also one single interview conducted in English for the *Jerusalem Post*, "the world's top English-language daily newspaper covering Israel, the Middle East and the Jewish World" (Jerusalem Post).

Though the newspapers primarily conducted interviews consistently in the same language, the parliament members who participated in interviews spoke a variety of languages, depending on the language chosen by the interviewer. Six of the seven parliament members who were interviewed multiple times were also interviewed in multiple languages, and three were interviewed in more than two languages. The parliament member who was interviewed twice in the same language was interviewed both times by *RTL Radio Lëtzebuerg*. Another member was interviewed twice by the

same newspaper, namely, *Luxemburger Wort*. However, one of the interviews was conducted in German and the other was conducted in French. Jean Asselborn, Vice-Prime Minister, was interviewed nineteen times in four different languages, including one interview in English, three in French, six in German, and ten in Luxembourgish. In just this one example, one has an idea of the language trends for interviews of Luxembourg Parliament members across the board.

### 5.5 Conclusions

While many believe that the primary language of the Luxembourg Parliament is Luxembourgish, my research indicates that while the preferential interview language is Luxembourgish and while the informal debates might be in Luxembourgish, French seems to be the language of choice for formal speeches. French also seems to be the language of choice for providing information about and explaining government functions, what they are, how they work, and which members of government are responsible for them. It also seems that any speeches addressing the people of Luxembourg or Luxembourg-specific issues are given in Luxembourgish, which may be reminiscent of the fact that many Luxembourgers consider Luxembourgish the language of their home.

The Second World War served as a turning point for Luxembourg with regard to foreign policy. Luxembourg became a founding member of the United Nations, Benelux, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, the Brussels Pact, the Council of Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Chalmers 10). In this way, Luxembourg politics have become international to an extreme degree, and the multilingualism of the nation has served its officials well in their international

delegations. The government of Luxembourg has clearly promoted the use of Luxembourgish as a language of the country's administration and political life. The next chapter explores other ways in which the language has been promoted within the European Union, in teaching, and in Luxembourg studies programs.

## Chapter 6: Studies of Luxembourgish in the Grand Duchy and Abroad

Luxembourgish has long been established as a language of the people, native to Luxembourgers, and unique to this tiny country situated at the heart of Europe. The question is, then, whether Luxembourgish is a language worth studying and, if so, who studies it. Luxembourgish is studied both as a foreign language, and as a language containing a rich cultural heritage and future to be explored scientifically. There are four organizations dedicated to the study of Luxembourgish. The first is *Centre de Langues Luxembourg*, an organization in Luxembourg that organizes classes and examinations for those wishing to learn Luxembourgish, and primarily to those looking to obtain citizenship in Luxembourg. The second is *Master en langues, cultures et médias - Lëtzebuenger Studien*, a Master program in Luxembourgish language and culture at the University of Luxembourg. The third, Centre for Luxembourg Studies, is part of the Germanic Studies Department at the University of Sheffield and is the only standing university program known to exist outside of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Finally, the Luxembourg American Cultural Society dedicates itself to the preservation of Luxembourg culture in America. These organizations represent the largest programs dedicated to the preservation and expansion of Luxembourg language and culture.

### 6.1. Centre de Langues Luxembourg

The Centre de Langues Luxembourg provides Luxembourgish as a set of language classes for people of all nationalities who want to learn to read, write, and speak



Luxembourgish or any of the many other languages taught at the Centre. Among the students are day laborers who want or need to learn Luxembourgish to use at work, immigrants seeking citizenship, and Luxembourgers themselves who want or need to learn the official spelling system of Luxembourgish, which was not taught in school until recently.

Luxembourgers often attend night classes for Luxembourgish out of a sheer desire to learn to spell their native language correctly (Kartheiser 63). As a primarily spoken language, the current official Luxembourgish spelling rules were first adopted in 1975 (Newton, "Lëtzebuergesch" 197), were not regularly taught in schools until much later, and were again reformed in 1999. Many young adults I have met profess not to know the official correct spelling of Luxembourgish and claim that they practiced primarily spoken Luxembourgish in school. For that reason, many adults must attend classes to learn to write Luxembourgish.

Day laborers, who primarily travel from the border regions of France, Belgium, and Germany, represent a second and much larger group studying Luxembourgish (Kartheiser 64). These cross-border laborers often find that "the professional pressures [to learn Luxembourgish] have been increasing rapidly, with more and more employers insisting that their staff should at least be able to get along in the language" (Kartheiser 64). Foreigners seeking Luxembourg citizenship must also prove their competence in written and spoken Luxembourgish to obtain citizenship. These represent a third group of Luxembourgish learners at the Centre de Langues Luxembourg. The demands of learning Luxembourgish in addition to working are strenuous and often too much for day laborers and residential aliens, especially French speakers, for whom Luxembourgish is

completely foreign, whereas German speakers can often understand much of Luxembourgish "spontaneously" (Kartheiser 65).

The Centre de Langues Luxembourg offers tests biannually at four different levels (Kartheiser 69). The lowest level, *Zertifikat Lëtzebuergesch als Friemsprooch (ZLaF)* or Certificate of Luxembourgish as a Foreign Language, is awarded to students with basic knowledge of Luxembourgish, and is composed of three components: a reading component, in which candidates are asked to read a short text and show that they have a basic understanding of the purpose of the text, a writing component, in which candidates must write a short note or message, and a listening/speaking component, which consists of three parts to test oral interaction, listening comprehension, and oral expression. Each of the three components (writing, reading, and listening/speaking) is graded individually on a Pass/Fail basis.

After this first exam, students may move on to *Éischten Diplom Lëtzebuergesch als Friemsprooch (1DLaF)* (first diploma for Luxembourgish as a foreign language) and *Zweeten Diplom Lëtzebuergesch als Friemsprooch (2DLaF)* (second diploma for Luxembourgish as a foreign language), and finally the *Ieweschten Diplom Lëtzebuergesch (IDL)* (Highest Diploma in Luxembourgish), for which the candidate must show near-native fluency, including a writing sample in which he or she must use correct spelling. These are also graded by individual component on a Pass/Fail basis, but at the highest level the candidate is only awarded the diploma after earning a "Pass" for all components. For all but the highest level, candidates may take components individually, and may take different component exams at different levels.

## 6.2. Master's Program at the University of Luxembourg

The Master's Program at the University of Luxembourg "Master en langues, cultures et médias - Lëtzebuenger Studien" (master's degree in languages, cultures, and media - Luxembourg studies) offers courses taught in French, German, and Luxembourgish, and stresses that many of the courses are in Luxembourgish, indicating that a working knowledge of Luxembourgish is necessary for the completion of the program. The description of the program, available online, is written entirely in Luxembourgish. It claims the Master's Program is innovative in that (Université Du Luxembourg - Master):

- déi d'Lëtzebuenger Sprooch a Kultur an de méisproochege a multikulturelle Kontext vum Land abett,
- déi berücksichtigt, wéi Kultur zu Lëtzebuerg duerch d'Medie wéi Film, Press, Télee oder Radio konstruëiert a reflektéiert gëtt

Which I have translated as:

- *it embeds the Luxembourgish language and culture and the multilingualism and multicultural context of the country,*
- *it considers how the culture of Luxembourg is constructed and reflected through media such as film, the press, television or radio*

The program is divided into three subcategories of concentration, namely language(s), culture, and media studies. Students specialize in two of the three concentrations, beginning in the second semester. Begun in the 2009/2010 academic year, this program is four semesters long, including a Master's thesis to be completed in the fourth semester. In the second and third semesters, students are expected to write term papers in Luxembourgish, and 20% of the course grade is based on correct grammar and spelling. In this way the program places emphasis on standard grammar and orthography, strengthening the position of Luxembourgish as a language.

The program is headed by Dr. Peter Gilles, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Luxembourg and native Luxembourger, and is comprised of sixteen faculty members, including Dr. Gilles, and a maximum of twenty students. All of the students' research, along with research compiled by other Luxembourgers and faculty members can be found in the *Laboratoire de linguistique et de littératures luxembourgeoises* (Laboratory of Luxembourg linguistics and literature).

### 6.3. Centre for Luxembourg Studies at the University of Sheffield

The Centre for Luxembourg Studies was founded by Prof. Gerald Newton in 1995 and is now headed by Dr. Kristine Horner. The Centre has three principle functions. First, it focuses on acquiring and maintaining resources pertaining to Luxembourg and Luxembourgish, which attracts public and private researchers to its facilities. Its own research, another focus, pertains to the continued formation and growth of the Luxembourg archive, and the research stemming from these collections. The Centre also offers a class in Luxembourgish language to Students as the third focus of the Centre, teaching. The class, which teaches Luxembourgish in spoken and written form as well as offering an overview of the country, has consisted of an average of fifteen students each year.

### 6.4. Luxembourg American Cultural Society

The Luxembourg American Cultural Society, Inc. of Belgium, Wisconsin, is a society dedicated to the preservation of Luxembourg history and heritage in America as well as the growing relationships between the United States and Luxembourg with regard

to friendship, commerce, and tourism. Besides hosting "Heritage, Cultural, and Gastronomical Tour[s] of Luxembourg", the society also sponsors a Luxembourg Heritage Weekend in August that includes workshops for learning Luxembourgish. The Luxembourg American Cultural Society is also home to the LACS Research Center, which is claimed on their website to be the "largest collection of resources pertaining to Luxembourg genealogy/heritage/culture outside of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg" (Luxembourg American). The research center is open to the public, and provides translation of Luxembourgish works, furthering the accessibility of Luxembourgish language and culture. The Society also provides a list of all known Luxembourg Heritage Societies in the United States and a list of Luxembourg American Annual Heritage Events by state.

## 6.5 Conclusion

Study centers of Luxembourg and Luxembourgish are few and far between. However, studies of Luxembourg and Luxembourgish stretch over three continents, and all of the study centers allow students to perfect their knowledge of the Luxembourgish language, either through orthography and linguistics or through a basic understanding of the language. Three of the four centers are also interested in Luxembourg culture and the preservation of Luxembourg artifacts for the purpose of research. That two of the three programs, The Centre for Luxembourg Studies and the Master's program at the University of Luxembourg, were instated in the past twenty years implies that interest in Luxembourg as a topic of research may be increasing, and the opening of new research centers, open to the public, allows an increasing number of scholars and citizens alike to

pursue an interest in Luxembourg culture and languages without necessitating a trip to the Grand Duchy itself.

## Chapter 7: The Place of Luxembourgish in Luxembourg

In this thesis, I have examined the development of Luxembourgish as an official language of Luxembourg, and described the role of the language in both written and spoken communicative realms. Luxembourgish is currently a viable language that is the preferred language of choice in some linguistic areas, while in others it seems to be increasing in use.

Luxembourgish was found to be the primary language of newspaper announcements for births, deaths, and weddings. While in some cases age, ethnicity, and background played a role in the language of the announcements, the overwhelming majority was entirely in Luxembourgish, indicating that Luxembourgish is the primary language of communication between Luxembourgers on a personal level.

Moving from the personal to the pseudo-personal sphere, Luxembourgish in television appeals to viewers as their native tongue. Furthermore, a national television company with no international ties is well served by using Luxembourgish, a language free of external political affiliations, as its primary language of communication. Advertisers choose to advertise in Luxembourgish to appeal to customers, who are in almost all cases already watching Luxembourgish programming.

Luxembourgish, as a language with little written tradition, is at its weakest in formal written form. Though Luxembourgish seems to have found solid footing in children's literature, the percentage of total publications in Luxembourgish is relatively low when compared to French. Though the decreasing percentages of French and

increasing percentages of Luxembourgish over the past several years could show a change in trend in the coming years, it is too early to make such predictions.

Despite frequent claims that Luxembourgish is the primary language of parliamentary speeches and debate, the government's website is primarily in French, and few of the speeches posted on the Parliament's website are in Luxembourgish. It also must be taken into consideration that many of the formal speeches are given at meetings of international proportion, where the use of Luxembourgish may be ill advised, as one could not expect any diplomats not from the Luxembourg government to understand the language. However, the sole presence of Luxembourgish when directly addressing the nation through political speeches could represent a greater position for Luxembourgish in the future.

Studies of Luxembourg's language and culture, including its national multilingualism, have become topics of study at institutions both within the country and abroad, indicating a newly kindled interest in the Grand Duchy as a linguistic anomaly. As a small but thriving linguistic entity pressed on all sides by competition for linguistic dominance, Luxembourgish is certainly worth the attention of scholars. At this point, it remains to be seen if and how the study of Luxembourg and Luxembourgish will spread further, especially with the creation of the new Master's program in Luxembourg studies at the University of Luxembourg.



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