

**Germanisms in the Upper Silesian ethnolect in Poland: Commodification and
Revitalization**

**Germanismen im oberschlesischen Ethnolect in Polen: Kommodifizierung und
Revitalisierung**

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

In this thesis, I examine how commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect. This project focuses specifically on the Germanisms, which are German loanwords in the Slavic Upper Silesian ethnolect. The Germanisms have contributed to the stigmatization of the ethnolect in the past, and they continue to be a contentious issue in the codification of the ethnolect and in the recognition of the ethnolect as a regional language by the Polish state (Hentschel, 2018).

Since the change of the Polish political system in 1989, there has been an ‘ethnic awakening’ in Upper Silesia, a region in southwestern Poland. The results of the Polish National Census in 2002 and a subsequent one in 2011 show the Upper Silesians as the largest minority of the Republic of Poland with over 500,000 speakers of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. Polish legislation does not recognize Upper Silesians as an ethnic or linguistic minority (Michna, 2019).

Grassroots movements in efforts to revitalize the ethnolect include a new generation of Upper Silesian speakers who use the Internet for blogging in the ethnolect or for entrepreneurial endeavors that feature the ethnolect in numerous ways. The corpus of merchandise (mainly T-shirts) analysed in this research project was taken from an online store, the Gryfnie.com company in Upper Silesia, Poland.

In support of my thesis argument that commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, as exemplified on the Gryfnie.com printed T-shirts, may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect, I evaluated the extent to which Germanisms are promoted on the T-shirts, which revealed that the company features Germanisms on the majority of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts. Many of these Germanisms are in the category of underutilized lexemes by current ethnolect speakers. I also examined the role of the T-shirts in the linguistic landscape and propose that in this context the T-shirts increase the visibility of the ethnolect by shifting the ethnolect from the colloquial setting of individual speakers into the public

domain, which allows for an integration of the minority language across the community. Multimodal critical discourse methodology guided my examination of Upper Silesian identity construction on the T-shirts and product labels and showed that the Germanisms are used as distinct markers of Upper Silesianness, and as boundary-markers that define speakers of the ethnolect as members of an ethnic group. The same methodology revealed how the images and texts on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts for young children can aid transmission of the ethnolect by functioning similarly to picture books. Gryfnie.com T-shirts and other merchandise designed for students signal a stance toward inclusion of the ethnolect in the education environment. Enhancing the prestige of the ethnolect and conveying modernity is another strategy employed by the Gryfnie company that can aid transmission of the ethnolect to adolescents and young adults. By drawing on principles of translanguaging as a language practice, I describe how the Gryfnie.com T-shirts may support a shift in the perception of the Germanisms from stigmatized elements of the ethnolect to dynamic forms of linguistic creativity.

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Dedication:

To my Upper Silesian grandparents, Johann and Katharina Komorek,
who never doubted that it is not embarrassing to speak in the Upper Silesian ethnolect:

To ni ma gańba godać po ślonsku.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In 2019, while preparing to write a conference paper about the Upper Silesian ethnolect, I searched the internet for information about the ethnolect and discovered several Polish entrepreneurial websites, which used the Upper Silesian ethnolect in a variety of business ventures: an online travel agency, cooking lessons, advertising services, and the Gryfnie.com company, which sells a variety of merchandise that features the ethnolect, including the ethnolect's numerous Germanisms. Germanisms are German loanwords that have been uniquely modified and adapted in terms of phonetics, inflection, and often word formation by the speakers of the Slavic Upper Silesian ethnolect (Tambor, 2014). Seeing the Upper Silesian ethnolect featured in commercial ventures is poignant because prior to 1989, during the communist rule in Poland, the use of the ethnolect was actively discouraged and tolerated for private use only and spoken with an avoidance of the Germanisms. The use of the German language in any form was prohibited at that time (Kamusella, 2013; Tambor, 2014). Noticing the use of the ethnolect in commercial ventures, especially the displays of the ethnolect's Germanisms on merchandise, led me to the present research on the commodification of the ethnolect, particularly the Germanisms in the ethnolect.

The Upper Silesian ethnolect belongs to the West Slavic languages (Hentschel, 2019; Tambor, 2014), and is currently spoken by about 500, 000 Upper Silesians (NSP, 2011), mainly in the southwestern region of Poland in the historical region of Upper Silesia, now comprising the two Polish provinces: the Województwo śląskie and the Województwo opolskie (see Appendix, figure 25). Upper Silesia is rich in natural resources and has been the most important coal mining and industrial area in Poland since 1945 (since 1922 for the eastern part of the area), when this region became part of the Polish state. Prior to that time, Upper Silesia was one of Germany's most important industrial areas, second only to the Ruhrgebiet (see history of Upper Silesia, chapter 2). Upper Silesia was culturally and economically influenced by Germany and a historical subject of dispute between Germany

and Poland. Historically, Upper Silesia has been a contact area of several peoples, cultures, and languages. Poles, Bohemian, Moravian, Austrians, and Germans shaped the region of Upper Silesia and the Slavic language (ethnolect) of the autochthonous¹ Upper Silesians in the past centuries. Upper Silesia has never been an independent state, and the Upper Silesian ethnolect has been used in domestic and family relations and in the community but never in an official capacity. Upper Silesians had to contend with the official languages of the ruling polity whether Polish, Czech, or German (Hannan, 2006). Through these historical associations, the west Slavic Upper Silesian ethnolect has absorbed loanwords from the Czech, Slovak, and in particular the German language when Upper Silesia was a Prussian/German province (1742-1945). Many of the German loanwords (Germanisms) were assimilated into the ethnolect during the Prussian/German rule and industrialization of this region between 1742-1945, but inclusion of German loanwords in the Upper Silesian ethnolect goes back to the middle ages when a ‘natural bilingualism’ (Kocyba, 2011) developed between the autochthonous Upper Silesian Slavophones and German settlers arriving in this region. It is the inclusion of the Germanisms that has contributed to the stigmatization of the ethnolect by both Standard German and Standard Polish speakers. Since the early 19th century, Standard German speakers referred to the ethnolect as ‘Wasserpölnisch’, that is, Polish language diluted by German words, and later Standard Polish speakers labeled the ethnolect as ‘corrupted Polish’ (Kocyba, 2011). After WWII, Upper Silesia became wholly incorporated into Poland. During the communist rule in Poland (1945-1989) the German language in any form was banned, and the use of the Upper Silesian ethnolect was actively discouraged.

Since the change of the political system in 1989, Poland’s minorities are free to exert their right to be recognized. This allowed an ‘ethnic awakening’ in Upper Silesia and the

¹Autochthonous is used in this context for the inhabitants of the historical region of Upper Silesia who currently define themselves as ‘Upper Silesians’ (Tambor, 2014).

return to questions about regional identity that had been asked since the interwar period when the eastern industrial part of Upper Silesia was incorporated in the re-emerging Polish state to form the Województwo śląskie/Voivodship Silesia (see history of Upper Silesia, chapter 2). The result of this discussion was the popularization of notions about the existence of an Upper Silesian nationality and the Upper Silesian ethnolect independent of the Polish language, as well as political activities referring to the interwar autonomy of the Województwo śląskie (Voivodeship Silesia). Public support for these ideas has been growing, as evidenced by the results of the National Census of 2002 in which 173,000 people declared Upper Silesian nationality, and in the subsequent National Census in 2011 when the number of Polish citizens declaring Upper Silesian nationality swelled to 846,719, and with 529,377 Upper Silesians reporting to speak the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the home environment and the community (NSP, 2002, 2011). Four attempts (2007, 2010, 2012, 2018) were made by Upper Silesian mobilizing groups since the first census in 2002 to officially recognize the Upper Silesians as an ethnic minority and have the ethnolect recognized as a regional language in the Polish Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Languages (Michna, 2019, p. 59). Although the existence of the Upper Silesian minority and language is not officially recognized by the Polish state, the results of the Polish National Census show the Upper Silesians as the largest minority of the Republic of Poland. Polish legislation does not recognize the Upper Silesians as an ethnic or linguistic minority, or national minority, because according to Polish law, Upper Silesia is part of Poland, the Upper Silesians are Poles, and the Upper Silesian ethnolect is considered a dialect of the Polish language (Szmeja, 2022, p. 854). Scholars are divided on the matter of recognizing the Upper Silesian ethnolect as independent from the Polish language, but the idea of an independent Upper Silesian ethnolect has been winning supporters among linguists and sociologists (see Upper Silesian ethnolect, chapter 2). The Polish linguist Jolanta Tambor (2014), for example, refers to the speech of the Upper Silesians as an ethnolect, a neutral term according to Tambor who regards other designations

of the speech, such as Upper Silesian dialect or language, regional language, or Gwara (jargon), as politically charged or pejorative. An ethnolect is used here as a collective term for linguistic variants or speaking styles used by speakers of an ethnic minority in a specific language area and classified as typical for them (e.g., Clyne, 2000). Tambor (ibid.) suggests that from the linguistic perspective the Upper Silesian idiom has attributes of an ethnolect, characterized by salient features (see Upper Silesian ethnolect, chapter 2) that are distinct from Standard Polish and act as important markers of the Upper Silesian group identity and ‘Silesianness’. The Polish sociologist Marek S. Szczepański (1999), speaking in the context of Upper Silesia, defines an ethnic group as follows: “(...) an ethnic group is a community whose cultural identity is connected with a given territory [Upper Silesia], having its own identity regarding culture, language, history, sometimes even economy, which — however — does not make up a separate nation, although is equipped with some features of a nation. (...) the ethnic group has its ‘private motherland’ (‘personal motherland’) and ‘ideological motherland’ in the state which it inhabits, while its national option is typically analogous with the choices made by the majority of inhabitants of that state” (p. 88).

The status of the Upper Silesian ethnolect is not only the subject of scholars and politicians. In the past two decades there has been an active grassroots movement in efforts to revitalize the ethnolect, because even though the declared number of Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers seems high, the 529, 400 speakers of the ethnolect constitute only 9% of the total population of the historical Upper Silesia. The autochthonous Upper Silesians represent only 30% of the area’s population due to an influx of immigrants from other regions of Poland and administrative re-arrangements that incorporated areas outside of Upper Silesia into the region (see figure 26, Appendix). Rafał Adamus, president of the Pro Loquela Society, which is promoting the Upper Silesian ethnolect, recounts how suppression and discrediting of the ethnolect affected the vitality of the ethnolect: “Throughout the 1950s to 1980s people were taught that speaking in the ethnolect was a faux pas, a sign of primitivism, or lack of

education. The decades of stagnation have done their job. Although more and more people are trying to use the Upper Silesian language [ethnolect] again, we are not always able to speak it as well as the previous generations used to” (Tokarzewska, 2012, p. 1). But the development of a new means of communication - the Internet - has made writing and speaking in the Upper Silesian ethnolect more frequent than ever before in discussion forums and in online magazines (Czesak, 2004, p.106). There are now dictionaries available online and in printed versions to translate the ethnolect into Standard Polish or German. In the past few years numerous books have been written in the ethnolect (an oral language in the past) on subjects ranging from children’s stories to serious philosophical topics. The internet offers many websites in the Upper Silesian ethnolect featuring a new generation of Upper Silesian speakers who use the new technologies for blogging in the ethnolect or for entrepreneurial endeavors that feature the ethnolect in numerous way: cooking, travelling, contemporary music, and merchandise creation.

This research project draws on one of the above-mentioned Upper Silesian online entrepreneurial endeavours. In this thesis, I examine how commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, as exemplified on merchandise, may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect. The corpus of merchandise (mainly T-shirts) analysed in this research project is taken from the online store of the Upper Silesian Gryfnie.com company in Poland. Gryfnie.com is a company founded in 2011 by a local couple. The owners of Gryfnie.com belong to a group of Upper Silesian activists known as the ‘New Silesians’ - young leaders who aim to change the region through semantic design (Oslislo-Piekarska, 2015, p. 64). Semantic design is understood as design inspired by Upper Silesia’s culture and heritage. The ‘New Silesians’ draw their inspiration from the mining culture, post-industrial landscape, architecture, language, culinary traditions, and folklore. The Gryfnie.com company specializes in merchandise that features the Upper Silesian ethnolect in an online store, and in three brick and mortar stores one in each of the three major cities of the Silesian Voivodeship

(province) in Poland. The Gryfnie.com company claims that their primary aim is to reach and recruit a new generation of Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers by employing modern design in the production of the T-shirts and presentation of the ethnolect (Oslislo-Piekarska, 2015).

The argument of my thesis is that commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, as exemplified on the Gryfnie.com merchandise, may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect. This project focuses specifically on the Germanisms in the ethnolect. The research questions informing this thesis are: To what extent does the Gryfnie.com company promote Germanisms on their T-shirts, i.e., what fraction of the company's T-shirts feature Germanisms, and what kind of Germanisms has the company selected? In what way does the presence of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in the linguistic landscape contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect? How is the contemporary Upper Silesian identity constructed on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts and how does it facilitate revitalization of the ethnolect? What is the role of the T-shirts and other merchandise in the intergenerational transmission of the ethnolect?

This thesis relies on the theories and research of a number of scholars. Literature review in chapter two provides background information about the history of Upper Silesia and the Upper Silesian ethnolect. Knowing the history of Upper Silesia is relevant for understanding the current issues concerning the Upper Silesian's status as a minority group and the related status of the ethnolect. Literature review about the ethnolect provides essential information about the structure of the ethnolect, and scholarly evaluations related to the designation of the ethnolect as a regional language. Relevant theories and concepts in chapter three provide scholarly background that informs my thesis and provides a framework that guides the analyses of my data. I followed Johnstone's (2009) interpretation of Appadurai's (1986) theory of the 'commodity situation' for exploring the conditions and processes that have led to the feasibility of the Upper Silesian ethnolect to become a commodity featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts and other merchandise. I relied on the *Frequenzwörterbuch*

deutscher Lehnwörter im Schlesischen der Gegenwart by Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor (2021) as a tool to compare the Germanisms chosen by the Gryfnie.com company for the above-mentioned T-shirts (and *Tyta*, see chapter 4) with the frequency that these Germanisms are used by current speakers of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. This process allowed me to answer my guiding questions in my analysis to what extent the Gryfnie.com company promotes Germanisms on their T-shirts. I relied on research literature concerning language loss, maintenance, and revitalization to provide a framework to assess the current level of endangerment/vitality of the Upper Silesian ethnolect and evaluate how the commodification of the ethnolect, as manifested on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, may contribute to the revitalization of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. I also utilized the above-mentioned framework to answer my research question about the role of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in the linguistic landscape in the context of revitalization of the ethnolect. I applied James Paul Gee's (2005, 2011) and Gunther Kress' (2011) approach in multimodal critical discourse analysis to examine the texts and images on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts and the discourses on the production labels of the T-shirts. This approach facilitates my analyses on how contemporary Upper Silesian identity is constructed on the T-shirts, and the role of the texts and images on the T-shirts in intergenerational transmission of the ethnolect. I drew on principles of translanguaging as a theory of language practice to describe through the lens of new theories, such as translanguaging, the construction and use of the Germanisms by the Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers.

To reinforce the relevance of this project, this topic is worth examining because the 'awakening' of the Upper Silesian ethnic awareness is part of a wider trend of regional and minority movements in Europe. Minority language advocacy in a number of European countries has promoted the use of local languages in businesses, enterprises, and public services. Such initiatives have been used to promote Celtic languages, among them Welsh, Manx, and Irish, and other minoritized languages such as Basque/Euskara, Galician,

and Sorbian (Olko, 2021). Some minority language communities, lacking recognition on a legislative level seek acknowledgement via the free market, redefining language as a commodity in procedures of cultural branding or identity incorporation (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2009; Wicherkiewicz, 2021). The analysis of the commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts joins other studies of marginalized ‘imperfect’ minority languages being marketed on T-shirts. Among them are Järlehed (2019) who discussed Basque and Galician T-shirts which feature what Standard Spanish speakers consider to be non-standard ‘imperfect’ mixed local language, and Pietikäinen et al., (2016), who analysed what is considered by language purists ‘flawed’ Irish, marketed on T-shirts in Ireland. These marginalized language varieties have been indexed as inferior in relation to the local standard language forms, just like the Upper Silesian ethnolect has been considered inferior in relation to the Standard German and Polish languages. But the commodification of these non-standard language forms and registers by local T-shirt designers and other cultural entrepreneurs challenge their indexical value (Järlehed, 2019).

Figure 5

*The Gryfnie T-shirt **Familok**, and the contemporary settings of the historic **Familok** (Mehrfamilienhaus, multi-family house).*



Note. Photographs by Wieczorek, E. 2018. <https://slaskie.travel/article/1011340>

Figure 5 (see also p. 74) is an example of the corpus of merchandise (mainly T-shirts) taken from the online store of the Upper Silesian Gryfnie.com company in Poland and examined in this research project in support of my thesis argument that commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, as exemplified on merchandise, may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 The history of Upper Silesia

Silesia, Ślůnsk (Upper Silesian ethnolect), Ślůsk (Polish); Schlesien (German); Slezska (Czech), is a historic region in east-central Europe. It now lies mainly in southwestern Poland, with parts in Germany and the Czech Republic. Geographically the historical region of Silesia consists largely of the basin of the upper and middle Oder/Odra river, which flows from southeast to northwest. The eastern part of Upper Silesia is an area rich in natural resources of coal deposits and other valuable minerals. Since 1999, the historical Province of Silesia has been administratively divided principally into three Polish województwa (provinces): Dolnoślůskie, Opolskie, and Ślůskie (see Appendix, figure 25). The remainder of the historical region forms part of the Brandenburg and Saxony Lůnder (states) of Germany and part of the Moravia-Silesia kraj (region) of the Czech Republic (see Appendix, figure 26).

Silesia is a region with a complex history, which is inscribed in the fate of several countries, and specific interpersonal relationships and value systems (Wiatr, 2011). For centuries, writes Wiatr (*ibid.*), a Polish-German historian, Silesia was an open space of constant change and remains so to this day (p. 73). New people kept arriving, many of them stayed and brought their own values and traditions to this multi-ethnic and multi-cultural community. They were Moravians, Bohemians, Germans, Poles, but also Walloons from Flanders or Wallachians from the distant eastern Balkans (*ibid.*). Silesia has never been an independent political entity, and there has never been an independent Silesian state. Silesia has always been a peripheral region within other countries, and under different rulers: Poles, Czechs, Austrians, and Germans.

Slavic and Germanic tribes have inhabited the Silesian region since ancient times, and according to some historians, the name of the region, Silesia, was possibly derived from the name Silingi, a Germanic tribe who settled in Silesia around the first century CE. Another hypothesis derives the name from the old Polish word ‘Ślůgwa’ reflecting the name of a local

river. (Haberland et al., 2015). In the early Middle Ages, the region of Silesia, populated mainly by Slavic people at that time, was ruled by the neighbouring Moravians (Wrobel 2021). After the decline of the Moravian rule in 907 AD, the Polish Piast and Bohemian rulers alternately claimed the region for themselves (ibid.). In 1137, Silesia became part of the emerging Kingdom of Poland (ibid.). Although there was no official division, the term Lower Silesia had become commonplace for the Piast Duchies in the north-west region of Silesia, and the term Upper Silesia was understood for Piast principalities in the south-east part of the region (Wiszniewski, 2013, p. 9.). The Silesian Piast rulers (dukes) encouraged the settlement of Germans to increase the region's agricultural productivity, develop its coal mining and textile weaving. The population became increasingly German. The German settlers founded towns, villages, monasteries, and trading posts. German administrative and legal structures were adopted by the Silesian towns - Silesia became a bridge between East and West (ibid.). By the 14th century, a "coexistence of older Slavic and younger German settlement associations, some as ethnically separate places, others as double settlements, or others even as ethnically mixed places" developed (Bellmann, 1971, p. 5, cited in Kocyba, 2011, p. 252). As a result, a form of bilingualism developed in Silesia, between the German speaking settlers and the Silesian Slavophones. This 'natural bilingualism', as Bellmann (1971) calls it, was particularly widespread in rural areas and occurred spontaneously and in groups (Bellmann 1971, p. 10, cited in Kocyba, 2011, p. 252). The Silesian Piasts gradually broke away from the association of Polish Duchies in the Kingdom of Poland and submitted to the Bohemian crown. In 1335, the split of Silesia from the Polish Crown was made when the Polish king renounced feudal sovereignty over the Silesian Duchies in favor of Bohemia (Wrobel, 2021). In 1526, the Bohemian crown passed to the Habsburg Monarchy. As kings of Bohemia, the Habsburgs were sovereigns and at the same time dukes of Upper Silesia until 1742 (ibid.).

After three Silesian Wars (1740–1763) between the Habsburgs and Prussia, most of the region fell to the Kingdom of Prussia. Habsburg Austria retained only the Silesian extreme

southeastern districts of Silesia. In the following decades, the Prussian part of the region, now the Prussian province of Silesia, was administratively reorganized, creating the Prussian-German Upper Silesia and Lower Silesia in 1815. In 1871, the region became part of the German Empire (Wrobel, 2021). The Prussian rule brought changes in administration and great attention to the region's economic development. In Upper Silesia, expanded coal, iron-ore, lead, and zinc mining, and manufacturing in time made the region the second most important industrial area in Germany (Lipok-Bierwaczonok, 2014). Lower (northwestern) Silesia was by this time almost entirely German speaking and of Protestant denomination (Kocyba, 2011). In Upper (southeastern) Silesia the population was mixed, with Germans concentrated in the towns, the predominantly Catholic Slavic Upper Silesians in the agricultural areas, and the latter making up a large proportion of the miners and industrial workers (Lipok-Bierwaczonok, 2014). While in Lower Silesia the German-Silesian dialect, covered by Standard German, was able to stabilize to a large extent until the complete 'population exchange' in the post-World War II period, the influence of Standard German in Upper Silesia increased continuously since the 18th century under the Prussian rule of this region. Due to the intensive industrialization and the homogenization efforts of the forming German nation-state, especially since the second half of the 19th century, widespread German-Slavophone bilingualism can be assumed, which this time was asymmetrical and developed on the basis of the implementation of the Standard German language in the school system – Bellmann speaks of 'secondary or educational bilingualism' (Bellmann 1971, p. 10, cited in Kocyba, 2011, p. 253).

At the end of the 19th century, Upper Silesia was shaped by a multitude of denominational, ethnic, and social problems. There were major social differences between a small class of rich industrialists and large landowners and an ever-expanding class of industrial and agricultural workers (Haberland et al., 2011). An increase in denominational tensions followed the *Kulturkampf* ('culture struggle', 1871-87) between the Prussian state

and the Catholic Church. Upper Silesian Catholic and political organisations directed resistance against Prussian-Protestant dominance and Prussian Germanization policies (Karch, 2010). As the Polish national movement in the middle of the 19th century became also active in Upper Silesia, it faced a different challenge than in those areas that had belonged to the Polish Republic before the division of the Polish state at the end of the 18th century. The difficulty, notes Kocyba (ibid.) was to ‘awaken’ a Polish national identity in a province that had been by then outside the sphere of influence of Polish statehood for five centuries. All the more important became the role of language in the conception of an identity offer, applied to convince the Upper Silesian Slavic speaking locals that they were ‘real’ Poles (ibid.).

However, this offer of Polish national identity also had problems, because until the partition of Upper Silesia in the interwar period (see below) the Polish Standard language among the locals was hardly used (ibid.). Even though there was some incorporation of Standard Polish in functions as a church language, it was not the primary idiom of the Upper Silesians but was just as imported as Standard German (Kocyba, 2011, p. 256). Nineteenth-century Upper Silesia, split between the Prussian and Austro-Hungarian empires, became the object of competing German, Polish, and Czech nationalist strivings (Karch, 2010). Each aimed to win the support of the local population regarding its ownership. Much of the Upper Silesian population, however, remained indifferent to these nationalist movements, or “responded with a rational weighing of risks and rewards mediated by many factors including social class, language, religion, politics, and personality” (Karch, 2010, p. 4). As Karch (ibid.) points out, “National activists and state bureaucracies failed, despite zealous efforts, to compel Upper Silesians into becoming durably loyal Germans or Poles”.

After the defeat of Germany and Austria-Hungary in World War I, several conflicting claims for Silesian territory were addressed to the Allied powers. The former Austrian districts were divided between the re-emerging Poland and newly formed Czechoslovakia. This left the important question of the conflicting claims of Germany and Poland to the bulk

of Upper Silesia. Polish units in Upper Silesia tried in three military uprisings between 1919 - 1921 to emphasize their demand for a connection to the re-established Poland (Haberland et al., 2011). The Treaty of Versailles (1919) called for the population of Upper Silesia to declare, by plebiscite, whether it wished to belong to Germany or Poland. Following the plebiscite of 1921 in which the majority of voters in the disputed area voted to remain with Germany, the Allies decided to cede most of the industrial and coal production area with the area's close to a million inhabitants to Poland. This eastern part of the formerly Prussian Upper Silesia was combined with the northern half of formerly Austrian Upper Silesia to form the Polish Silesian Voivodeship (Województwo śląskie) with extensive autonomy rights within the Republic of Poland (ibid.).

In 1939, Nazi Germany occupied all of Upper Silesia. In turn, after World War II, Lower Silesia, and Upper Silesia, with the exception of Czech Silesia and a small part of northern Upper Silesia that remained in the German states of Saxony and Brandenburg, was wholly incorporated into Poland. After massive displacements to Germany immediately after the war, the population structure continued to change in Silesia. New inhabitants settled down in Silesia, mainly from the former Polish eastern regions incorporated into the Soviet Union, as well as settlers from other parts of Poland. Lower Silesia became inhabited almost by an entirely immigrant population, while those in the Upper Silesian population who passed the Polish verification operation, were allowed to remain in Upper Silesia (Kamusella, 2011, p. 778). In communist Poland after 1945, Silesia's return to the 'Piast motherland' was celebrated and Silesia was integrated into national memory as part of the 'regained territories', and, accordingly, Polish aspects were brought to the fore in the official communist Polish historiography (Haberland et al., 2011). The Polish authorities undertook intensive efforts to Polonize the acquired lands (Myśliwiec, 2013). The public and private use of the German language was banned and visible 'traces of Germanness' (books and inscriptions) were eliminated (Kamusella, 2011, p. 778). Those who remained on the territory of the Polish

People's Republic were forbidden to use the German language. In addition, the Upper Silesian ethnolect classified by the Polish authorities as a 'Silesian dialect of Polish' had to be "weeded of German and Czech linguistic loans" (ibid.). Using the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the People's Republic of Poland was possible only in domestic and private spaces, and attempts to use it, for example, in school relationships ended in penalties and harassment (Kamusella, 2011; Tambor, 2014). The region was politically and administratively reorganized several times, until the historical and cultural term 'Upper Silesia' almost completely disappeared (Bialasiewicz, 2002, p. 119). "In communist Poland, the memory of Upper Silesia's special character as a multi-national borderland where several cultural and political worlds came together was erased, and the region became simply a framework for economic planning", writes Bialasiewicz (ibid.). But it was also here, where only 30 per cent of the 'local' pre-war population had remained, that the most vigorous regional identity claims in post-1989 Poland began to be voiced.

This sentiment of regionality has been confirmed in Upper Silesia in 2002 when the 2002 Polish National Census gave the Upper Silesians the choice of identifying themselves as Upper Silesians. In the 2002 census, 173,000 people self identified as Upper Silesian. The 2011 census saw a growth of such declaration to 846,700. There was also a great increase in the declarations of use of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, in 2002 there were 56,600 such declarations and in 2011 there were 529, 400. The results of the 2002 census and a subsequent one held in 2011 showed that the Silesians are the largest minority group in Poland, a country that has yet to acknowledge them as a distinct group with a distinct regional language (Kamusella, 2011). The results of the census caused an awakening of Upper Silesian social, cultural, and political activists.

2.2 The Upper Silesian ethnolect

Upper Silesia's history as a borderland whose political borders, alongside statehood, have changed many times over the past ten centuries are also reflected in the formation and evolution of the language, referred to as the Upper Silesian ethnolect/dialect (see below), used by the autochthonous inhabitants of Upper Silesia. The peripheral nature of the region in which the Upper Silesian ethnolect occurred and evolved resulted in a low level of its polyvalency (Hannan, 2006). This means that it never attained official language status and meant that not all spheres of life were covered in this ethnolect. It was used mainly in domestic and family spaces, but never in official relations. Upper Silesians utilized the literary languages of the ruling polity, whether Polish, Czech, or German (Hannan, 2006). There were some attempts in the past to develop a written form of the ethnolect with a few works of literature (*ibid.*).

In recent years, there has been a stormy and emotional discussion in Poland about the Upper Silesian ethnolect, and the issue of the debate is the legal recognition of the Upper Silesian ethnolect as a regional language. This discussion takes place in the scientific community, in the political arena, but above all in the media space (Tambor, 2015). Basically, it is the question whether the speech of the Upper Silesians can be considered an independent language, or only a territorial variant or dialect of the Polish language. This question is fundamental to the Upper Silesian movement to achieve minority status with a legally recognized regional language. Achieving minority status would bring certain advantages to the Upper Silesians, because by law minorities in Poland are assured rights that include education in the heritage language and development of their culture (*ibid.*). But, according to the law adopted in Poland in 2005 regarding minority status and regional languages, no code can be considered a regional language if it is a dialect of another language already recognized in the country, and the Polish officials assert the Upper Silesian ethnolect as a dialect of the Standard Polish language (Hentschel, 2018). There are also questions about the codification

or standardization of the three main variants of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, and the retention of the Germanisms (lexical borrowings from the German language) in the codification of the ethnolect (Hentschel, 2018; Tambor, 2019). The granting of the status of a regional language in Poland is associated with codification requirement, at least to a certain extent (see Hentschel, 2018).

There is a general agreement among linguists that the Upper Silesian ethnolect belongs to the West Slavic dialect continuum and its formation - especially in terms of vocabulary - was influenced by borrowings from other languages or dialects, in particular from Polish, and German, but also Moravian (Czech) and partly also Slovak (Tambor, 2014). As a linguistic territory, the historical Upper Silesia is divided into 3 main variants of the Upper Silesian ethnolect: the northern Opole region (since 1999 the Opole voivodship), the central Upper Silesia industrial region (since 1999 the Silesia Voivodship and the southern region Cieszyn (part of the Voivodship Silesia).

Jolanta Tambor (2014), an Upper Silesian linguist, refers to the Upper Silesian idiom as a Slavonic ethnolect characterized by the inclusions of Germanisms, that are estimated to constitute about 18% of the ethnolect's lexis, and are a result of language transfer (Tambor 2014, p. 135). She too, like other linguists (among them Olesch, 1978; Hentschel, 2001, 2018), points to the lexis rather than the grammar of the ethnolect where the influence of the German language is most evident. In her analysis of the ethnolect's vocabulary, Tambor (2014) identifies three main categories of lexis in the ethnolect (p. 145):

1. Words of Slavonic origin, which did not and do not appear in Standard Polish.

Examples:

- asić sie – to boast; to show off
- bolok – a painful spot; a wound; a scab
- cieпно́ć – to throw; to fling

2. Words existing in the Standard Polish language but are stylistically marked as archaisms, colloquialisms. Such words are unmarked in the Upper Silesian ethnolect.

Examples:

- baba (colloquial word in contemporary Polish)
 - in the ethnolect meaning: a) a woman, b) wife
 - in contemporary colloquial Polish meaning: a pejorative word for a woman
- chrobok (archaic word in Standard Polish)
 - in the ethnolect meaning: a bug
 - in contemporary standard Polish the word 'robak' is used instead, meaning a bug
- łoblyc sie
 - in the ethnolect meaning: to change one's clothes, to get dressed
 - in contemporary Standard Polish meaning: to change bed sheets

3. Words of German origin (*Germanisms*); in the ethnolect they are uniquely modified and adapted in terms of phonetics, inflection, and often word formation.

Examples:

- ***bajsnoné*** sie - from German *beißen* – to bite
- ***bojtlik*** - from German *der Beutel* – a small sack
- ***frelka*** - from German *das Fräulein* – a girl

- Examples of Standard German pragmatic influences on the ethnolect:

Addressing a person with the family name

- In the ethnolect: Dziyń dobry pani Biskup
- German: Guten Tag Frau Bischof
- Standard Polish: Dzień dobry pani

In Standard Polish one does not usually use the family name when addressing someone orally.

➤ Examples of German grammatic influences on the Slavic lexis of the ethnolect:

(1) Using the possessive attribute rather than the genitive case:

- Upper Silesian: Chłop od moji dziółchy
- German (colloquial): Der Mann von meiner Tochter
- Standard Polish (always uses the genitive case): mąż mojej córki

(2) Preposition “z” (mit) rather than instrumental case

- Upper Silesian: przyjechał z autym
- German: kam mit dem Auto
- Standard Polish: przyjechał samochodem

In standard Polish use of the instrumental case rather than the preposition ‘z’ (with)

Almost unchanged by the German language remains the inflection and morphology or word formation of the Upper Silesian dialect, which, according to Hentschel (2001, 2018), is a clear indicator that the Upper Silesian ethnolect has retained its West Slavic character to this day and is not a mixed language, nor a creole language², as proposed by the sociolinguist Tomasz Kamusella (2011). Tambor (2014) also strongly opposes the designation of the Upper Silesian ethnolect as a creole language (p. 144).

The Polishness of the Upper Silesian ethnolect is a contentious issue in the current debate. Tambor (2019) reports that most Polish linguists consider the Upper Silesian ethnolect a dialect³ of the Polish language.

² A creole language is a stable natural language that develops from the process of different languages simplifying and mixing into a new form and then expanding and elaborating into a full-fledged language with native speakers, all within a fairly brief period of time (Millar, 2015, pp. 305-306).

³ Dialect understood as a variety of a language that is a characteristic of a particular group of the language's speakers. Under this definition, the dialects or varieties of a particular language are closely related and, despite their differences, are most often largely mutually intelligible, especially if geographically close to one another in a dialect continuum (Tambor, 2014a).

But Tambor (ibid.) suggest that from the linguistic perspective the Upper Silesian idiom has attributes of an ethnolect, characterized by salient features (see above section) that are distinct from Standard Polish and act as important markers of the Upper Silesian group identity. But Tambor (2014a) acknowledges that from a purely linguistic point of view, the question of whether the Upper Silesian ethnolect is an independent language cannot be answered unequivocally. In the case of closely related language varieties, there are no structural linguistic criteria that would allow distinguishing between dialects and languages. The answer to this question in such cases therefore depends largely on the importance attached to sociolinguistic criteria (see also Kamusella, 2013).

Hentschel (2018) contributes to this discussion with his analysis stating that, on one hand, during its development the Upper Silesian ethnolect, both in its structural aspect (and not only due to the presence of Germanisms in it) and in the sociolinguistic one, drifted away from a prototypic dialect, on the other – neither its sociolinguistic nor structural aspects fully meet the terms of a prototype language as defined (at least implicitly) in the European context. But Hentschel's (2018) point is also that in Europe, there are some other 'lects' of comparable characteristics to the Upper Silesian one, which are legally recognized as languages or regional languages⁴ (p. 41). Hentschel (2018) further contributes to this aspect of the debate by looking at the common history of the Upper Silesians and the Polish state in the first few centuries of the second millennium when languages existed only in the form of the so-called dialect continuum. Historically speaking, there is no doubt to Hentschel (ibid.) that the Upper Silesian ethnolect and its variants come from the same dialect continuum as the

⁴Regional languages, as defined by the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants (Prys Jones, 2013).

dialects of Greater Poland and Lesser Poland, etc., which in political terms could be called Polish. Hentschel's argument is that the political situation of that time can be acknowledged, primarily the existence of the first Polish state and the reign of the Polish Piast dukes in Upper Silesia in the first two centuries of the second millennium. However, Hentschel (*ibid.*) rejects the argument that in those days there was one uniform Polish language, from which Polish dialects, such as the Upper Silesian lect, were distinguished. The author (*ibid.*) argues that against the background of linguistic knowledge, this is as erroneous as the statement that the Dutch language broke away from the Standard German language. Kocyba (2011) adds to Hentschel's reasoning that the Upper Silesian ethnolect has been outside the realm of the development of the standard Polish language since 1335 due to the parting of the region of Silesia from the Polish medieval state association, which is why the idiom of the Upper Silesians had hardly participated in the change of the Polish language— this explains the numerous archaisms in the ethnolect, points out Kocyba (2011, p. 258). Kamusella's (2011) argument from the sociolinguistic point of view is that the designation 'language' or 'dialect' is a "political act aimed at changing the existing sociolinguistic reality" (p. 769). The author suggests that "the question of definition should ideally be left to those directly concerned, the Upper Silesians, so that they themselves might give expression to their wishes in the sphere of language planning or ethnolinguistic politics" (*ibid.*). Similarly, Tambor (2014) agrees that social issues in the debate regarding the status of the Upper Silesian ethnolect cannot be omitted, even though establishing the status of a regional language is a legal and political matter.

Currently, work is underway on the codification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect (Tambor, 2019; Czesak, 2004), which causes disputes. It should be added that non-linguists, amateurs, and enthusiasts take part in the codification works. As mentioned before, the Upper Silesian ethnolect functioned in the past almost exclusively in an oral capacity. But with the advent of the Internet came the development of a new means of communication. The Internet

has made writing and speaking in the Upper Silesian ethnolect more frequent than ever before in discussion forums and in online magazines (Czesak, 2004, p. 106). There are now dictionaries available online and in printed versions to translate the ethnolect into standard Polish or German. Books have been written in the ethnolect in the past few years on subjects ranging from children's stories to serious philosophical topics. In 2010, with the help of the linguist Jolanta Tambor from the University of Silesia, an interdialectal orthography primer was created, unifying the previously created spelling norms by various amateur authors, so that everyone can use them, regardless of what variety of the ethnolect they speak. The codification of the ethnolect is the first step towards recognizing the Upper Silesian ethnolect as a regional language. Most linguists are reluctant to participate in discussions or voice opinions on subsequent proposals. Hentschel, Fekete and Tambor (2019) suggest that at least partial codification would be necessary - assuming that Silesian language education was to be introduced to schools, which would contribute to the stabilization and revitalization of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. Another contentious issue regarding the codification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect is the inclusion or exclusion of the numerous German borrowings (Germanisms) into a codified standard. Even a large part of the Polish linguists who do support the normativization of the Upper Silesian lect as a necessary stage on the way to granting it the status of a regional language represent a restrictive position as to the inclusion of Germanisms in official codification efforts. Hentschel (2018) notes that this position is motivated by general political arguments and suggests that the acceptance of the lexical 'less German' (less characterized by Germanness) codification by the Polish society at large, could be (a little) easier. But the author (2018) also asks: "Would the speakers of the ethnolect themselves accept such a codified norm, deprived of some of the vocabulary they use on a daily basis?" (p. 55). This question was included in an extensive study involving 2000 participants on their current use of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. 95 % of the study participants

want the Germanisms to be included in the codified standard (Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor, 2019).

As to the future of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor (2019), caution about a functionally full standardization of the ethnolect with the aim of Upper Silesian and Polish bilingualism which the authors warn is usually an unstable situation. Even though there are tens of thousands who still speak the ethnolect, it is impossible to ignore the fact that not only the immigrant population in Upper Silesia, but also a large part of the autochthonous inhabitants of the region do not use the ethnolect at all or use it only rarely. Therefore, points out Hentschel (2018), it can only be about Upper Silesian-Polish bilingualism and only in relation to a part of the population. But Hentschel (ibid.) cautions that situations of full bilingualism in society are generally rarely successful to maintain. On the other hand, diglossic systems can be very stable. Hentschel (ibid.) gives the example of the situation in Switzerland, i.e., the coexistence of the German literary language and the so-called *Schwyzerdütsch*, with the latter, as an (almost) exclusively oral variant, being increasingly used in official situations, primarily in the media (p. 58). Hentschel's (ibid.) suggestion of the Swiss diglossic language model is also in line with the results of a survey of 2000 Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers, and what they envision for the future of the ethnolect, which is not aspiring to replace the Standard Polish language as the official language in Upper Silesia, but rather "emancipation of their variety of speech and the recognition for its regionality, in all its historical and cultural specificity" (Böttcher, 2022, p. 2).

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Background

3.1 Language commodification

Language is generally associated with discourse, or linked to ethnicity, identity, and geography, but quite frequently, language is also viewed as a skill, a personal preference, or an asset. An asset in turn can be thought of as something of value, a commodity. When a language is referred to as a ‘commodity’, it suggests that there is a market or markets where languages and linguistic varieties, like other traded commodities, have a market value. This can happen in various ways, such as through the sale of language education programs, translation services, or the emergence of new language-related industries such as calling centres.

Heller (2003) raised the issue of language commodification, where a language needs to be seen not only as a process of meaning-making, social identities, and social relations but also as political and economic situations that may affect the process of making meaning and social relation. According to Heller (2003), there are continuous shifts in the criteria used to assess the value of languages, which can be seen at the decision-making levels of both corporate and governmental entities as well as individuals and families. The conventional reasons for learning or favouring a specific language, such as the fact that they are markers of identity or expressions of higher education or culture, are increasingly giving way to an economic justification that favours certain linguistic capital that is most readily convertible to the kind that is useful for the economy. This has increased the market value of Indigenous and minority languages in many different sectors of the economy, such as historical tourism or brand differentiation. Heller (2003) illustrates this point with her research in francophone areas in Canada, where new economy businesses such as tourist attractions or call centres are created on the base of the francophone distinction as a minority language community. The community’s French language, stigmatized and associated with francophone blue collar workers in the past, has become a valuable asset in the new economies (Heller, 2003, p. 483).

Researchers (Caldwell, 2016, 2017; Pietikäinen, 2016) have also looked at material manifestation of language practices, as in the form of T-shirts. Johnstone (2009) describes how the production, distribution, and consumption of T-shirts marketing a set of linguistic features, once used, and heard primarily as markers of socioeconomic class, are part of a process leading to the creation and focusing on the idea that there is a dialect called ‘Pittsburghese’ (p. 157), a regional speech thought to be unique to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. Johnstone (2009) analyzed the conditions that led to the viable commodification of the Pittsburghese dialect on items like T-shirts, by invoking Appadurai’s (1986) description of the ‘commodity situation’ (p. 161). Appadurai (1986, 2006) re-examines commodities and the cultural determination of their value. Appadurai’s cultural perspective opens new ways of looking at commodities, for example, how language is commodified as a cultural object. For Appadurai “commodities are powerful symbols that can express and define social relations, influence the development of technologies, determine the legacy of political systems, and provide ways for people to understand their world” (Luria, 1989, p.188). Following Appadurai (1986), the “commodity situation in the social life of any ‘thing’ can be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability for some other ‘thing’ is its socially relevant feature” (pp.13–15, cited in Johnstone, 2009, p. 161). To enter into a ‘commodity situation’, a ‘thing’, in this case the Pittsburghese dialect, had to be in a ‘commodity phase’ by being linked with local identity; it had to be a potential ‘commodity candidate’ within a larger cultural framework in which it makes sense for people to produce and buy T-shirts featuring the local dialect; and finally, it had to present a viable ‘commodity context’ by being economically profitable (ibid.). Thus, there has to be a set of features in place for a language or language variety to be commodifiable. Similarly, in Heller’s (2003) example, cited above, the francophone community was able to capitalize on its linguistic resource, when the French language became sought after in bilingual calling centres, or in heritage tourism.

Another effect of the redefinition of language as a commodity is the development of contexts in which minority language communities frequently seek acknowledgment via the free market, often through procedures of cultural branding or identity incorporation, rather than receiving recognition on a legislative level (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2009; Wicherkiewicz, 2021). As Wicherkiewicz (2021) points out, the relationship between states, societies, and the economy has changed in the past few decades; social-economic variables now play a considerably larger part in institutional discussions and have an impact on power dynamics in language revitalization, maintenance, and planning. Large (global) retail chains, some financial institutions, and local small businesses, for instance, have recently shown an increasing interest in using nonofficial languages—languages that are used only in specific domains—as part of their marketing campaigns. Efforts such as the use of bilingual product names or the provision of menus or ads in regional languages could be used as evidence in favour of more language planning arrangements that aim to promote these language varieties. Consequently, the economy could develop into a valuable ally in language revitalization, regardless of the official attitude of the authorities. Similarly, Olko (2021) discusses how commercialization of linguistic heritage can be a valuable dimension of language revitalization programs. Many languages cease to be spoken precisely because of their perceived lack of utility and economic value (UNESCO, 2003). Responding to this need, minority language advocacy in a number of European countries has promoted the use of local languages in businesses, enterprises, and public services. Efforts to embrace both grassroots and governmental initiatives have been used to promote Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Irish, and Basque/Euskara (Olko, 2021, p.141). Providing work possibilities for Welsh speakers in their communities has demonstrated the language's economic viability and contributed to its expansion. Welsh manufacturers and retailers regard the language as an opportunity for economic progress (Olko, p. 151). Also, in the case of Irish, local organizations promote the value of incorporating the language visually into businesses, with product labels, signage,

menus, or stationery (ibid.). Here the Irish language is used as a resource for business, a domain that has, until now, been reserved for English. Such economy related revitalization efforts can start on a small scale within local businesses and services and may eventually be adopted by larger companies.

But there is also tension associated with commodification of language and heritage. As Olko (2021) acknowledges, the real challenge is to link language commodification to genuine language revitalization and promotion efforts, without reducing them to purely economic or folkloric dimensions. Folklorization or ‘self-folklorization’, the marketing of one’s culture to outsiders, is characterized by some as ‘identity for sale’ (Olko, 2021 p.146). Koterska (2018) likens endeavours linked to commodification of language and heritage to self colonization, as for example, in the marketing of the Upper Silesian cultural and language heritage by local entrepreneurs and artists in their efforts to revitalize the local ethnolect. Likewise, Łuc (2020) argues that the Upper Silesian ethnolect is being exploited by local entrepreneurs by riding the wave of the current grassroots efforts to revitalize the ethnolect. Łuc (2020) analysed and interpreted the methods and mechanisms of advertising statements and business texts, which use expressions of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, spoken in the Upper Silesian region in Poland. The author (2020) based her research on materials collected in 2016–2020 from advertisements on the internet, press, street billboards, advertising leaflets and from observation of the communicative and linguistic practises of businesses in the Upper Silesian region. According to Łuc (2020), the use of these Upper Silesian ethnolect expressions is conducive not only to distinguishing brands, products, and services, but also at the same time, they serve to ennoble the target group - local recipients, and the geographical space of Upper Silesia (p. 266). Łuc (2020) views the dual importance of the ethnolect to the regional culture as well as the consumer culture as a conflict that is expressed in the commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect through a localized marketing strategy. The primary function of the ethnolect, according to Łuc (2020), is the integration of the Upper

Silesian community and identity. The author explains how in the course of marketing activities, the primary function of the ethnolect is disturbed, and it is assigned an arbitrary role of profit-oriented commercial calculation. To Łuc (2020) the ethnolect becomes an imitation, a form of artificial identification with the recipient, emulating the sense of belonging to this community, this region.

3.2 Language endangerment and language revitalization

Of the 7156 different known living languages in use around the world today nearly half are endangered (Ethnologue, 2021). The vast majority of languages are minority peoples' languages, rather than so-called dominant languages, such as English or Spanish (ibid.). A 2003 study by the ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2003) reveals a large disproportion in the number of speakers of world languages: about 97% of the world's population speak about 4% of the world's languages (mostly English, Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, Indonesian, Arabic, Swahili, and Hindi), while only about 3% of the world population speak the roughly 96% remaining languages (Bernard, 1996, p. 142, as cited in UNESCO, 2003, p. 2). Thus, most of the world's language diversity is maintained by a small number of speakers of Indigenous and minority languages. But in almost every part of the world, Indigenous and minority peoples' languages are disappearing, and this is taking place at an alarming rate (ibid.). Researchers acknowledge that languages have come and gone over the course of human history, but the rate of decline in linguistic diversity is probably unique to our times (Krauss, 1992; Hale, 1992). Hale (1992) comments that language loss in the modern period seems to be of a different character in its extent and in its implications: "It is part of a much larger process of loss of cultural and intellectual diversity in which politically dominant languages and cultures simply overwhelm Indigenous, local languages and cultures, placing them in a condition which can only be described as embattled" (p. 1). For the past few decades, researchers, language activists, and speaker

communities themselves have become increasingly focused on the issue of language endangerment (Hinton, 2003; Simons & Lewis, 2013; UNESCO, 2003). The UNESCO (2003) Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages defines language endangerment as follows: “A language is in danger when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next.” (p. 2). Thus, endangered languages are those that are potentially moving toward language death or extinction. Dead languages are identified as having lost all living native speakers and cease to serve as a language of identity for an ethnic community; but, some dead languages, like Latin, for example, may still have a function in education and literature (Crystal, 2000). A language that has no fluent speakers but still serves as a symbol of ethnic identity to a particular group is termed being a dormant or sleeping language (Leonard, 2008). Truly extinct languages are those which have no function within any living ethnic community (Simons & Lewis, 2013, p. 5).

Different factors can contribute to language endangerment, death, or extinction. Languages can die out abruptly at times. This can happen when natural disasters or wars destroy small populations of speakers (Pine & Turin, 2017). But research indicates that the most frequent reasons for endangerment and eventual extinction of a language are political, economic, or cultural marginalization of local languages in favour of another more prestigious language within a wider dominant language community (Hinton, 2003; Krauss, 1992; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002; UNESCO, 2003). This happened to numerous Indigenous populations and ethnic groups as a result of oppressive measures by imperial powers during colonization, or through repressive policies of national states governed by speakers of the dominant language (ibid.). Speakers of Indigenous and minority languages have suffered a long history of oppression. Well into the 20th Century, many Native American children in Canada and the US were sent to boarding schools, where they were often forbidden to speak their native language (Norris, 1998). Once a language has become marginalised in this way, it

is often perceived as being less prestigious and useful by its remaining speakers, who associate it with low social status and poverty, and consequently fail to pass it on to the next generation (Hinton, 2003; Norris, 1998). Some of the greatest loss of Indigenous languages and subsequent shift of the speakers to use the dominant language due to colonization occurred in Australia, Canada, and the United States. But as Olko and Sullivan (2016) point out, facets of postcolonialism as contributory factors to language loss can also be found in European countries, especially regarding the forms of discrimination towards ethnic minorities, many of them with drastic, even traumatic, historical experiences (p. 348). These observations by Olko and Sullivan (ibid.) are based on their experience with revitalization efforts of the Indigenous language Nahuatl, in Mexico and the minority language Wymysorys in Poland. To the authors (ibid.) some of the major problems faced by European minorities resemble those experienced by local communities outside Europe: “overt and covert violation of language rights, inefficient or discriminating language policy, negative language ideology, absence of local languages in the national education system, scarcity of teaching and literary materials in endangered languages as well as spaces for their use” (p. 348.). Skutnabb-Kangas (2002) calls Europe “linguistically the poorest continent” with 225 languages or 3 % of the world’s languages spoken (p. 7). And according to the Atlas of the World’s Languages (Moseley, 2010), 128 languages within the European Union alone are considered to be endangered (cited in Prys Jones, 2013, p. 11). Yet, as Olko and Sullivan (2016) point out, linguistic and cultural plurality has always been a reality in Europe – as everywhere else in the world. But after the rise of the nation state in Europe, and other regions, greater emphasis was placed on having a more uniform culture across the state and developing a common language which would assist in the process of assimilation. This policy development had a detrimental effect on many languages which were not adopted as state languages (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006). In the past decades, globalization, increased migration and rapid urbanization have contributed to language loss as speakers shift from their native tongue to a dominant

language that is – or is perceived to be – necessary for civic integration and economic advancement, “The need to acquire proficiency in the dominant languages of the urban centers is posing a threat to the vitality of minority languages as large numbers of people are moving from rural to urban areas” (Simons & Lewis, 2013, p.16).

Language loss means also other kinds of loss because languages are more than just a means of communication; they encompass a wide range of values and beliefs and are a window on many different ways of looking at the world (Hale, 1992). The realisation of the extent of global language endangerment has led to increased appreciation for what is lost when a language dies. The demise of a language may result in the loss of scientific, cultural, or historical information encoded in the language itself, while the transmission of information, memories and stories may not be possible if the language used to communicate this knowledge is no longer understandable: “The extinction of any language results in the irrecoverable loss of unique cultural, historical, and ecological knowledge. Every time a language dies, we have less evidence for understanding patterns in the structure and function of human language, human prehistory, and the maintenance of the world’s diverse ecosystems” (UNESCO, 2003, p. 2). The ability of communities to keep, develop, and employ the distinctive perception and reasoning coded inside their languages is weakened or lost by the erosion of local languages. Furthermore, since “to choose to use a language, is an act of identity” a speech community might experience a loss of ethnic and cultural identity if their language dies (Nettle & Romaine 2000, p. 173). This statement resonates with Norris’ (1998) reference to Canada’s Aboriginal languages and their immense importance to Indigenous people as one of the most tangible symbols of culture and group identity. It is not only a means of communication, states Norris, but a link which connects people with their past and grounds their social, emotional, and spiritual vitality (p. 1). Loss of language does not necessarily lead to the death of a culture, notes Crystal (2000) but it can severely handicap transmission of that culture.

Since the 1990s, the research interest in endangered languages and awareness of the need to contribute to their survival have grown among researchers. (Fishman, 1991; Simons & Lewis, 2013; UNESCO, 2003). Researchers have also tried to explain why some languages survive and others do not and pinpoint the most relevant factors in language endangerment and the ways in which they interact. Tools and techniques for endangered-language assessment have been developed such as Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), updated by Lewis and Simons (2010) as E[xtended]GIDS), and the UNESCO (2003) 'nine factors'. Even though there are differences how these assessments evaluate a language's vitality and state of endangerment, for example by taking into account the documentation of a language (UNESCO, 2003), or considering the attitudes toward the language as a criterion to assess endangerment (Lewis and Simons, 2010), the common premise is that language shift (ending in language death) happens as a language loses functions in society. Language shift is the replacement of one language by another as the primary means of communication and socialization within a community (Fishman, 1991). There are many factors that contribute to language shift and involve both the individual level and the group level, because it is through individuals' speech behavior that a language is either maintained or lost in a family and in broader society (ibid.). Language assessments are essential both to understanding language shift and to take measures to reverse it. The GID Scale (Table 1), for example, focuses on language domains (Levels 1-3), literacy (Level 4-5), and intergenerational transmission (Levels 6-8). Levels 5 & 6 (see Table 1 below) illustrate the most common preconditions for language loss to occur, even though the speakers have not yet shifted to the other language: the domains in which the original language is used are becoming increasingly limited (Dwyer, p. 2).

Table 1*Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Fishman 1991)*

GIDS	
LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1	The language is used in education, work, mass media, government at the nationwide level
2	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services
3	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders
4	Literacy in the language is transmitted through education
5	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community
6	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language
7	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children
8	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation

Note. Reprinted from “Tools and techniques for endangered-language assessment and revitalization”. Dwyer, A. M. 2011. In *Vitality and Viability of Minority Languages* p. 2. New York: Trace Foundation Lecture Series Proceedings.
http://www.trace.org/events/events_lecture_proceedings.html

Researchers (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; Leonard, 2008) also suggest that levels of language vitality/endorsement can be characterized by a continuum between two ends of a scale: on one end are stable, vital languages used for all functions and domains, and extinct languages which are found at the opposite end of the spectrum, no longer spoken at all, and used in no domains. In between these two ends are a variety of intermediate stages, with languages used in limited settings. One common situation is when people speak in one language predominantly at home and during casual social interactions, but in contexts like the workplace, school, and public or official settings, they speak in another language (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006, p. 7). Many safe languages enjoy official status within nation-states, may have functions as language of government, education, and commerce and as such tend to be held in higher prestige than other languages (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006, p. 18). Of course, very few languages have the potential of becoming a national language that everyone speaks, or at least identifies with. As Hinton (2003) points out, stages 3, 2, and 1 on Fishman’s (1991) GID scale

are less relevant to small Indigenous societies and are not a serious goal for the small Indigenous or minority languages (p. 52). Thus, for Indigenous and minority languages to stay vital, the communities must develop meaningful roles for their languages in their everyday lives and find good reasons to speak and transmit them to their children (Yamamoto et al., 2008 p. 68). UNESCO (2003) emphasizes that the most important thing that can be done to keep a language from disappearing is to create favourable conditions for its speakers to speak the language and teach it to their children. This often requires national policies that recognize and protect minority languages, education systems that promote mother-tongue instruction, and creative collaboration between community members and linguists to develop a writing system and introduce formal instruction in the language. It is essential to create a social and political environment that encourages multilingualism and respect for minority languages so that speaking such a language is an asset rather than a liability (ibid.).

Many different concepts and approaches have been developed by scholars and language activists to stem the loss of languages. Language maintenance, for example, can be an essential aim for communities who are still using their language but are exposed to pressures associated with a dominant language and other factors that increase language endangerment such as discrimination, school education in a dominant language, economic pressures (Fishman, 1991). Language revitalization is often referred to actions in the communities to reverse language shift especially among the youngest community members who do not use or do not learn the language (Fishman, 1991). In addition, revitalisation may seek other means besides intergenerational transmission such as education and strengthening the pragmatic functions of the language in various spheres of society (ibid.). Another term, language reclamation, is sometimes used in reference to efforts of a community to regain a language, which has gone out of use fairly recently. For example, the North American language Miami (Myaamia) represents, what Leonard (2008) terms “an extreme case of

Indigenous language reclamation” (p. 340). This is because almost everything about this language to be introduced to the community in the process of reclamation is based entirely on written documentation (ibid.). This includes the cultural practices and ideologies that inform language use and community interaction (ibid.). The importance of language documentation is also underscored by such programs as the *Breath of Life Language Workshops* which provide materials for Native Californians for purposes of language reclamation (Hinton, 2003, p. 45). Documentation of a language makes it even possible for a community to bring back, or to revive, and start using a language that already ceased to be spoken for a long period of time. One of the most successful language revivals has been the development of modern spoken Hebrew from the liturgical Hebrew following the establishment of the state of Israel. This successful large-scale language revival was the result of a combination of historical motivation, political self-determination, cultural revival, and community mobilization (Hinton, 2003). Indigenous and minority communities in many parts of the world are making efforts to regain knowledge and use of their endangered languages. Initiatives vary in their implementation as much as the languages for which they are intended. In some instances, they may be national in scope, such as the efforts to revive the Hebrew language or to revitalize the Irish or Welsh languages, yet in other instances they involve small communities or even a few motivated individuals such as the Wymysorys language community in Poland (Olko, 2018). Many of these programs are connected to claims of territorial sovereignty, or a desire to maintain a unique ethnic identity is just as often the explicit goal (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006). Depending on the size of the group and their available resources, different opportunities and constraints are put on the kinds of programs that can be realistically implemented (Hinton, 2003). They may include instruction in the basic vocabulary of the language, formal language instruction, organization of language camps and establishment of immersion schools (Hinton, 2003, 2011). These efforts often include linguistic publications, creation of a writing system, development of dictionaries and textbooks based on the educational needs of speech

communities. But, as Hinton (2003) points out, many Indigenous languages in the Americas and elsewhere are solely or primarily oral languages; thus, revitalization or reclamation efforts aim to promote conversational fluency among speakers in such community. For other languages, however, literacy plays a key role in language maintenance and revitalization. Irish, Welsh, Breton, or Catalan and other minority languages that have literary traditions, or a history in education, literacy is an important part of school-based language education. New technologies in projects aimed at language maintenance or revitalization have also become popular. Eisenlohr (2004) points out the advantages of computer-assisted language learning, interactive CD-ROMs, Web sites, and computer networks which provide comparatively inexpensive choices for language learners and users. Instructions using these techniques can be made accessible to relatively small groups of geographically dispersed language learners. Digital technologies can be particularly attractive to the younger generation by aligning the minoritized language with the contemporary world with a relevance for the future of a particular group (ibid.). Of course, this is only possible if computers and the skills for using them are available.

Researchers and language activists emphasize that the structure and goals of language maintenance, revitalization or other language recovery projects must be driven by the language community in question, and it is the sustained effort of communities that are instrumental in the success of any language recovery project (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; Hinton, 2003). Dołowy-Rybińska and Hornsby (2021) emphasize that linguists or others involved in language revitalization need to listen to the attitudes expressed in the community towards the endangered language, and to then try and work what motivation ('ideology') is behind the attitude. Without this knowledge, some community efforts could fail. Language ideologies can be defined as socially, historically, and politically shaped ideas about language which often have far-reaching and irreversible effects on language attitudes and linguistic practices. (Dołowy-Rybińska & Hornsby, 2021, p. 89). The authors emphasize that in efforts

to revitalize a language it is also important to consider attitudes within the dominant language community, and, if necessary, to counter unfavourable perceptions that non-speakers of minority languages may hold. Majority language consensus views affect minority language speakers and potential speakers (ibid.).

3.3 Translanguaging Theory and Practice

Contemporary linguistic scholarship and related fields (e.g., sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology) increasingly challenges the traditional view that languages are bounded systems of communication by reframing language as practice—that is, as a form of action that occurs within particular social and cultural contexts (Garcia, 2009; Makoni & Pennycook, 2005; Otheguy et al., 2015). Such reframing of language implies a need to rethink our notions of bilingualism and multilingualism moving away from simply the “pluralization of monolingualism” (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005, p. 147). Traditionally, bilingualism was defined as the ability to speak two languages with a defined structure and multilingualism as the ability to speak more than two structurally defined languages. Several theoretical concepts have emerged that challenge the concept of language and conventional bi/and multilingualism models. Related to these theoretical concepts are different terms that describe a variety of fluid or hybrid language practices by bi/multilingual speakers. One of these terms is Translanguaging which relates to both the practice and a theory of using language. Translanguaging and related research on individual and community language practises view language as an action, or something that language users do rather than a static entity (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005). The emphasis on language practice is highlighted with the verb ‘languaging’ (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005; Garcia, 2009) to emphasise the action of language users as they employ semiotic resources at their disposal in strategic ways to communicate. Garcia (Garcia & Leiva, 2014) relates the concept of ‘languaging’ to the Chilean biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco J. Varela who compare language to the concerted workings of biological systems, “language not as pre-given and able to be decomposed into

fragments, but as human action by someone particular in a particular place” (p. 202). That is, language is an ongoing process that only exists as languaging. Reagan (2004) too argues that the notion of languages as fixed entities is problematic from both a historical and a social point of view. Historically, “language—any language—is constantly changing, and in flux, and thus any effort to demarcate the boundaries of a particular language are inevitably at best able to provide a snapshot of the language at a particular time and place” (p. 46). Reagan (ibid.) suggests that a language is “ultimately a collection of idiolects which have been determined to belong together for what are ultimately non- and extra-linguistic reasons” (p. 46). The theory of Translanguaging (Garcia, 2009; Otheguy et al., 2015; Li, 2017) also refers to the ‘idiolect’ as a person’s own unique, personal language, the person’s mental grammar that emerges in interaction with other speakers. In other words, “a named language is a collection of the only partially overlapping idiolects of people who share a common cultural identity” (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 294.). The concept of an ‘idiolect’ extends into scholarly debates about the separation or integration of languages by multilingual speakers.

Translanguaging is rooted in the belief that plurilingual speakers select language features from one integrated, unitary system that constitutes their ‘idiolect’ and construct their language practices in ways that fit their communicative situations. As Otheguy et al. (2015) clarify: “Translanguaging is the deployment of a speaker’s full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages” (p. 294). Translanguaging scholars advocate that languages are dynamic and fluid, with no clear boundaries between them (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Makoni & Pennycook, 2005). Moreover, the identification of boundaries among ‘named languages’ such as Spanish, English, or Russian is itself a political choice and not one that necessarily represents those languages or varieties in the mind of the speaker (Otheguy et al., 2015; Li, 2017). Thus, this also means that Translanguaging goes beyond the concept of code-switching. “Code-switching refers to the mixing or switching of two static language

codes. Translanguaging, (...), is about a new languaging reality, original and independent from any language codes, a new way of being, acting, and languaging in a different social, cultural, and political context” (Garcia & Leiva, 2014, p. 204). However, Otheguy et al. (2015) in their clarification of the Translanguaging theory state that they do not deny the existence of named languages. Rather, the concept of named languages is “not appropriate for discourse dealing with mental grammar” (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 293). Li (2017) points out that the ‘trans’ in Translanguaging refers to the fluid and dynamic language practices that transcend named languages, even in multilinguals who are aware of the sociopolitical boundaries among those languages (p. 23.). For Li (2011), the ‘trans’ in Translanguaging also means going both between different linguistic structures, systems, and modalities, and going beyond them. Li (ibid.) proposes that: “The act of Translanguaging is transformative in nature; it creates a social space for the multilingual users by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance” (p. 1223). Li’s (2011) concept of a Translanguaging space explains how multilingual speakers integrate social spaces that have been formerly practiced separately in different places. It is a space that allows speakers to share their language and cultural activities. Translanguaging, according to Li (2011), embraces both creativity, and criticality; that is, following or flouting norms of language use, and using evidence, to question, problematize or express views. The author illustrates this point with the example of ‘new Chinglish’ where speakers merge Chinese and English: Chinsumer 在外疯狂购物的中人 = a mesh of ‘Chinese consumer’, usually referring to Chinese tourists buying large quantities of luxury goods overseas (Li, 2011, p. 16). To Li (2018) human beings have a natural translanguaging instinct, an innate capacity to draw on as many different cognitive and semiotic resources as are available to them to interpret meaning intentions and to design

actions accordingly (p. 24). This innate capacity drives humans to go beyond culturally defined language boundaries to achieve effective communication (ibid.).

Scholarship has also described the fluid identities affected by the complex multilingual repertoires and spaces where individuals embody or enact multiple identities today (Garcia & Homonoff Woodley, 2015, p. 138). This relates to Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) definition of identity as "the social positioning of self and other" (p. 586) and their explanation that the co-construction of identity involves the use of language as a tool individuals use to produce identity. "Because these tools are put to use in interaction, the process of identity construction does not reside within the individual but in intersubjective relations" (p. 608). It is through the use of tools, or linguistic resources, that individuals negotiate the meaning of their social positions and identities.

Translanguaging constitutes not only a challenge to the concept of language, conventional bi/and multilingualism models but also to traditional and established ways of understanding bilingual education. Translanguaging has its roots in Wales where the Welsh minoritized community, while seeking to preserve and expand its bilingualism, called the tradition of language separation in instruction into question. Welsh scholars questioned the long-held belief in language separation for language development. They found that bilingualism was an important instrument in the learning and development of integrated bilingualism, as well as cognitive involvement (Lewis et al., 2012). Williams (1994, cited in Lewis et al., 2012), coined the term 'trawsieithu' to describe a pedagogical practice that he observed at a bilingual school in Wales in which two languages, in this case English and Welsh, were used purposefully in the classroom with the assumption that language skills in both languages are further developed in this way and that a better understanding of the curriculum content is also achieved. As a pedagogical strategy, Translanguaging enables bilingual or multilingual students to use as much of their linguistic repertoire as possible in their learning processes, while adhering to the curricular requirements. Baker (2011) who

translated William's term 'trawsieithu' into 'translanguaging' defined the concept as follows: "Translanguaging is the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages" (Baker, 2011, p. 288, cited in Lewis et al., 2012). In an international context, the growing popularity of Translanguaging in education can be seen as emancipation from many negative ideas about bilinguals and bilingualism (Lewis et al., 2012). Garcia (2009a), an early proponent of the Translanguaging concept and a scholar focused on bilingualism in the U.S. educational contexts, contends that Translanguaging in bilingual classrooms is important in the movement from a mainly monolingual or separatist language practices in the classroom to the cognitive and communicative advantages of Translanguaging: "It is important for bilingual educators and bilingual students to recognize the importance and value of Translanguaging practices. Too often bilingual students who Translanguage suffer linguistic shame because they have been burdened with monoglossic ideologies that value only monolingualism (...). And too often bilingual teachers hide their natural Translanguaging practices from administrators and others because they have been taught to believe that only monolingual ways of speaking are 'good' and valuable. Yet, they know that to teach effectively in bilingual classrooms, they must Translanguage" (p. 308, as cited in Lewis et al., 2012).

Chapter 4: Data and Methodology

4.1 Background about the data source

The corpus of printed T-shirts analysed in this research project is taken from the online store of the Upper Silesian Gryfnie.com company in Poland. Gryfnie.com is a company founded in 2011 by a local couple, Klaudia and Krzysztof Rokseła. Klaudia Rokseła is an ethnographer and Krzysztof a programmer. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, the founders (and owners) of Gryfnie.com belong to a group of Upper Silesian activists known as the ‘New Silesians’ who are young leaders aiming to bring positive change to the region through semantic design (Oslisło-Piekarska, 2015, p. 64). Semantic design is understood as design inspired by Upper Silesia’s culture and heritage, explains Oslisło-Piekarska (ibid.). The ‘New Silesians’ draw their inspiration from the mining culture, post-industrial landscape, architecture, language, culinary traditions, and folklore. The Gryfnie.com company specializes in merchandise that features the Upper Silesian ethnolect in an online store, and in three brick and mortar stores one in each of the three major cities of the Silesian Voivodeship (province) in Poland: Katowice, Gliwice, and Rybnik. In addition, Gryfnie.com is also represented in a store in The New Silesian Museum in Katowice.

Figure 1

Gryfnie.com. Store in Katowice, Poland.



Note From Gazeta Wyborcza Katowice. (2019, February 19). Śląsko godka na T-shirtach, kubkach i kartkach. Firma Gryfnie popularyzuje i sprzedaje. <https://katowice.wyborcza.pl/katowice/7,35063,24469438,slasko-godka-na-t-shirtach-kubkach-i-kartkach-firma-gryfnie.html>

4.2 Data collection and methodology

The data for this project draws on the Gryfnie.com website's online store. The data is based on the printed T-shirts featuring the Upper Silesian ethnolect and has been gathered from the online store during May 10th – May 14th, 2021.

Figure 2

Screenshot of the Gryfnie.com Website Online Store Page Tabs



Table 2

Translation of the Gryfnie.com Website Online Shop Tabs into English

Titles of the Gryfnie.com Website Online Shop Tabs written in the Upper Silesian ethnolect	Translation into English and Standard German (in the case of <i>Germanisms</i>)
Sklep/ <i>Gyszeft</i>	Store / <i>Geschäft</i>
Dla Babów,	For Women
Dla Chopów,	For Men
Dla <i>Bajtlow</i>	For Kids /für die <i>Kleinen</i>)
Ksionżki	Books
Biżuteryjo	Jewelry
Inksze	Other
Lookbook	Lookbook
Wyprzedane	Sold out

Note. The online store is organised into nine pages (i.e., tabs): For an overview, I have tabulated the available tabs and translated the headings of the tabs into English (*Germanisms* are translated into Standard German).

In addition to the online store, the Gryfnie.com website includes links to information about the company, to non-commercial videos produced by Gryfnie.com that provide information

about how the Upper Silesian ethnolect is used in the region, and about regional cultural events. Additional links connect with the Gryfnie.com Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube accounts. These links are not part of the current research. Most information on the Gryfnie.com website is given in the Upper Silesian ethnolect with occasional translations of Upper Silesian expressions into Standard Polish.

The Gryfnie.com online merchandise consists of numerous clothing articles, books, and objects, all featuring word/s of the Upper Silesian ethnolect and some with images that correspond to the text. This research project draws on the data (text, images, and product labels) from T-shirts offered in the following online website tabs: For Men, For Women, For Children, and ‘Currently Sold-Out’. By selecting these tabs, I ensured that the entire assortment of T-shirts featuring the ethnolect offered for different genders and ages, which were gathered in the aforementioned time interval, would be included in my data. I selected the T-shirts as my data source rather than other objects offered by the company because the T-shirts represent the most numerous merchandise at Gryfnie.com and they feature text and images. In addition to the T-shirts, the analysis will also include a children’s *Tyta* (known as a ‘Schultüte’ in German), that is featured on the ‘For Children’ tab of the website’s online store. A *Tyta* is a special paper cone given to first graders on their first day of school. The *Tyta* was included in the data collection because it is specifically geared toward school-aged children and will be analyzed for its potential as a tool in the transmission of the ethnolect to the next generation.

All T-shirts offered on the nine tabs of the Gryfnie.com website that were featuring the Upper Silesian ethnolect were initially counted, but since the focus of this research is on the Germanisms of the ethnolect, only T-shirts featuring Germanisms were further sorted using the following categories: women, men, children. For a detailed numerical overview, and for a visual listing of the Germanisms that Gryfnie.com chose to use on the T-shirts, I

have tabulated in alphabetical order, and in separate columns the Germanisms featured on men's, women's, and children's T-shirts, and on the *Tyta* (see Table 3). I have also translated the Germanisms, which are spelled on the T-shirts and the *Tyta* in Standard Polish orthography, into the Standard German and Polish languages (please refer to Table 3). I bring to this research project my experience of growing up in Upper Silesia, my proficiency in the Upper Silesian ethnolect, and in the Polish and German languages.

4.3 Methodology employed in data analysis

The Gryfnie.com T-shirts with their product labels, and the *Tyta* display texts or combinations of images and texts. I relied on Gunther Kress' (2011) and James Paul Gee's (2005, 2011) concepts and methodology in multimodal critical discourse analysis to examine the images and text on the T-shirts, product labels and the *Tyta* in support of my thesis statement that commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect contributes to the revitalization of the ethnolect. Multimodality refers to the interplay between different representational modes within one medium, for instance, printed T-shirts, like the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, can serve as a medium for communication with a multimodal interplay between words, images, colours, fonts, and spatial layout. Multiple modes contribute to an audience's understanding of a composition. Everything from the placement of images to the organization of the content to the method of delivery creates meaning (Kress, 2011). Multimodal discourse analysis (MMDA) is a method that takes into account multiple modes of communication such as language, image, colour, layout, and how they interact with one another. MMDA explores the meaning-making potential of different communication modes and their dynamic interaction with each other, and with the sociocultural context in which they operate (ibid.). According to Kress (2011), the modal resources available for social interactions and in meaning making in a culture need to be seen as one coherent, integral field, of nevertheless distinct resources for making meaning (2011, p. 39). Kress defines mode

as “a socially and culturally shaped resource for making meaning: image, writing, layout, speech, moving images are examples of different modes” (ibid.). In MMDA, an understanding of any text assumes understanding the selection of the different modes and their role in the discourse, of their ‘arrangements’ which one is dominant, what functions does each have (Kress, 2011). Multimodality means that several modes are present, and each mode plays its specific part: writing tells, image shows, colour frames and highlights; layout and font are used in part for reasons of compositional arrangements, and, as the other modes, for style. Style reflects the sum of choices made (Kress, 2011, p. 42). For Kress, choice points to the selection, to preference: this colour rather than those others; this font as better for the designer’s purposes here than others. Texts, of whatever kind, are the result of design and of process of composition and production (Kress, 2011). The choice and composition of different modes reflect the agency of the text makers, and thus, according to Kress (2011), texts realize the interests of the text maker. Every choice of a signifier (the material form of the mode) in each of the modes (colour, font, lettering, drawing) points to a decision made about an appropriate match of ‘what is to be meant’ with ‘what can best express that meaning’ (Kress, 2011, p. 39). MMDA attempts to give answers to questions about the design of the text, its meaning, and how the text constructs and represents social relations between the participants in the text, the text maker, and the viewer. James Paul Gee’s (2011) discourse analysis is based on the concept that language is used in culture and society “to say things (informing) do things (action), be things (identity), and that language gains its meaning from these practices” (p. 19). Gee’s concepts and methodology are focusing on language as the communicative mode, but he also demonstrates how these concepts and methods apply to multimodal texts composed of combinations of words and images provided these combinations are meant to communicate. “(...) discourse is about communication and we humans can communicate using modalities other than language or ones composed by mixing other modalities with language” (p. 194). Gee (2011) makes clear that his approach to

discourse analysis is a critical one which pays attention to the political and societal implications of using language. To Gee, (2011) “all language is political” since any linguistic action involves potential social goods and their distribution (p. 10). It is this combination of analysing linguistic and visual features of communication and their connection to social and political issues that I find applicable to my analysis of the Upper Silesian ethnolect practices displayed on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts. For Gee (2011) discourse analysis is built around making arguments for a specific claim. The claim is the point of the analysis. Gee’s discourse analysis involves asking questions how we use language to enact or construct in the world. “Whenever we speak or write, we always construct or build seven things or seven areas of “reality.” Gee call these seven things the ‘seven building tasks’ of language. They are: significance, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems & knowledge, situated meaning. Gee suggests asking questions that help reveal the seven building tasks in a given instance of language-in-use. For example, we can probe if and how language (and/or an image) which is being used in our data makes certain things significant or not and in what way? Similar question can be applied to the data to reveal other areas of language use. Gee (2011) acknowledges that not all the areas (language building tasks) might be present in a text or not equally represented.

4.4 Use of terminology

In this research project, text in the Upper Silesian ethnolect or in the Standard Polish language is translated into Standard German or English by the author unless indicated otherwise. Also, for the purpose of clarity and readability, all *Germanisms* are indicated by the combination of the *bold/cursive font*, and *Germanisms* translated into *Standard German* are written in *cursive font*. Throughout this thesis work, the historical term ‘Upper Silesia’ is used to refer to the contemporary administrative boundaries of the Voivodeship of Silesia and Voivodship of Opole which approximate the historical region referred to as ‘Upper Silesia’

(please refer to figure 25 and figure 26 in Appendix for a visualization of the historical Upper Silesian territory with the corresponding current voivodships). I have followed the Polish linguist Jolanta Tambor to refer to the speech of the Upper Silesians as an ethnolect, a neutral term according to Tambor (2014) who regards other designations of the speech, such as ‘Upper Silesian dialect’ or ‘language’, ‘regional language’, or ‘Gwara’ (jargon), as politically charged or pejorative. An ethnolect is a collective term for linguistic variants or speaking styles used by speakers of an ethnic minority in a specific language area and classified as typical for them (e.g., Clyne, 2000). I relied on the definition of the Polish sociologist Marek S. Szczepański (1999) who describes the Upper Silesians as an ethnic group as follows: “(...) an ethnic group is a community whose cultural identity is connected with a given territory [Upper Silesia], having its own identity regarding culture, language, history, sometimes even economy, which — however — does not make up a separate nation, although is equipped with some features of a nation. (...) the ethnic group has its ‘private motherland’ (‘personal motherland’) and ‘ideological motherland’ in the state which it inhabits, while its national option is typically analogous with the choices made by the majority of inhabitants of that state” (p. 88).

Chapter 5: Analysis

5.1 Rationale of the analysis structure

Before commencing with the analysis section, I offer a brief outline of my rationale behind the organisation of my analysis. The analysis of my data follows my own process of discovering and researching how the commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, as shown on the Gryfnie.com T-Shirts, may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect. After noticing the Germanisms on the Gryfnie.com T-Shirts, my initial aim was to calculate what fraction of the T-Shirts feature Germanisms and what assortment of Germanisms is presented. I also applied theoretical concepts of language commodification to examine how the marginalized Upper Silesian ethnolect became commodifiable and added value to the Gryfnie.com T-Shirts. Before proceeding with analysis of how the commodification of the ethnolect by Gryfnie.com contributes to the revitalization of the ethnolect, I considered it important to evaluate the vitality/endangerment level of the ethnolect. Since there is no official data available concerning the vitality of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, I relied on literature research relating to concepts of language endangerment/vitality to assess the vitality of the ethnolect. In the final three analysis sections, I examined how the Gryfnie.com T-Shirts contribute to the revitalization of the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the following contexts: first, as contributors to the visibility of the ethnolect in the public space; second, in the construction and presentation of the contemporary Upper Silesian identity; third, the role of the T-Shirts and the *Tyta* in the intergenerational transmission of the ethnolect.

5.2 Introduction to Table 3

Table 3 helps to visualize the data set on which I base my analysis of the commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect by Gryfnie.com, and the role of commodification in the revitalization of the ethnolect. The data set consists of the ethnolect's Germanisms featured on a total of 78 men's, women's, and children's T-shirts and one *Tyta*

collected from the online Gryfnie.com store. I have translated the Germanisms, which are spelled on the T-Shirts and the *Tyta* in Standard Polish orthography, into the Standard German and Polish languages. This step has a dual purpose: First, it allows the reader a comparison of the Germanisms with the two languages, Standard German, and Standard Polish, and thus shows the link of the ethnolect Germanisms to Standard German, and how they differ from Polish lexical items. Second, translating the Germanisms into Standard German underscores the difference of the Germanisms from Standard German and reveals the meaning of the Germanisms to readers who might not be familiar with the ethnolect. I would like to draw attention to the fact that the Germanisms in Table 3 can be found in many lexical groups, including family vocabulary, (ex. *oma*/grandmother, *opa*/grandfather), animals (ex. *szmaterlok*/*Schmetterling*/butterfly), food items (ex. *sznitbony*/*Schnittbohnen*/green beans, *blumkol*/*Blumenkohl*/cauliflower), or placeholder words (ex. *Wihajster*/*Wie heißt er*/*Dingsda*/*whatchamacallit*) and vocabulary linked to the work environment (ex. *Fachman*, *Majster*/*Meister*/master). With the exception of the verb *bajсна* (*beißen*), all of the Germanisms listed in Table 3 are nouns. There are identical Germanisms found on T-shirts for men, women, or children, but many of the Germanisms are found only on T-shirts for a specific age group or specific gender, and this is shown in the organization of Table 3 by creating labelled columns (ex.: Germanisms displayed on women's T-shirts only). I will be referring to the different aspects of the Germanisms in Table 3 throughout the analysis chapter. For each of my analysis sections, I have selected examples from Table 3 that are focusing on T-shirts which best demonstrate how commodification of the ethnolect may contribute to its revitalization. For example, the T-shirt for very young children 'Idymy do Zoo' (We are going to the Zoo) features a semantic word field with Germanisms describing animals in a Zoo. In my analysis, I show how such T-shirts function in a similar way to picture books by connecting images with the corresponding words and thus may contribute to transgenerational transmission of the ethnolect. I follow a similar approach to demonstrate the construction of the contemporary

Upper Silesian identity on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, and the role of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in the linguistic landscape (public space) in the context of commodification and revitalization of the ethnolect.

Table 3

Data gathered from the Gryfnie.com online store: Germanism featured on women's, men's, and children's T-shirts and the *Tyta*. Germanism were translated into Standard German and Standard Polish to reveal their meaning and relation to Standard German.

Germanisms displayed on women's T- Shirts only	Translation into Standard German (expressions considered dated in contemporary Standard German are in brackets)	Translation into Standard Polish	Translation into English
<i>Bombony</i>	<i>Bonbons</i>	Cukierki	candy
Dej <i>Kusika</i>	Gib ein <i>Küsschen</i>	daj pocałunka	Give me a kiss
<i>Frelka</i>	<i>Fräulein</i>	Dziewczyna	girl
<i>Gryfno Frelka</i>	(<i>geschicktes</i>) <i>nettes Fräulein</i>	zgrabna dziewczyna	handsome girl
<i>Gymizy</i>	<i>Gemüse</i>	Warzywa	vegetables
<i>Heksa</i>	<i>Hexe</i>	Czarownica	witch
<i>Nudelkula</i>	<i>Nudelrolle</i>	wałek do ciasta	rolling pin
<i>Ojla</i>	<i>Eule</i>	Sowa	owl
<i>Oma</i>	<i>Oma</i>	Babcia	grandmother
<i>Szmaterek</i>	<i>Schmetterling</i>	Motyl	butterfly
<i>Szolka Tyju</i>	Tasse (<i>Schale</i>) <i>Tee</i>	filizanka herbaty	cup of tea
Germanisms displayed on men's T- Shirts only	Translation into Standard German	Translation into Standard Polish	Translation into English
<i>Ajnfart</i>	<i>Einfahrt</i>	Wejście	driveway
<i>Auto</i>	<i>Auto</i>	Samochód	car
<i>Cwerg</i>	<i>Zwerg</i>	Krasnolud	gnome
<i>Fojerman,</i>	<i>Feuerwehrmann</i>	strażak	fireman
<i>Fusbal</i>	<i>Fußball</i>	piłka nożna	soccer
<i>Grubiorz</i>	<i>Gruben Arbeiter</i>	górnik.	miner
<i>Gryfny Karlus</i>	(<i>geschickter</i>) <i>netter Kerl</i>	przystojny chłopak	handsome guy
<i>Kamrat</i>	<i>Kamerad</i>	przyjaciół	comrade
<i>Krepel</i>	<i>Kreppel, Krapfen</i>	pączki	doughnut
<i>Moplik,</i>	<i>Moped</i>	motorower	motorcycle
<i>Opa</i>	<i>Opa</i>	dziadek	grandfather
<i>Radijok</i>	<i>Radio</i>	radio	radio
<i>Wandrus</i>	<i>Wanderer</i>	wędrowiec	wanderer
<i>Wihajster</i>	<i>Wie heißt er</i>	Jak on ma na imię?	What is his name?
Women's and Men's T-shirts with identical Germanisms	Translation into Standard German (in multi word text, translated Germanisms are in cursive letters)	Translation into Standard Polish	Translation into English
<i>Ciś na Luft</i>	Raus auf die frische <i>Luft</i>	Wyjdź na powietrze	Get some fresh air
<i>Fajrant</i>	<i>Feierabend</i>	koniec dnia roboczego	end of work shift

<i>Familok</i>	<i>Mehrfamilienhaus</i>	dom rodzinny	multi-family house
<i>Gruba</i>	<i>Grube/Bergwerk</i>	kopalnia	mine
<i>Hercklekoty</i>	<i>Herzklopfen</i>	kołatanie serca	heart palpitations
<i>Kafyj</i>	<i>Kaffee</i>	kawa	coffee
<i>Larmo</i>	<i>Lärm</i>	hałas	noise
<i>Mom Rula</i>	<i>Ruhe haben</i>	mieć spokój	To have some peace
<i>Oberiba</i>	<i>Oberrübe/Kohlrabi</i>	rzepa (kalarepa)	kohlrabi/turnip
<i>Rechtor/in</i>	<i>Rektor/in</i>	dyrektor/in	school principal
Skocz mi na <i>Pukel</i>	<i>Rutsch mir den Buckel</i> runter	daj mi spokój	Give me a break/I don't care
<i>Szrank</i>	<i>Schrank</i>	szafka	wardrobe
<i>Sztudynty</i>	<i>Studenten</i>	studenty	students
<i>Zaś Szychta</i>	wieder <i>Schichtarbeit</i>	znowu praca	another work shift
T-shirts with semantic word fields Men's (M), Women's (W), & Children's (C) Themes of the semantic word fields: <i>note:</i> etc., is added where additional words can not be clearly seen in the word field	Translation into Standard German (in multi word text, translated Germanisms are in <i>cursive letters</i>) (expressions considered dated in contemporary German are in brackets)	Translation into Standard Polish	Translation into English
Babskie <i>Klamory</i> : (W) <i>Lypensztift, Zonynbrele, etc.</i>	<i>Klamotten für Frauen: Lippenstift, Sonnenbrille, etc.</i>	Manatki dla Kobietów: szminka, okulary słoneczne, itp.	Women's Clothes: lipstick, sunglasses, etc.
<i>Fachman</i> (M), (C): <i>Colstok, Fedra, Mutterka, Szrauba, etc.</i>	<i>Fachman: Zollstock, Feder, Mutter, Schraube, etc.</i>	Specjalista: miarka, sprężyna, nakrętka, śruba, itp.	Specialist: ruler, spring, nut, screw, etc.
<i>Graczk</i> i, (C): <i>Flieger, Koble, Rolszuty, Drach, Fojerwera, Bala</i>	<i>Spielzeug (begrapschen): Flieger, Knobeln, Rollschuhe, Drachen, Feuerwehr, Ball</i>	Zabawki: samolot, kostka do gry, wrotki, latawiec, wóz strażacki, piłka	Toys: plane, dice, roller skates, kite, fire truck, ball
<i>Gymizy</i> (W): <i>Oberiba, Sznitlok, Blumkol, Radiska, Sznitbony</i>	<i>Gemüse: Oberrübe/Kohlrabi, Blumenkohl, Radieschen, Schnittbohnen</i>	Warzywa: rzepa/kalarepa, kalafior, rzodkiewka, fasolka szparagowa	Vegetables: turnip/kohlrabi, cauliflower, radish, green beans
Idymy do Zoo: <i>Tiger, Szlanga, Afa, Elefant, Ber, Kamela</i>	<i>Wir gehen in den Zoo: Tiger, Schlange, Affe, Elefant, Bär, Kamel</i>	Jedziemy do zoo: tygrys, wąż, małpa, słoń niedźwiedź, wielbłąd	We are going to the zoo: tiger, snake, monkey, elephant bear, camel
Ida na Zegrodka, (M), (W) <i>Kibel, Lauba, Giskana, Guminioki, Schlauch</i>	<i>Ich gehe in den Garten: Kübel, Laube, Gießkanne, Gummistiefel, Schlauch</i>	Idę na ogródek: wiadro, altana, konewka, kalosze, wąż ogrodowy	I'm going to the garden: bucket, gazebo, watering can, rain boots, garden hose

Koło (M), (W), (C): <i>Brymze, Gypek, Lynksztanga Keta, Rajfa, Szusblech, Szpajchy, Zic</i>	<i>Fahrrad/Rad: Bremsen, Gepäckträger Lenkstange, Kette, Reifen Schutzblech, Speichen, Sitz</i>	Rower: hamulce, nośnik, poręczne, łańcuch rowerowy, opony, błotnik, szprychy, siedzenie	Bicycle: brakes, carrier, bicycle chain, tires, fender, spokes, seat
<i>Majster</i> (M), (C): <i>Szery, Myjtermas, Waserwoga, szralbyncyjer, etc.</i>	<i>Meister: Schere, Metermaß, Wassewaage, Schraubenzieher, etc.</i>	Rzemieślnik: nożyczki, taśma miernicza, poziomica, śrubokręt, itp.	Craftsman: scissors, tape measure, spirit level, screwdriver, etc.
<i>Sztudynty</i> , (M), (W): <i>Hefty, Pukeltasza, Bajtlik, Filok, Klapsznita, Kamraty</i>	<i>Studenten: Hefte, Puckeltasche, Beutel, Füller, Klappschnitte, Kameraden</i>	Studenty: zeszyty ćwiczeń, plecak, torba, pióra wieczne, kromki chleba, towarzysze	Students: workbooks, backpack, bag, fountain pens, sandwich, comrades
Tyta with semantic word fields Theme of the word field: School (not all of the words can be clearly seen on the image of the <i>Tyta</i>)	Schultüte Translation into Standard German (expressions considered dated in contemporary German are in brackets))	Translation into Standard Polish	Translation into English
<i>Klajster, Hefty, Gyszichta (title of book), Szwam, Liniorz, Klapschnita, etc.</i>	<i>Klebstoff (Kleister), Schulhefte, Geschichte Schwamm, Lineal, Butterbrot, (Klappschnitte), etc.</i>	klej, zeszyty, historia gąbka, linijka, składane kromki chleba, itp.	glue, notebooks, history, sponge, ruler, sandwich, etc.
Germanisms displayed on Children's T-shirts	Translation into Standard German (in multi word text, translated Germanisms are in cursive letters)	Translation into Standard Polish	Translation into English
<i>Bajtel</i>	<i>Junge</i>	chłopczyk	boy
<i>Ciga</i>	<i>Ziege</i>	koza	goat
<i>Cug</i>	<i>Zug</i>	pociąg	train
<i>Cwerg</i>	<i>Zwerg</i>	krasnoludek	gnome
Dej pozor bo <i>bajsna</i>	Aufpassen, ich <i>beiße</i>	uwaga, bo ugryzę	careful, or I bite
<i>Frelka</i>	<i>Fräulein</i>	dziewczynka	girl
<i>Fojerman</i>	<i>Feuerwehrmann</i>	strażak	fireman
<i>Heksa</i>	<i>Hexe</i>	czarownica	witch
<i>Krepel</i>	<i>Kreppel, Krapfen</i>	pączek	doughnut
<i>Ojla</i>	<i>Eule</i>	sowa	owl
<i>Szmaterlok</i>	<i>Schmetterling</i>	motyl	butterfly
<i>Rojber</i>	<i>Räuber</i>	bandyta	robber

5.3 Promotion of the Upper Silesian ethnolect's Germanisms as a commodity

In this section, I analysed to what extent the Gryfnie.com company promotes Germanisms on their T-shirts by answering the following questions:

- a) What percentage of the company's T-shirts feature Germanisms? Are there just a few 'token' T-shirts featuring Germanisms?
- b) What kind of Germanisms has the company selected? That is, are they just the most popular and well known Germanisms to Upper Silesian speakers, or is the company promoting currently less known and used Germanisms of the ethnolect?

I also investigated the factors that enabled the Germanisms of the Upper Silesian ethnolect to become a commodity that adds value to the Gryfnie.com T-shirts.

To determine to what extent the Gryfnie.com company promotes the Germanisms of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, I calculated the percentage of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts that feature Germanisms. I first counted all T-shirts featuring the Upper Silesian ethnolect for a total of 147 T-shirts in the above-mentioned tabs (see Table 3) of the online store: There were 60 men's, 57 women's, and 30 children's T-shirts. As I have mentioned before, the Upper Silesian ethnolect belongs to the West Slavic dialect continuum (Hentschel, 2001, 2018; Tambor, 2014), with numerous inclusions of Germanisms (German loanwords), and some loanwords from the Czech, and Slovak languages (ibid.). These various types of lexemes that are part of the Upper Silesian ethnolect are represented on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts. But since this research is focusing on the ethnolect's Germanisms, I proceeded to select for my data set only T-shirts which feature Germanisms and then calculated to what extent the Gryfnie.com company promotes Germanisms on their T-shirts. Out of the initial 147 men's, women's, and children's T-shirts with text in the Upper Silesian ethnolect which I at first counted in the Gryfnie.com online store, 78 T-shirts, or 53%, featured the ethnolect's Germanisms. This

figure is striking considering that researchers estimate that only about 18% of the Upper Silesian ethnolect lexemes are Germanisms (Tambor, 2014; Hentschel, Fekete, & Tambor, 2021). This would indicate that Gryfnie.com chose to display on their T-shirts a much higher proportion of Germanisms in relation to the percentage of Germanisms found in the Upper Silesian ethnolect.

The large percentage of T-shirts with Germanisms is also remarkable considering what Barbara Johnstone (2009) calls the ‘commodity situation’, where several factors, including ideological and economic, must line up in such a way as to make printed T-shirts featuring a dialect, or in this case an ethnolect, viable as a commodity (p. 161). Gryfnie.com is selling T-shirts that feature Germanisms at a time when research results show that Germanism use by ethnolect speakers has declined in the past decades, and for non-ethnolect speaking Poles as potential consumers of the T-shirts, the Germanisms are the greatest barrier to understanding the ethnolect, because they are not of Slavic origin like other lexemes of the ethnolect (Tambor, 2014; Hentschel, Fekete, Tambor, 2021). Yet, the Germanisms have become a selling feature in the commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect by Gryfnie.com. To investigate how the ethnolect’s Germanisms added value to the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, I followed Johnstone’s analysis of the conditions and processes that have led to the viability of Pittsburghese T-shirts (Johnstone, 2009). In her analysis, Johnstone invokes Appadurai’s (1986) description of the ‘commodity situation’ (cited in Johnstone, 2009, p. 161). According to Appadurai (1986), the “commodity situation in the social life of any ‘thing’ can be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability for some other ‘thing’ is its socially relevant feature” (pp.13–15, cited in Johnstone 2009, p.161). To enter into a ‘commodity situation’, a ‘thing’, (in this case the Germanisms of the Upper Silesian

ethnolect), must be in a ‘commodity phase’, it must be a potential ‘commodity candidate’, and it must be in a viable ‘commodity context’ (ibid).

1. Commodity phase: When and how did the ethnolect’s Germanisms acquire the potential for commodification? To follow Johnstone’s method, answering these questions requires taking a historical perspective on the indexical meanings of the Germanisms. Historically, the Germanisms in the Upper Silesian ethnolect indexed, alongside with Czech and Slavic lexemes, the multilingualism of the ethnolect speakers (Kamusella, 2011, 2013). Once the Germanisms were associated ideologically with non-standard linguistic expressions and as the contributing factors to the negatively perceived “mixed speech” of the Slavic Upper Silesian ethnolect (Hentschel 2013, p. IV; Kocyba, 2011, p. 255), they indexed negative membership in the ethnolect. Carl Kaisig’s 1933 writings and comparison of the Upper and Lower Silesian ethnolects, for example, contributed to a long-standing and often cited critique of the Upper Silesian ethnolect as an “Übergangerscheinung und eine Verfallserscheinung des Polnischen” (“a transitional language phenomenon and a decline of the Polish language”) due to the presence of the Germanisms in the ethnolect (as cited in Hentschel 2001, p. 159). The Germanisms have indexed negative membership in the ethnolect in two different environments, first when Standard German was the ‘Dachsprache’ (official language) and later when Standard Polish replaced German as the official language in Upper Silesia. Prior to 1945, when Upper Silesia was part of Germany, Standard German speakers perceived the ethnolect as a Polish language diluted by inclusions of Germanisms. This gave the ethnolect the pejorative name ‘Wasserpolsch’, or watered-down Polish language (Reiter, 1985, cited in Hentschel, 2001, p.157). When this region became part of Poland in 1945 and Standard Polish became the ‘Dachsprache’, the Germanisms continued to index a negative membership in the ethnolect, but this time because of their association with the German language which was prohibited in any form during the communist period (1945-1989) by the Polish government (Kamusella 2013; Szmeja, 2016). The Germanisms entered a commodity

phase only when change in Polish political ideology in 1989 made it possible for the Germanisms to be linked with local identity rather than with ‘incorrect’, stigmatizing language forms in the Upper Silesian ethnolect. The link of the Germanisms to local identity was confirmed in a survey of 2000 Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers, conducted by a team of Polish and German researchers in 2019, in which the majority (95 %) of respondents rejected the abandonment of Germanism or their reduction in future lexical codification (Hentschel, Fekete, Tambor, 2021).

2. Commodity candidacy: Johnstone suggests that there needs to be in place a larger cultural framework in which it makes sense for people to produce and buy T-shirts featuring the local ethnolect. The cultural framework for the Upper Silesian ethnolect has changed profoundly after 1989. One of the key factors for this change has been a movement for greater autonomy in the region of Upper Silesia and for recognition of the region’s ethnolect as a regional language (Hentschel, 2018; Kamusella 2013; Kocyba 2011; Tambor, 2014). This has brought a revitalization of the ethnolect through publications of dictionaries, internet blogs, greater exposure of the ethnolect in the newspaper and television media, and efforts for codification of the ethnolect. These positive changes of the public image and exposure of the ethnolect created favourable conditions for entrepreneurial endeavours in the commodification of the ethnolect.

3. Commodity context: In what ideological and material contexts can a local ethnolect be a viable commodity? To answer these questions Johnstone’s (2009) method requires taking a closer look at the economics of T-shirt sales and the ideas about T-shirts or other merchandise (such as the *Tyta*) featuring language as a medium of communication that encourage people to produce and purchase them. A closer look at the economy of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts reveals that their cost is comparable to printed T-shirts found on Polish online companies such as popular, international clothing providers like H&M or Zara which are in the average price range for T-shirts sold in Poland, between 29.50 zł - 65 zł (C\$10-

C\$30). Thus, the Gryfnie.com company has found a niche market for a local resource, the Upper Silesian ethnolect, in the competitive clothing market where people are willing to pay not just for a piece of clothing but also for the words and images displayed on the T-shirts. As Johnstone (2009) points out, “people who purchase these T-shirts must know by whom and why such T-shirts can be worn” (p. 165). In an interview with an online business support service (Leżoch, 2019) the Gryfnie.com owners point out that their T-shirts are exclusively produced in Poland. This point is also made clear to the customer on the production label of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts: “Made in Poland from start to finish! 100%”, (“Łod poczontku do końca łonaczone w Polsce! 100%”). The label informs the customer that purchasing a Gryfnie.com T-shirt supports local economy and, in a sense, provides a link with regionality and the region’s history that is featured on the T-shirt in form of the ethnolect. The Gryfnie.com T-shirts can also be seen as challenging the historical negative indexical membership of the Germanisms in the Upper Silesian ethnolect, for as I have shown in the previous part of the analysis, over 50 % of the T-shirts feature Germanisms. Järlehed (2019) in his discussion of Basque and Galician T-shirts, which feature what is considered non-standard ‘imperfect’ mixed local language, suggests that these T-shirts provide consumers with symbolic materials to use these language markers as a positive identity resource (p. 65). Just like the ‘imperfect’ Basque and Galician in Spain, the ‘flawed’ Irish, marketed on T-shirts in Ireland (Pietikäinen et al, 2016), the Upper Silesian ethnolect has been indexed as inferior in relation to the Standard Polish and German language forms, but the usage of these non-standard language forms and registers by local T-shirt designers and other cultural entrepreneurs challenge their indexical value (ibid.).

In the above analysis section, I have shown that the commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect by the Gryfnie.com company imbues the Germanisms with value which suggests that the Germanisms are a valuable component of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. In addition, the company promotes the Germanisms by featuring them on more than half of their

entire T-shirt collection. The next part of this analysis section addresses the question about the choice of Germanisms that Gryfnie.com displays on 53 % of their T-shirts. That is, does the company favour only popular and commercially more advantageous Germanisms, or are Germanisms featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts that are less known and used by the ethnolect speakers? To answer this question, the tabulated Germanisms from Table 3 were ranked according to the *Frequenzwörterbuch deutscher Lehnwörter im Schlesischen der Gegenwart* (Hentschel, Fekete, Tambor, 2021). The *Frequenzwörterbuch* (word frequency dictionary), was generated in collaborative work by the Polish linguists, Jolanta Tambor, and her German colleagues, Gerd Hentschel and Istvan Fekete (2021) to measure the vitality, or the frequency of use of the Germanisms in the ethnolect that is spoken in today's Upper Silesia. The central question which this word frequency dictionary aims to answer is, to what extent today, three quarters of a century after the end of the Second World War, people of Upper Silesia still use Germanisms in conversations that they lead in the ethnolect. As there are no text corpora available for this regional ethnolect, the frequency was determined in the sense of the so-called 'subjective frequency' (ibid., p. 4). The basic requirement for the respondents was the use of the ethnolect with some regularity at least when it comes to communication within their families. To ensure reliability of this survey and avoid targeting a homogeneous group, the number of respondents was set at 2000. For this study, the method of interviewing by means of a questionnaire was designed somewhat differently than usual. Rather than asking the interviewees how often they use individual Germanisms, in this study, the question was how often the respondents use a first word, Germanism, compared to a second word, a word in the Standard Polish language. The possible answers available for respondents were: ("I use this Germanism") "mainly"; "often"; "equally often"; "less often"; "rarely"; "never but I know the word"; "never because I don't know the word". So, it is not about the frequency of a certain word against the background of the entire Upper Silesian vocabulary, but rather a contrastive assessment of Upper Silesian words of German origin to

corresponding Standard Polish words. The resulting frequency dictionary covers 687 Germanisms, which are among those that are included in many glossaries and popular dictionaries on the present Upper Silesian ethnolect. The 687 Germanisms are ranked from 1 to 687, where the rank 1 testifies to the highest subjective frequency, the rank 687 to the lowest.

The results of the authors' inquiry indicated that a large number of the 687 Germanisms in question are still in use, but a comparable number is not (ibid.). The researchers report that almost half of the analyzed lexical units in comparison with their Polish equivalents are used only rarely or are never used. An influx of lexemes from Standard Polish had to be assumed, because after 1945 (in the eastern part of Upper Silesia from the beginning of the 1920s), it has been the dominant and official language replacing Standard German as the 'Dachsprache', which previously had the same function for many years. For this reason, lexemes from Standard Polish, phonetically and morphologically adapted to the Upper Silesian ethnolect in many cases, may appear instead of Germanisms (Hentschel, 2018, p. 116). At the same time, the authors (Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor, 2021) caution that it cannot be ignored that the number of Germanisms, which show a similar subjective frequency as their Polish counterparts, reaching the level of 40%, is also significant, and almost 10% of the Germanisms are much more often used than the Polish equivalent words (ibid.).

How do the Germanisms used by Gryfnie.com fit into the dictionary frequency scale? Are they part of the frequently or less often used Germanisms by the ethnolect users? The reasoning for these questions goes back to my thesis argument that commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, as shown on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect. If the Gryfnie.com T-shirts feature Germanisms that are not well known to the ethnolect speakers, this would indicate a potential contribution of the T-shirts to the revitalization of the ethnolect. To answer these questions Germanisms featured on

the Gryfnie T-shirts were compared to the frequency dictionary findings and listed in Table 4.

Table 4		
<i>Germanisms (in bold and cursive font) featured by Gryfnie.com on women's, men's, and children's T-shirts are compared to the frequency that these Germanisms are used by current speakers of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. The ranking is based on the list of 687 Germanisms compiled in the Frequenzwörterbuch deutscher Lehnwörter im Schlesischen der Gegenwart (Hentschel, Fekete, & Tambor, 2021).</i>		
Germanisms Used on Gryfnie.com T-shirts	Standard German	Ranking according to the <i>Frequenzwörterbuch deutscher Lehnwörter im Schlesischen der Gegenwart</i>
<i>Ber</i>	<i>Bär</i>	no ranking available
<i>Brymze</i>	<i>Bremsen</i>	no ranking available
<i>Hefty</i>	<i>Schulhefte</i>	no ranking available
<i>Graczk</i>	<i>Spielzeug</i>	no ranking available
<i>Guminioki</i>	<i>Gummistiefel</i>	no ranking available
<i>Gyszichta</i>	<i>Geschichte</i>	no ranking available
<i>Heksa,</i>	<i>Hexe</i>	no ranking available
<i>Klamory</i>	<i>Klamotten</i>	no ranking available
<i>Koble</i>	<i>Knobeln</i>	no ranking available
<i>Liniorz</i>	<i>Lineal</i>	no ranking available
<i>Lypensztift</i>	<i>Lippenstift</i>	no ranking available
<i>Majster</i>	<i>Meister</i>	no ranking available
<i>Moplik,</i>	<i>Moped</i>	no ranking available
<i>Pyndale</i>	<i>Pedalen/Fahrrad Pedalen</i>	no ranking available
<i>Radyjok</i>	<i>Radio</i>	no ranking available
Mom <i>Ruła</i>	Ich habe meine <i>Ruhe</i>	no ranking available
<i>Rajfa</i>	<i>Reifen/Autoreifen</i>	no ranking available
<i>Szlanga</i>	<i>Schlange</i>	no ranking available
<i>Szłalch</i>	<i>Schlauch/Gartenschlauch</i>	no ranking available
<i>Szralba</i>	<i>Schraube</i>	no ranking available
<i>Szyry</i>	<i>Schere</i>	no ranking available
<i>Sztudynty</i>	<i>Studenten</i>	no ranking available
<i>Familok</i>	<i>Familienhaus (Mehrfamilienhaus)</i>	6
Ciś na <i>Luft</i>	Raus auf die <i>Luft</i>	13
<i>Larmo</i>	<i>Lärm</i>	20
<i>Zaś Szychta</i>	wieder <i>Schichtarbeit</i>	21
<i>Gruba</i>	<i>Grube/Bergwerk</i>	26

Grubiorz	<i>Grubenarbeiter</i>	26
Fajrant	<i>Feierabend</i>	28
Bala	<i>Ball</i>	31
Krepel	<i>Kreppel, Krapfen</i>	35
Waserwoga	<i>Wasserwaage</i>	40
Bajtel	<i>Kleinkind</i>	42
Keta	<i>Kette/Fahrradkette</i>	43
Cug	<i>Zug</i>	46
Fusbal	<i>Fußball</i>	47
Kibel	<i>Kübel</i>	50
Bombony	<i>Bonbons</i>	52
Klapschnita	<i>Klapschnitte</i>	60
Auto	<i>Auto</i>	68
Colstok	<i>Zollstock</i>	86
Szolka Tyju	<i>Tasse (Schale) Tee</i>	96/221
Szrank	<i>Schrank</i>	102
Rojber	<i>Reuber</i>	120
Skocz mi na Pukel	<i>Rutsch mir den Pukel runter</i>	129
Zic	<i>Sitz</i>	130
Nudelkula	<i>Nudelrolle</i>	134
Hercklekoty	<i>Herzklopfen</i>	142
Oma	<i>Oma</i>	146
Wihajster	<i>Wie heißt er</i>	154
Myjtermas	<i>Metermaß</i>	178
Frelka	<i>Fräulein</i>	185
Fachman	<i>Fachmann</i>	191
Dej Kusika	<i>Gib Küsschen</i>	197
Opa	<i>Opa</i>	199
Dej pozor bo bajsna	<i>Gib acht, ich beiße</i>	205
Oberiba	<i>Oberrübe/Kohlrabi</i>	210
Heft	<i>Heft</i>	228
Lauba	<i>Laube</i>	236
Giskana	<i>Gießkanne</i>	240
Fliger	<i>Flugzeug</i>	245
Bojtlik	<i>Beutel</i>	261
Pukeltasza	<i>Puckeltasche/Rucksack</i>	262
Fedra	<i>Feder</i>	264
Fojerman,	<i>Feuerwehrmann</i>	265
Kamela	<i>Kamel</i>	280
Radiska	<i>Radieschen</i>	298
Ajnfart	<i>Einfahrt</i>	299
Kamrat	<i>Kamerad</i>	319
Elefant	<i>Elefant</i>	331
Szmaterlok	<i>Schmetterling</i>	339

Sznitlok	<i>Schnittlauch</i>	382
Gryfno Frelka	<i>(geschicktes) nettes Fräulein</i>	399
Afa	<i>Affe</i>	397
Gryfny Karlus	<i>(geschickter), netter Kerl</i>	399
Kafyj	<i>Kaffee</i>	419
Szraibencyjer	<i>Szraubenzieher</i>	420
Szusblech	<i>Schutzblech</i>	429
Zonynbrele	<i>Sonnenbrille</i>	445
Muterka	<i>Schraubenmutter</i>	450
Rolszuty	<i>Rollschuhe</i>	454
Filok	<i>Füllfederhalter</i>	461
Sznitbony	<i>Schnittbohnen</i>	466
Rechtor/in	<i>Rektor/in</i>	472
Drach	<i>Drachen</i>	516
Gymizy	<i>Gemüse</i>	531
Lynksztanga	<i>Lenkstange</i>	532
Ciga	<i>Ziege</i>	533
Cwerg	<i>Zwerg</i>	553
Ojla	<i>Eule</i>	589
Wandrus	<i>Wanderer</i>	595
Gypek	<i>Gepäckträger</i>	650

As shown in the above Table, 23 of the 93 Germanisms, or 25%, that were visible on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts (not all words in the semantic word fields could be clearly seen) were not on the list of the 687 Germanisms ranked in the *Frequenzwörterbuch*. This is significant because the authors of the *Frequenzwörterbuch* (Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor, 2021) point out that they ranked Germanisms chosen from several recently compiled dictionaries of the Upper Silesian ethnolect that list Germanisms self-reported as used by contemporary speakers of the ethnolect. This would indicate that Gryfnie.com is featuring Germanisms that are not considered to be part of the current ethnolect speakers' repertoire. This position by Gryfnie.com is further underscored by additional 8 Germanisms or 9% that are featured on the company's T-shirts but listed in the *Frequenzwörterbuch* (*ibid.*) as either not used or not understood by current speaker of the ethnolect (ranking 510-687). Words like: **Ciga** (*Ziege, goat*), **Cwerg** (*Zwerg, gnome*), **Ojla** (*Eule, owl*), **Rechtor** (*Rektor, principal*), **Filok**

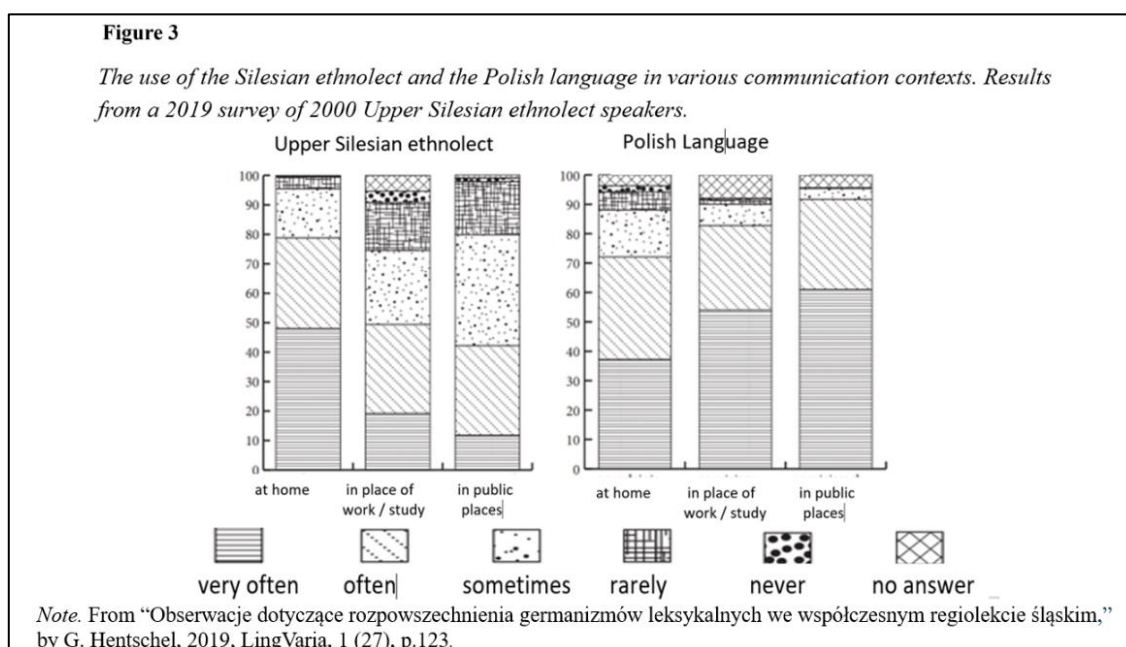
(*Füllfederhalter/Füller, fountain pen*) are among those bottom ranked words where participants would report of either “knowing these Germanisms but not using them”, or “not knowing these words at all”. Another 14 of the Germanisms, amounting to 15%, that are featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts are in the category of seldom used Germanisms by the ethnolect speakers (ranking 323-415 in the *Frequenzwörterbuch*). It is noteworthy that many of these Germanisms ranked in the *Frequenzwörterbuch* (ibid.) as least known or unknown to the ethnolect speakers, or seldom used, are featured by the Gryfnie company on T-shirts with semantic word fields (see Table 3 for a list of these T-shirts and related word fields). The role of the semantic word fields in the revitalization of the ethnolect will be discussed in subsequent analysis sections. 18 of the Germanisms featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, or 19% (ranking position 185-322), are used just as often as the equivalent Standard Polish words by ethnolect speakers. The remaining 30 Germanisms that were found on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in this study, or 32%, belong to the most frequently chosen Germanisms by the ethnolect speakers (ranking 1-185 in the *Frequenzwörterbuch*). Among these words are Germanisms that are connected to the historically significant industry of this region – coal mining and steel production – dating back to the industrial revolution of the early 19th century when Upper Silesia was one of Germany’s most important industrial regions (Kocyba, 2011; Wiatr, 2011). Words like **Gruba** (*Grube/Bergwerk, mine*), **Grubiorz** (*Grubenarbeiter/Bergmann, miner*), **Szychta** (*Arbeitsschicht, work shift*), **Familok** (*Mehrfamilienhaus für Grubenarbeiter, multi-family house*) will be further discussed in the analysis of the construction of Upper Silesian identity on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in the context of revitalization of the ethnolect. Apart from for the verb **bajсна** (*beißen, to bite*), all of the Germanisms listed in Tables 3 & 4 are nouns. These nouns, except for the aforementioned Germanisms linked to the industry of this region, represent vocabulary describing ordinary items that are encountered in everyday life, for example, food items: **Klapsznita** (*Brotschnitte, sandwich*) **Bombony** (*Bonbons, candy*), **Szolka Tyju** (*Tasse/Schale*

Tee, cup of tea) **Krepel** (*Krapfen, doughnut*); animals: **Ciga** (*Ziege, goat*), **Ojla** (*Eule, owl*); work related expressions: **Fachman** (*Fachmann, expert*), **Majster** (*Meister, master, Mutterka* (*Schraubenmutter, screw*), and humorous expressions like Skocz mi na **Pukel** (*Rutsch mir den Buckel runter, I don't care*). To summarize, a comparison with the *Frequenzwörterbuch* has shown that 32% of the Germanisms featured by Gryfnie.com, are known to a majority of speakers of the Upper Silesian ethnolect and are frequently used instead of the equivalent Standard Polish word. But a substantial number representing 49% of the Germanisms featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts are either not used, or seldom used by the current ethnolect speakers, or are unknown to them. The remaining 19% of Germanisms presented on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts are ranked in the *Frequenzwörterbuch* as being used by the ethnolect speakers as often as equivalent Standard Polish words. Thus, the result of the above analysis indicates that Gryfnie.com does not rely on the most widely used Germanisms to be showcased on their T-shirts but features many of the less frequently chosen Germanisms by current Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers, or Germanisms unknown to the speakers. The claim of the Gryfnie.com owners is to preserve and promote the Upper Silesian ethnolect: “We didn't want to talk about the ethnolect in the past tense” (Oslislo-Piekarska, p. 69). Interestingly, the word **Gryfnie** - from the Standard German word *griffig, or geschickt*, meaning ‘handy, nice’ - chosen by the Gryfnie.com company as their logo, is ranked as one of the less frequently used words with a ranking of 389 out of 687 ranking positions (Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache, 2022).

5.4 Assessing the vitality of the Upper Silesian ethnolect in contemporary Upper Silesia.

Before analyzing how the Gryfnie.com T-shirts contribute to the revitalization of the Upper Silesian ethnolect it is essential to consider the vitality of the ethnolect in contemporary Upper Silesia and why it needs to be revitalized. As there is no official reference published on the Upper Silesian ethnolect's vitality or endangerment, as for example in the publications

of the Ethnologue (2021), I have drawn on data provided by Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor (2021) who in addition to their compilation of the *Frequenzwörterbuch* also compared the use of the ethnolect and the Standard Polish language in the following three situational contexts: in the family, workplace or study, or in public places, such as eateries, restaurants, shops, on the street (talking to strangers).



The results of this comparison are illustrated in figure 3, and they reveal the vitality of the ethnolect as indicated by the extent to which the ethnolect is reportedly used by the speakers in the various domains. Functions of the language in the community and society are important indicators in assessing vitality of a language, or other speech forms, like the ethnolect (Lewis & Simons, 2010). Researchers concerned with language loss emphasize that the vitality of a language (or ethnolect) is related to a combination of factors –social, political, demographic, and practical, but of greatest relevance are the social and political factors: the use of a language, or the ethnolect, in a wide variety of domains, including the home, schools, government offices, on the streets, in stores, in the workplace (Crystal, 2000; Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; UNESCO, 2003). The availability of the target language in these various domains is not always the decision of individual speakers but is often shaped by language and education policies (ibid.). This is linked to the social prestige of a language, which is in turn

related to speakers' motivations to use the language, and also connected to the economic power of a language (Grenoble, 2021, p. 9). The results in figure 3 show that respondents reported the most frequent use of the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the family context but much less often in the workplace or study and in public places (Hentschel, 2019, p. 123). The gradation for the Polish language is exactly the opposite: The Polish language dominates in all official public domains such as offices, work, and education. The Upper Silesian ethnolect has thus far not been recognized as a minority or regional language by the Polish government and therefore is not granted any official status and functions, nor is it part of the education system (Kamusella, 2013; Szmeja, 2007; Wiatr, 2020). Standard Polish dominates also as a spoken language in the public sphere (restaurants, shops, streets). What's more, it is also notable that almost 40% of the 2000 Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers who participated in the compilation of the *Frequenzwörterbuch* by Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor (2021), reported using the Polish language very often in family circles (see figure 3). Thus, there is a shift from the Upper Silesian ethnolect to the dominant Polish language even within the home environment.

A number of classifications have been proposed to assess the viability or level of endangerment of a language (Fishman, 1990; Lewis and Simons, 2010; UNESCO 2003). Most of them appear to employ one or more of the following criteria: (a) number of speakers - in particular first language speakers; (b) age of speakers; (c) transmission of the language to children, i.e., whether or not the children are learning the language; (d) functions of the language in the community/society. Comparing the results of Table 3 with the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) by Lewis and Simons (2010) to assess the vitality of a language, the Upper Silesian ethnolect could be considered a threatened language with its reduced numbers of communicative domains and loss of speakers in the home environment.

5.5 The role of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in public space in the context of the ethnolect revitalization

Researchers concerned with language loss and engaged in projects of language revitalization suggest that increased visibility equals increased chance of survival of a threatened language (Olko, 2021; Ritchie, 2016; Wicherkiewicz, 2021). To Marten et al. (2012) being visible in the public space, referred to as the ‘linguistic landscape’ by the authors, may be as important for the survival of minority languages as being heard. A linguistic landscape, commonly consisting of “the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings” (Landry and Bourhis, 1997), has been taken by scholars to represent ethnolinguistic vitality, symbolic power, language ideology, and various combinations of these (p. 23). While official languages may be observed in numerous public domains, such as on signs, menus, public monuments and so on, this is not the case for all but a few minority or endangered languages (Olko, 2021.). For most of these languages, including the Upper Silesian ethnolect, the language found in public domains will be the same as the official national language (ibid.). By incorporating a threatened or marginalized language across the physical space of the community in which it exists, not only is awareness of the minority language improved but so is the opportunity for the use of the language outside of the idiomatic context of individuals (Ritchie, 2016). As pointed out by Ritchie (ibid.), language visibility might not determine the continued vitality of a language, but it is a significant factor in the process of language revitalisation. The reasons for the significance of language visibility can be attributed to improved community awareness, public influence, and economic benefits. Language visibility projects such as public signage, billboards, menus, etc. have both a symbolic outcome through acknowledging local traditional languages but also place the language within the context of non-speakers’ daily activities (Ritchie, 2016, p. 68). The

printed T-shirt can be compared with other more traditional forms of signage in the linguistic landscape, like billboards, but Caldwell (2017) assigns to the T-shirt features of both spoken and written communication (p. 127). The printed T-shirt, like the written mode on a billboard, is both a visual and a planned act of communication. At the same time, the printed T-shirt, like the spoken mode, is a face-to-face communicative act, with a potential for interactivity between wearer and viewer. Thus, the potential for interaction and immediate feedback is there, and, if it is acted upon, the mode shifts from the written text on the printed T-shirt to speech (ibid.). Another characteristic of the printed T-shirt is that the T-shirt text and image is permanent and combined with the face-to-face dimension makes this a unique feature of the printed T-shirt. Speech is transient, the writing on the T-shirt, however, is a continuous ongoing permanent communication. “The printed T-shirt may be in the background to other communicated events, however, all the while it remains in the vision of spoken interaction and the public environment more generally” (Caldwell, 2017, p. 131). Järlehed (2019) reminds us that, “T-shirts are not just clothing, but mobile, multimodal and highly accessible communicative media used for displaying and indexing a wide range of things, people, places and values” (p. 61). They invite the viewer to reflect on notions such as language and its cultural heritage (ibid.). Similarly, this would suggest that wearing a Gryfnie.com T-shirt inscribed with Germanisms in a semantic word field invites the viewer of the T-shirt to reflect on the images, the text, the choice of the vocabulary and possibly to engage with the wearer of the T-shirt to discuss the ethnolect words. For example, most of the Germanisms in the semantic word field on the T-shirt *Kolo* (see figure 4 below) belong to the least used or even no longer known or understood words by the majority of the ethnolect speakers. Only two out of the nine Germanisms, *Keta/Kette* (bicycle chain) and *Zic/Sitz* (bicycle seat), are still ranked as being frequently used by the ethnolect speakers (Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor, 2021).

Figure 4

Gryfnie.com T-shirt **Koło**. **Koło** is a translation of the German word *Rad*, from *Fahrrad*, and means ‘wheel’ in Standard Polish. A bicycle is called ‘rower’ in Standard Polish, never a **Koło**. **Koło** is perceived by both Upper Silesian and Polish speakers as a typical Upper Silesian word (Vann, 2000, p.187). All of the words in the semantic word field are Germanisms: **Brymze** /*Bremsen*/Hamulce, **Gypek**/*Gepäckträger*/Nośnik, **Lynksztanga**/*Lenkstange*/Poręczne, **Keta**/*Kette*/łańcuch rowerowy, **Rajfa**/*Reifen*/Opony, **Szusblech**/*Schutzblech*/Błotnik, **Szpaichy**/*Speichen*/Szprychy, **Pyndale**/*Pedale*/Pedały, **Zic**/*Sitz*/Siedzenie. The only Germanism that are still used regularly by the ethnolect speakers are **Keta** and **Zic** according to the *Frequenzwörterbuch* by Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor (2021). (Germanisms are in bold cursive font, Standard German in cursive font, and Standard Polish in regular font).



It is also important to keep in mind that only a fraction of the current population of the two voivodships that comprise the historical Upper Silesia speak the ethnolect at all. In the Polish National Census (NSP) in 2011, 529,400 Upper Silesians declared to use the ethnolect which amounts to only 9% of the entire population of about 6 million in the two voivodships. Only 30% of the current population in the historical Upper Silesian territory are autochthons, over the years there has been an influx of immigrants from neighbouring parts of Poland or from the former, pre-WWII eastern regions of Poland (Bialasiewicz, 2002). Community

involvement of both speakers and non-speakers of the language is vital to any revitalisation strategy and can have a direct impact in improving the situation of a marginalized language (Dołowy-Rybińska & Hornsby, 2021; Wicherkiewicz, 2021). Ritchie (2016) proposes that public presence of a minority language, such as on billboards, menu cards, or T-shirts can facilitate functional multilingualism among the speakers of the dominant language within the speech community. Within this framework, speakers of the dominant language are encouraged to acquire basic phrases of the minority language which allows for an integration of the minority language across the community. In the case of Upper Silesia, functional multilingualism might help to ease tensions and irritation between the Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers and Polish speakers who are not familiar with the ethnolect (Kamusella, 2013; Kocyba, 2011; Tambor, 2014).

5.6 The construction of the contemporary Upper Silesian identity on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts

In this analysis section, I draw on multimodal discourse analysis to examine how the Gryfnie company is constructing and presenting the Upper Silesian identity on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts. Generally speaking, discourse is a social practice in which not only communication takes place, but language is also staged and negotiated (Vann, 2000). With Gee (2005), discourse is the way in which “language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, evaluating and using various symbols, tools, and objects” create a socially recognizable identity (p. 21). Bucholtz and Hall (2005) who define identity broadly as “the social positioning of self and other” (p. 586) described how the co-construction of identity involves the use of language as a tool individuals use to produce identity. “Because these tools are put to use in interaction, the process of identity construction does not reside within the individual but in intersubjective relations” (p. 608). It is through the use of tools, or linguistic resources, that individuals negotiate the meaning of their social positions and

identities. The following multimodal discourse analysis is positioned within the context of language revitalization to consider the link between the construction of the Upper Silesian identity and the revitalization of the ethnolect. I also applied concepts of Translanguaging (explained below) to examine the function of the Upper Silesian Germanisms in the construction of identity and the revitalization of the ethnolect. Preceding my analysis is a brief summary of research that reflects on the Upper Silesian identity from the historical and the present perspective. The summary provides some background to my subsequent analysis.

i. Background information on the Upper Silesian identity

Historically, for Upper Silesians the relationship with the region as a specific place was stronger than the relationship with the nation or state. Researchers of this borderland (among them Karch, 2010; Kocyba, 2011; Struve, 2017) point out that the Upper Silesian case shows the fluidity of national identities and the persistence on non-national forms of loyalties and identity. The Polish anthropologist, Alexandra Kunce (2013), a researcher in the Institute of Culture Studies at the University of Silesia, explains that “the identity of being an Upper Silesian was in the sense of being rooted in this region” (p. 73). The home and its immediate surroundings were of great importance as symbolic figures in the culture and identity of Upper Silesia. It was *Heimat*, ‘the local cosmos, but also the cosmos as such, the world as home’ (ibid.). The presupposed distancing from the outside can be explained by the experience of history - frequent changes of borders and nationality complete with its specific standard language resulted in a certain distrust and passivity towards what was outside. The world outside the home was perceived as impermanent and changeable. What lasted was the home, the community, the local language (the ethnolect), and the pride in work (Karch, 2010; Kunce, 2013). Paradoxically, explains Kunce (ibid.) the contemporary situation in Upper Silesia is similar, although the reasons for this impermanence and changeability of the external world are different. Searching for your place and discovering your roots has become a trend recently. Identity became a matter of personal choice, which encourages people to

look for roots and build bonds with the region. Upper Silesia in its search for identity and modernization after the political changes of 1989 brings forth a new attitude of civic engagement that appeals to more and more young people who yearn for change, writes the Polish/German researcher, Marcin Wiatr (2011, p. 73). This attitude of civic engagement goes beyond an expression of local patriotism, explains Wiatr (ibid.), it means being at the forefront of change. The need for recognition of one's own distinctiveness and the expectation to influence the fate of the region are strongly pronounced (ibid.). The implementation of such inspirations can take on different forms. One of these forms is 'semantic design', a term used by Irma Kozina to describe design that uses symbolic and verbal associations inspired by Upper Silesia's culture and heritage, which, in recent years, have been important factors in shaping local identity (Oslislo-Piekarska, 2015, p. 64). A group of young activists described by Oslislo-Piekarska as the 'New Silesians' aims to change the region through semantic design (ibid.). The 'New Silesians' include activists, artists, and entrepreneurs, and among them are the owners of the Gryfnie.com company, Klaudia and Krzysztof Rokseła. The 'New Silesians' draw their inspiration from the mining culture, post-industrial landscape, architecture, language, culinary traditions, and folklore.

ii. Construction of the Upper Silesian identity on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts based on concepts of home, community, pride in work, and the local language

In the following section I examine how the Gryfnie.com company, using semantic design, constructs Upper Silesian identity that is based on the concepts of home, community, work, and the local language. These historical concepts of Upper Silesian identity are reflected in the Germanisms, and images featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, as for example: the tenement house *Familok* (*Mehrfamilienhaus/ multi-family home*), the coal mine *Gruba, Grubiorz* (*Grube, Grubenarbeiter, Bergmann/mine, mine worker*), the workplace *Szychta* (*Arbeitsschicht/work shift*), *Fajrant* (*Feierabend/end of work*), in the expression of

camaraderie **Kamrat** (*Kamerad/comrade*), the pride in work **Fachman** (Fachman/Expert), **Majster** (Meister/Master).

One of the icons of Upper Silesian heritage and identity linked to home is the **Familok**, a historical name adapted by the Upper Silesians from the German word *Mehrfamilienhaus*/multi-family home.

Figure 5

The Gryfnie T-shirt Familok, and the contemporary settings of the historic Familok. The T-shirt **Familok** illustrates how the Gryfnie.com brand utilizes and transforms the symbols of local industry, community life, and traditional values into a contemporary, humorous identity resource. In contemporary Upper Silesia some of the historic **Familoki** (pl.) have been restored and are used as residential units (as seen below on the left). The famous **Familok** complex Nikiszowiec in Katowice (photograph below on the right) is on the list of historical monuments of Upper Silesia. The remains of the industrial era present in the landscape inspire the inhabitants of the region to explore their own history which is different from the rest of Poland (Oslislo-Piekarska, 2015, p. 22).



Note. Photographs by Wiczorek, E. 2018. <https://slaskie.travel/article/1011340>

The **Familok** refers to multi-family buildings in workers' colonies built at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in the vicinity of mines and steel mills, which emerged in great numbers during the industrialization of Upper Silesia (figure 5). The investors of workers' colonies were usually the German owners of the mines and large industrial plants. These workers'

settlements permanently changed the structure of the region, and changed its socio-cultural structure, writes the Upper Silesian researcher Maria Lipok-Bierwiazzonek (2014). The image of the *Familok* on the Gryfnie T-shirt (figure 5) reflects the iconic red brick structure of these houses, the typically red painted window frames - the entire T-shirt is the colour of the bricks. But the image on the T-shirt also tells a story of the historic neighbourly community life, the language used by the inhabitants. The T-shirt invites the viewer to examine the details found on the image of the *Familok* (figure 6): the ubiquitous pigeons bred by the men, the stereotypical stern matriarch ruling the household, the accordion player, and, of course, the Upper Silesian ethnolect. Taking a closer look at the windows of the *Familok* image on the T-shirt (figure 6), we can imagine the life that is going on inside and invoke the typical Germanisms that describe the details. There is the matriarch with her ominous *Kelnia* (*Schöpfkelle/ladle*) in her hand shouting ‘lobiod’ (*Mittagessen/lunch*) from the window into the courtyard most likely summoning her children for the main meal of the day; there is the old man shaking his *Kryka* (*Krücke/walking stick*) out the window while shouting “Co za *Larmo!*” (What a noise!). Maybe he is shouting at the *Larmo* (*Lärm/noise*) made by the dog and cat we can see fighting in the neighbouring window; or maybe it is the *Larmo* made by the *Cyja* (*Ziehharmonika/accordion player*) in the window of the upper floor; or maybe the old man can hear the two pidgins turtling who are oblivious to the boy aiming at them with a *Szlojder* (*Schleuder/slingshot*) from the window below. Oblivious to all of this is also a young pair *Szac/Libsta* (*Schatz/Liebste/lover*) flirting with each other through adjacent windows on the uppermost floor. The T-shirt *Familok* illustrates how the Gryfnie.com brand utilizes and transforms historic symbols of local industry, community life, traditional Upper Silesian values, and the ethnolect into a contemporary, humorous identity resource. Items like the above T-shirt also have an educational function, points out Oslislo-Piekarska (2015) because they encourage the wearer and the viewer to get to know Upper Silesia and its heritage more thoroughly.

Figure 6

*A closer examination of the Gryfnie.com T-shirt **Familok**. Semiotic resources of locality include elaborated and multilayered symbols of the cultural heritage: the iconic red **Familok** building, the community life, and the Upper Silesian ethnolect.*



Research describes the inhabitants of the *Familok* as a homogeneous group in terms of their ethnic origin and Upper Silesian identity (Lipok-Bierwaczonk, 2014). Most of them came from nearby towns and villages. They all spoke the same Upper Silesian ethnolect, (with local nuances). They arranged apartments according to the same cultural patterns and cooked the same dishes (ibid.). The social bond of neighbors was overlapped by the bond that grew out of the community of the breadwinner's workplace - all of them worked in a nearby mine, steel plant or factory, which 'gave' them a flat. The homogeneity of the family block community in terms of the relationship with the workplace meant the same type of relationship with the employer, professional camaraderie, the same rhythm of family life, adjusted to the rhythm of

changes in the mine or steelworks, and the same cultural behavior (ibid.). The Gryfnie.com T-shirt **Kamrat** (*Kamerad/comrade*), as seen in figure 7 illustrates this bond between the workers at the mines or steel mills, who at that time were all male.

Figure 7

Gryfnie.com T-shirts **Kamrat** (*Kamerad/comrade*), **Fajrant** (*Feierabend/end of work.*)

The T-shirt **Kamrat** illustrates the bond between male workers at the mines or steel mills. On closer inspection, the T-shirt **Fajrant** shows a contemporary interpretation of this Germanism, illustrating a woman and man enjoying their ‘end of work’, even though **Fajrant** would have been historically associated with the male working domain.



Likewise, the Gryfnie.com T-shirt **Grubiorz** (*Grubenarbeiter/miner*) in figure 8 features an iconic image of the male mine worker, dressed in his finest regalia, something he would wear in a parade on Barborka, the feast day of St. Barbara, the patron saint of miners. Gryfnie.com offers the **Kamrat** and the **Grubiorz** T-shirts only in the men’s section of the Gryfnie.com online shop. There simply is no equivalent Germanism for a female **Grubiorz** in the Upper Silesian ethnolect, and even though the Germanism **Kamratka** indicating a word for a female comrade does exist in the ethnolect, it is used in the context of a casual friend.

Figure 8

*Gryfnie.com T-shirt **Grubiorz** (Grubenarbeiter/Bergman, miner). The Germanism **Grubiorz** applies to males only, but the festive uniform of the **Grubiorz** and participation in the annual parade to celebrate the local mine workers, as seen in the photograph on the right, have become available to all contemporary Upper Silesians as part of their identity.*

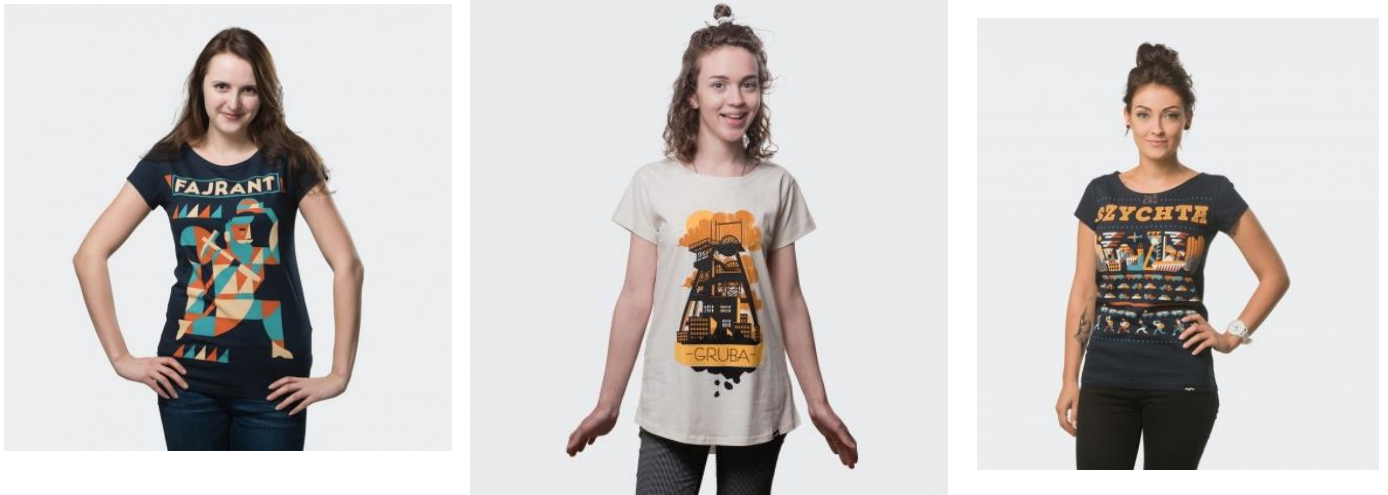


Note Image on the right by Scislowska, M. (2018, December 4). Associated Press. Miners' Day celebrated in climate talks city in Poland. Taiwan News. <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3589668>

On the other hand, the Gryfnie.com T-shirts **Fajrant** (*Feierabend/end of the workday*), **Gruba** (*Grube, mine*), and **Szycha** (*Arbeitsschicht/work shift*), as seen in figure 9, are available for men and women because these words are not gender bound to a male worker (like **Grubiorz** and **Kamrat**) even though historically they are also linked to the Upper Silesian men working in local mines and heavy industry. On closer inspection the T-shirt **Fajrant** in figure 7 shows a contemporary interpretation of this Germanism, illustrating a woman and man enjoying their 'end of work', even though **Fajrant** would have been historically associated with the male working domain. Thus, the historical industries of this region – the once exclusive domain of male workers in mining and steel production of the past - have become symbols that shape the identity of this region, available to all contemporary Upper Silesians regardless of gender.

Figure 9

T-shirts *Fajrant* (*Feierabend/end of work*), *Gruba* (*Grube, mine*) and *Szycha* (*Arbeitsschicht/work shift*). Gryfnie.com offers these T-shirts for men and women. Historically these Germanisms were associated with men working in the local industry but now *Fajrant*, *Gruba* and *Szycha* are part of the Upper Silesian identity with the region's industrial past and the local ethnolect.



Gee (2005) reminds us that “We use language to render certain things connected or relevant (or not) to other things, that is, to build connections or relevance” (p. 12). The Germanisms and the images on the above Gryfnie.com T-shirts - *Familok*, *Gruba*, *Grubiorz*, *Kamrat*, *Fajrant*, *Szycha* – connect contemporary Upper Silesians to the historical past of these important local industries. This heritage is certainly relevant in the present struggle with the economic and political changes of the 1990s which made the region lose its status as ‘a leading land of coal and steel’. In the face of the economic, social and image crisis it was necessary to rethink and redefine the elements that make up regional identity (Kosterska, 2018, p. 163). Upper Silesia resembles the German post-industrial Ruhr area in the development of initiatives related to the coal and steel heritage and culture. In Upper Silesia semantic design is one of such initiatives. It uses symbols and verbal associations with local motives inscribed in products, as seen on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, that aid the process of building contemporary Upper Silesian identity using the cultural code (Oslislo-Piekarska,

2015, p. 65). The intention of Gryfnie.com was to create a cultural and educational connection, addressed primarily to young people from Upper Silesia who are looking for their roots and identity. “We wanted to help them recreate it [roots and identity]. After all, it is important to know the history and culture of your region. On the other hand, we did everything in our power to avoid unnecessary bloat, pathos and - above all - to stay away from any politics. The content was supposed to be light and fun” - added Klaudia Rokseła, one of the owners of the company (Czoik, 2019). Yet, the construction of the Upper Silesian identity as projected on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts cannot avoid being viewed in a political context. As Gee contends (2005), language is always ‘political’, for “when we speak or write we always use language to take a particular perspective on what the ‘world’ is like” (p. 3). The perspective taken from the symbols and verbal associations featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts distinguishes Upper Silesia from the remainder of the Polish state and locates it within a broader community of belonging reflecting the region’s multi-cultural and multi-national history (Bialasiewicz, 2002; Wiatr, 2011). Upper Silesians are aware of their distinctiveness, the cultural territory in which they are rooted. This sentiment of regionality has resurfaced in Upper Silesia in 2002 when the Polish National Census gave the Upper Silesians the choice of identifying themselves as Upper Silesians. The results of the 2002 census and a subsequent one held in 2011 showed that the Upper Silesians are the largest minority group in Poland (NSP, 2002, 2011). The designation of the Upper Silesians as a minority group, the legal position of the ethnolect as a regional language, or as a dialect of Polish, and the retention of the Germanisms in the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the codification of the ethnolect is a highly politicised and emotional debate in Poland (Hentschel, 2018, p. 58; Kamusella, 2013). To Gee (2005), language is ‘political’ because ‘social goods’ are at stake when we use language. Gee (2005) defines ‘social goods’ as “anything some people in a society want and value” (p. 3). In Upper Silesia it is the acknowledgment by the Polish government of the Upper Silesians as a distinct group with a distinct regional language that

constitute ‘social goods’ at stake (Kamusella, 2013; Oslislo-Piekarska, 2015). Research also confirms that 95 percent of the ethnolect speakers ‘want and value’ the Germanisms and are in favour of retaining them in the codification of the ethnolect (Hentschel, Fekete, & Tambor, 2021).

iii. **Work ethos as a marker of Upper Silesian identity**

In the above analysis section, I have shown how the Gryfnie.com T-shirts featuring the Germanisms *Familok*, *Gruba*, *Grubiorz*, *Szychta*, *Kamrat*, *Fajrant* link the historical and contemporary Upper Silesian identity with home, community life, and work related to the regional industry. The pride in work and a ‘work ethos’ derived from the regional industries, and work in general, are still in present-day narratives of the region. This heritage is rhetorically transposed into a series of attributes, endowing not just the workers but the inhabitants of the region with a series of traits that, in turn, define their, and the region’s, identity (Szczepański, 1999a). Traits such as diligence and an ‘iron-clad work ethic’ that ‘emerged from the Prussian factory ethos’ (Szczepański, 1999a, p. 7). The Gryfnie company references these traits on the product labels on several of the T-shirts, as shown in figures 10, 11, 12, acknowledging the mythos of the hard-working, diligent Upper Silesians in a humorous rendition. I would like to note that the humour is derived from the choice of the Upper Silesian lexemes and not readily translated. These Upper Silesian traits are referred to on the product labels of some of the men’s, women’s and children’s T-shirts. The product labels of the T-shirts *Fachman* and *Majster* in figure 11, reference work ethic in a similar way on both the men’s and children’s version of the T-shirts. This would suggest that along with the Germanisms presented in the semantic word fields of these T-shirts, the Upper Silesian identity with work, and the pride in physical work, is being passed on to the next

generation by the Gryfnie.com company.

Figure 10

Gryfnie T-shirt **Grubiorz** (*Grubenarbeiter/miner*) - Product Label.

Product Label

Łobleczyni dlo chopów, kierzy radzi chytajom sie roboty, som łobrotni a ni majom strachu
(written in the Upper Silesian ethnolect).

To be worn by men who are industrious and are not afraid of work (translation of the above).



Figure 11

Women's T-shirt **ZAŚ SZYCHTA** (*Wieder eine Arbeitsschicht/work shift again*) – Product Label.

Product Label

Łobleczyni dlo babów, kiere durś drałujom do roboty, a na urlop jeszcze muszom
trocha doczkać (written in Upper Silesian ethnolect).

Something to wear by women who have always lots to do and little time for a
vacation (translation).



Figure 12

*T-shirts **Fachman** and **Majster** available for men and children at Gryfnie.com – Product Labels.*

Men's T-shirts **Majster/Fachman** Product Label

Łobleczyni dlo chopów, kierzy se radzi co poskryncajom i powynokwiajom
(written in the Upper Silesian ethnolect).

To be worn by men who like to turn things around, fix them, and set them straight
(translation).

Children's T-shirts **Majster/Fachman** Product Label

Łobleczyni dlo bajtli, kierzy se radzi co z łojcem poskryncajom i powynokwiajom
(written in the Upper Silesian ethnolect).

To be worn by little guys who enjoy fixing and setting things straight with their
dads (translation).



iv. Germanisms as distinct markers of Silesianness and in-group belonging

The Upper Silesian ethnolect belongs to the Slavic language group and its phonology differs much more from German phonology than from Polish phonology, therefore, the Germanisms, which are German loan words adapted by the Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers, have undergone substantial phonological alteration (Tambor, 2014; Vann, 2000). This renders

them distinct from both languages (see Table 3 for a comparison of Upper Silesian Germanisms with Standard German, and Standard Polish equivalent words). Their distinctiveness, in turn, makes them more available as markers of Silesianness, explains Vann (2000) who illustrates this point with an example from her fieldwork in Upper Silesia in the 1990s. At a gathering with Upper Silesian speakers, she was asked by one of the older guests: “Do you know what that word means, *Larmo*? ‘Hałas’ in Standard Polish, and ‘Lärm’ in Standard German. That’s something neither a Pole nor a German would understand!” (Vann, 2000, p. 145). This statement was underscored by another attendant Upper Silesian: “They don’t understand when we don’t want them to!” (ibid.). The ‘they’ are understood to be speakers of Polish who don’t understand the Upper Silesian ethnolect.

Figure 13

Gryfnie.com T-shirts *Larmo* (*Lärm*, noise) and *Hercklekoty* (*Herzklopfen*, heart palpitations). Examples of Upper Silesian ethnolect Germanisms that speakers of the ethnolect can choose to replace with equivalent Standard Polish lexemes: *Larmo* vs. hałas, *Hercklekoty* vs. szybsze bicie serca.



As I have clarified in an earlier section with the introduction of Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor’s (2021) *Frequenzwörterbuch*, current Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers may choose a lexeme from alternate sets of words that may consist of a German loan from the pre-1945 era or a Polish loan of the post-1945 era. Hentschel (2019) refers to this as style-shift. Thus, to

refer to ‘noise’ Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers may choose the Germanism *‘Larmo’*, derived from the Standard German word ‘Lärm’, or the word ‘Hałas’, from the Standard Polish word for ‘noise’. It is a strategic choice, explains Vann (2000). Similarly, the Polish researcher of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, Jolanta Tambor (2014), observed how the speakers of the ethnolect strategically choose which version of a particular word they want to use when conversing in the Upper Silesian ethnolect - but choosing a Germanism rather than a Standard Polish word can be far more charged. More than any other feature of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, the use of loan words from German has incited negative assessments by Polish authorities and in the Polish population (Kamusella, 2013; Kocyba, 2011; Tambor, 2014). Like autochthonous Upper Silesians, they [Polish authorities, and some Polish citizens] understand that the Germanisms symbolize a cultural connection to Germany. “They condemn what autochthonous Upper Silesians value highly”, comments Vann (2000, p. 145). In the sense of this clash of values, as well as a sense of simple comprehensibility, the Germanisms can contribute to rendering autochthonous Upper Silesians and immigrant Poles (to the Upper Silesian region) incomprehensible to one another (Hentschel, 2019; Tambor, 2014; Vann, 2000). The next example illustrates this clash of values. Jan Adamski (2019), a popular Polish internet blogger, takes issue with the Germanism *Wihajster* (*Wie heißt er?* What do you call it?) by first giving his readers a Polish dictionary definition of the word: “(...) an object (...) with a name unknown or irrelevant at the time of the statement” (Adamski, 2019). He then follows with an opinion: “Undoubtedly, the *Wihajster* itself and its synonyms are beautiful. Well, maybe, except it is a word with politically incorrect connotations” (ibid.). The Gryfnie.com company’s product label for the T-shirt *Wihajster* illustrates the use of the Upper Silesian ethnolect as a marker of the Upper Silesians’ in-group belonging. As for all Gryfnie.com T-shirts the product label is written in the ethnolect except for the first line on the label which is a translation into Standard Polish of the ethnolect lexeme featured on the T-shirt (figure 14).

Figure 14

*Gryfnie.com T-shirt **Wihajster** (Wie heißt er? Whatchamacallit?).* This expression is not readily understood by a speaker of Standard German or Polish. **Wihajster** reminds of the historical background of this region and how the Upper Silesian ethnolect was influenced by the German language. Even though this word is strung from the German expression “Wie heißt er” it has become a uniquely Upper Silesian expression recognized by its speakers. **Wihajster** is an example of the playfulness, creativity, and plasticity exhibited by multilingual speakers that Li (2016) speaks of in reference to the theory of Translanguaging.



Figure 15

*Product label of the Gryfnie.com **Wihajster** T-shirt.*

Wihajster to je po polsku przyrząd lub narzędzie o nazwie nieznaney mówiącemu albo chwilowo przez niego zapomnianej (first line on the product label in Standard Polish)

Wihajster in Polish means a name for a device or tool which is unknown to the speaker or temporarily forgotten by him (translation of the above line).

Łobleczyni dlo chopów, kierzy na **szyhcie** lotajom z roztomajtymi **wihajstrami** (second line on the product label written in the ethnolect).

Something to wear for guys who run around with all sorts of **wihajsters** during their work shift (translation of the line written in the ethnolect).

The description on the product label (figure 15) written in the ethnolect is very different from the first line written in Standard Polish. First of all, in the description written in the ethnolect **Wihajster** does not reference an unknown object but rather the Upper Silesian workers.

Secondly there is no explanation what a *Wihajster* means and, in addition, another Germanism *szychcie* is added, also without further explanation about its meaning. The line written in the ethnolect is a humorous recommendation of who should wear this kind of T-shirt, namely, all sort of *Wihajster* workers in a work shift. This is a very different meaning from the formal explanation given in Standard Polish on the product label. Thus, the Germanism *Wihajster* is used by Gryfnie.com as a marker of Silesianness as an inside-group joke for the Upper Silesian ethnolect speaker who does not require further explanation why *Wihajster* in this case is not used to name a tool or device as explained in the first line in Standard Polish. All the product labels on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts follow a similar pattern: a dictionary-like translation into Standard Polish of the main ethnolect lexeme that is featured on the T-shirt, and a playful recommendation in the ethnolect of who should wear this particular T-shirt. The Upper Silesian Germanisms, as for example *Larmo* or *Wihajster*, function as boundary-markers, knowledge of which define those who know them as members of the ethnic in-group (Vann, 2000, p. 79).

v. The interplay between Upper Silesian humour and identity construction

As I have illustrated with examples of the T-shirt product labels, the Gryfnie T-shirt brand uses the Upper Silesian ethnolect in a humorous manner to index Upper Silesian group identity. Similarly, contemporary Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers use Germanisms, like *Larmo* or *Wihajster*, as boundary-markers, and in group jokes which define them as members of an ethnic group. Upper Silesians revel in mixing forms, in practices of cross-lingual punning (wordplay between language forms and meanings), and question–answer sequences that violate the supposed boundaries of the standard languages (Vann, 2000). Germanisms are the most frequently used material for Upper Silesian jokes based on word play (Tambor, 2014, p.149). These jokes make use of the Germanisms’ phonetic distinctness and unintelligibility to non-Upper Silesians (ibid.). Vann (2000) perceives such jokes as “[Upper]

Silesian sense of humor” which is based on what Vann (ibid.) calls “the ‘betweenness’ of a culture autonomous in the way it constructs itself in a context of domination by two nation-states, to neither of which it exactly belongs” (p. 106.). The following example illustrates the concept of ‘betweenness’ in that “Upper Silesian humor is culturally specific and not necessarily funny to non-Upper Silesians, and it is relational in that the reason they’re not laughing is that they don’t understand the Upper Silesian position in inter-group dynamics on which the humor is based” (ibid.). One of Vann’s (2000) Upper Silesian participants in her research work in Upper Silesia recalled that when he entered the army, he found himself in a unit with many other Upper Silesians, but that one of the Poles, trying to be friendly, told them that he, too, knew a little of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. “OK,” they said, “Tell us what a *Cug* is.” (*Cug* /*Zug*, train). “Oh,” he said, “That’s a train” (‘pociąg’ in Standard Polish). “Very good,” they said. “Now tell us what an *Ancug* is” (*Ancug*/ *Anzug*, suit). “Hmm, *Ancug*. I guess that must be an express train.” (ibid. p. 117).

Figure 16

Gryfnie.com T-shirt Cug (Zug/Train).



Vann (2000) describes these jokes as trickster jokes, but the trickster is not a stock character,

some “Till Eulenspiegel of the upper Oder”, notes Vann (p. 119). The trickster, rather, is language. In these jokes in which language plays the role of the trickster, on whom the trick is being played seems not to matter, explains Vann (ibid.). Sometimes, it's being played on a Pole. But often, it's being played on an Upper Silesian which is the pattern adopted by the Gryfnie.com brand. The jokes seen on many of the company's T-shirt product labels are based on the Upper Silesian ethnolect and on word play, and are always directed at the Upper Silesians as, for example, on the product label of the *Wihajster* T-shirt. These jokes are usually not funny to those who are not multilingual in the Upper Silesian ethnolect, Polish, and some German to understand the meaning of the Germanisms, and this kind of knowledge is characteristic of many autochthonous Upper Silesians. They are thus in-group jokes, whose humor often reflects social relations of unequal power among groups (Vann, 2000, p. 119). The Germanism *Wihajster* illustrates the historical and current unequal power distribution among different groups, the autochthonous Upper Silesians, Germans, and Poles. Like many of the Germanisms, the expression *Wihajster* originated during the German industrialization of Upper Silesia, when the Upper Silesian workers adapted to the German language spoken at work. The use of Germanisms by the Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers at that time was perceived by Standard German speakers as ‘diluted Polish’ and stigmatized with the derogatory expression “Wasserpölnisch” (Hentschel, 2001, 2013; Tambor, 2014). After 1945, when this region became part of Poland, Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers censored their use of Germanisms because these words represented negative connotation with the German language which was banned in Poland between 1945-1989 (Tambor, 2014). Presently, Germanisms are still considered ‘politically incorrect’ expressions within Poland, as commented by the Polish blogger Jan Adamski (2019) about the Germanism *Wihajster*. The current refusal of the Polish authorities to acknowledge Upper Silesians as a minority group with a distinct regional language suggests an unequal power distribution in contemporary Poland. Scholars concerned with language maintenance or revitalisation emphasize that to the

language communities trying to save their language, such efforts are as much about the empowerment of language users, or potential language users, as it is about the language itself (Grenoble, 2021; Hinton, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002). Language use is dynamically embedded in community life and creates a sense of belonging to a group, a sense of self-determination, and a connection to a particular geographical location (Grenoble, 2021, p. 913). The sense of empowerment and self-determination is both in the act of producing T-shirts printed with the stigmatized Germanisms of the Upper Silesian ethnolect and in wearing such T-shirts. As Kress (2011) points out, texts, of whatever kind, are the result of design, composition, and production. Thus, they reflect the intent and the agency of the text maker (ibid.). And Caldwell (2017) considers the purchase of a printed T-shirt and using it to clothe oneself a planned linguistic act, in other words, the process of selecting a specific set of linguistic and visual meanings requires a degree of planning and preparation, and a degree of deliberation (p. 131).

vi. Shift in the perception of the Germanisms in the contemporary construction of the Upper Silesian identity

As mentioned in the previous part of the analysis, an expression like *Wihajster* originated at the time when Upper Silesia belonged to Germany and when Standard German was the official language of this region, and used by owners, managing staff, and higher technical staff coming into this region with the development of the coal and steel industry (Lipok-Bierwiazzonek, 2014). The workers, coming from nearby villages where the Upper Silesian ethnolect was relied on for communication, adapted to the Standard German spoken in their workplace and one can imagine how the German phrase ‘Wie heißt er?’ might have been used by the Upper Silesian workers when searching for the correct German expression or name. Eventually it became the one-word expression *Wihajster* similar to the colloquial German expression ‘Dingsda’ or the English ‘whatchamacallit’. Kocyba (2011) explains that such adapted German expressions (i.e., the ethnolect’s Germanisms), are situation-related ‘ad

hoc' combinations and thus expressions of the more or less pronounced bilingualism of people who are used to hybrid forms of speaking, in the words of Elisabeth Bronfen and Benjamin Marius, "refused the absolutism of the pure". (Bronfen, & Marius 1997, p. 29, cited in Kocyba, 2011, p. 267). Similarly, Vann (2000) drawing on her research and fieldwork experience in Upper Silesia in the 1990's comments that "Upper Silesians let themselves of the hook when it comes to language purism" (p. 119). Recent theories provide new perspectives that move beyond the notion of language purism, and languages as discrete complete systems. These theories are concerned with how language users in a multilingual environment navigate complex social and cognitive demands in their everyday life through employment of multiple languages. The theory of Translanguaging, for example, emphasises the fluid linguistic practices multilingual individuals engage in their interactions that transcend socially bounded language systems (García & Li, 2014). Translanguaging is the expression of creativity in the language user, "the ability to choose between following and flouting the rules and norms of socially constructed language systems" (Li, 2016, p. 8). From a Translanguaging perspective, such 'ad hoc' linguistic combinations like the Germanisms of the Upper Silesian ethnolect are dynamic forms of linguistic creativity whose meaning is negotiated in real-life social interaction. Of course, one has to remember that the Germanisms, these creative 'ad hoc' linguistic combinations, and "forms of mixed speech have certainly not been and still are not 'loved', at least not by official institutions or public figures on both sides: the Polish and the German", comments Hentschel (2013, p. IV). Yet, the Gryfnie.com company has made a conscious decision to feature Germanisms on more than half of their printed T-shirt merchandise. As Caldwell (2017) points out, there is nothing spontaneous about a commercially produced printed T-shirt. The text, image presented on the T-shirt is meticulously planned, evaluated, and drafted until the final product is released to the consumer. Thus, there is agency by the Gryfnie.com company in their promotion of these historical linguistic combinations on their merchandise as an integral part in the company's

construction of the Upper Silesian identity. “We thought it would be good to show the [Upper] Silesian language in a cool way, so that it could be bragged about in Warsaw and Krakow”, commented Krzysztof Rokseła in an interview (IFIRMA, 2015). Likewise, there is also agency by the wearer of the T-shirt. By placing the clothing on oneself, the wearer is visually projecting the meanings presented on the T-shirt (Caldwell, 2017, p. 145). Following Caldwell’s (ibid.) suggestion that there is an “explicit authorial relationship between T-shirt text and wearer” would imply that the wearer endorses the construction of the Upper Silesian identity as presented on the Gryfnie.com T-shirt. “We want people who like the [Upper] Silesian language to be able to express it somehow. We try to show the [Upper] Silesian language in the most modern way possible, explained Klaudia Rokseła (IFIRMA, 2015). Oslisło-Piekarska (2015) points to the Upper Silesian generation brought up after 1989 that is free from the trauma of the Polish People's Republic (1947-1989). Young people have had the experience of traveling or working abroad, they know Europe better and learn from it (p. 64). To Oslisło-Piekarska (ibid.) the outside world has become an inspiration for them [the young people] to change and improve what is local. The ‘New Silesians’, including the Gryfnie.com owners, recruiting from this generation, among others, become more tolerant, or at least try to free themselves from prejudices (ibid.).

vii. Choice of orthography as a marker of identity

The last section of my analysis of how Upper Silesian identity is constructed on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts deals with one of the most recent marker of Upper Silesian identity, namely, the choice of orthography used in writing the ethnolect. It is important to note that historically, the Upper Silesian ethnolect was almost exclusively an oral language used for communication in the home environment and within the community. There were a few scholars and authors, among them Feliks Steuer (1889 – 1950), and Óndra Łysohorsky (Erwin Goj, 1905-89) who wrote literary works in the ethnolect in independently developed orthographies (Hannan, 2006). With the advent of the Internet, various Upper Silesian Internet

groups created and used their own unofficial writing systems to be able to use the Upper Silesian ethnolect in a written form, explains the Polish researcher Marcin Mętrak (2016). At some point, several different alphabets were created. Some groups used Polish orthography, but Upper Silesian words and phrases written in the Polish orthography do not translate into a faithful rendition of the ethnolect, especially for readers who are not familiar with the pronunciation of the ethnolect. The Polish alphabet is also not sufficient for writing the ethnolect words, e.g. the nasal Standard Polish vowels ‘ą’ and ‘ę’ do not occur in the Upper Silesian ethnolect, and other sounds occurring in the ethnolect, like long vowels, cannot be expressed using the Standard Polish writing system, for example, ‘Gödömy’ vs. ‘Godomy’ (talking), the first spelling version using specifically developed orthography for the Upper Silesian ethnolect lets the reader know that the |ö| is a long vowel and the |o| a short vowel vs. the Polish writing system of ‘Godomy’ pronounced with short vowels only.

Figure 17

Gryfnie T-shirt Nojlepszy Opa (bester Opa, best granddad). The Gryfnie company is using Polish orthography to write the Upper Silesian ethnolect rather than the specifically developed orthography that expresses the long vowels in the Upper Silesian ethnolect as in the Germanism Ōpa (pronounced like the Standard German word ‘Opa’)



Finally, the need for standardization was recognized and initiated by Upper Silesian associations promoting the ethnolect as a regional language. In 2010, with the help of Jolanta

Tambor from the University of Silesia, an interdialectal orthography primer was created unifying the previously created spelling norms so that everyone can use them, regardless of what variety of the dialect they speak. The codification of the alphabet is the first step towards recognizing the Upper Silesian ethnolect as a regional language. The orthographic choice for writing the Upper Silesian ethnolect is used as a marker indexing ideological positions concerning Upper Silesian identity within the Polish Nation (Mętrak, 2016). The interdialectal orthography primer is endorsed by organizations promoting greater regional autonomy and usually belonging to official organizations with clear ideological and political postulates (ibid.). On the other hand, the Polish orthography is also popular, chosen not only by supporters of Polish national identification, but also by people who avoid involvement in ideological disputes. It is usually associated with less formal associations. They focus on the widest possible use of the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the process of building prestige and increasing the scope of its use (ibid.). Their best examples are large and popular projects combined with online stores such as Gryfnie.com. A characteristic feature of this type of undertakings is emphasizing openness to others and emphasizing attachment to the ethnolect without taking a position in the dispute over its legal or scientific status (ibid.). This position is evident on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts where, on the one hand, there is emphasis on regional identity reflected in the images, the use of the ethnolect, and in the promotion of the Germanisms, and, on the other hand, there is the use of the Polish orthography in writing the ethnolect. Germanisms written in the Polish orthography bring to mind Vann's (2000) observation of the 'betweenness' of the Upper Silesian culture in the way it constructs itself in the context of two nation-states to neither it exactly belongs. I would like to put forward that the Upper Silesian ethnolect Germanisms written in the Polish orthography give the perception of a blend of the German and Polish languages, neither German nor Polish, but 'something in between', or, as expressed by a group of 14-year-old Upper Silesians: "*richtig* Ślonski", or real Upper Silesian, (Vann, 2000, p.105). As the creators of the Gryfnie.com

project emphasize: “We stay far from Cepelia [communist-era folk art store] and political patriotism, because we stay away from politics. (...) Gryfnie.com is supposed to connect” (Urbaniak, 2012, p. 68). Using Polish orthography, which does not reflect the correct pronunciation of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, is also a nod to the general rebuff of language purism by Upper Silesians. As one of Vann’s (2000) Upper Silesian research participants commented: “Different people speak different [Upper] Silesian” (p.177).

To summarize, Gryfnie.com constructs Upper Silesian identity on the company’s commercially produced T-shirts by utilizing and transforming historical symbols of local industry, community life, traditional values, and the Upper Silesian ethnolect into a contemporary identity resource. These concepts of Upper Silesian identity are reflected in the texts, and images featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts. In addition, examining the product labels of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts revealed how the Germanisms, as for example *Wihajster*, are used as distinct markers of [Upper] Silesianness and in-group belonging. Information on the product labels also referenced the role of work ethos in the Upper Silesian identity. The interplay between Upper Silesian humor and identity construction was evident in the images and texts on the T-shirts (for example, the *Familok* T-shirt), and on many of the product labels that are provided with each T-shirt (see figures 10, 11, 12, 15). The promotion of the Germanisms as an integral part in the construction of the Upper Silesian identity on the Gryfnie. com T-shirts supports a shift in the perception of the Germanisms from stigmatized elements of the ethnolect to dynamic forms of linguistic creativity exhibited by multilingual speakers. Finally, the Gryfnie company’s choice of the Polish orthography in the written presentation of the Upper Silesian ethnolect on the T-shirts, underscores this region’s past and present identity with multilingualism and multiculturalism (Oslislo-Piekarska, 2015; Vann, 2000; Wiatr, 2011). The ethnolect’s Germanisms presented on the Gryfnie. com T-shirts point to the link of the Upper Silesian historic identity with the German nation, and the choice to

write the Germanisms in the Polish orthography reflects the present Upper Silesian connection with the Polish state.

5.7 The contribution of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts to intergenerational language transmission

Gryfnie.com offers T-shirts for adults as well as for children of all ages: the very young ones, school children, older students, and T-shirts meant to specifically appeal to the generation of 20–30-year-old Upper Silesians. In this analysis section, I drew on multimodal discourse analysis to examine and discuss the potential contribution of these T-shirts in the transmission of the Upper Silesian ethnolect to the younger generations. Included in this discussion is the role of the *Tyta* as a supporting factor in intergenerational transmission of the ethnolect within the Polish school system. Concepts of translanguaging pedagogy provide an additional perspective to my analysis of the position and the effects of the Polish education system on the transmission of the Upper Silesian ethnolect within the student population. Preceding my analysis is a brief introduction to theoretical concepts of intergenerational language transmission and how they relate to the transmission of the Upper Silesian ethnolect to the next generation of speakers.

i. Concepts of intergenerational language transmission within the context of the Upper Silesian ethnolect

The intergenerational transmission of a language is typically used as a standard indicator for whether a language will maintain its vitality into the indefinite future (Fishman, 1991, Krauss, 1992; UNESCO, 2003); and the basic tenet emphasized by Fishman (1991) is that language maintenance and revitalization must involve intergenerational transmission of the language. For the Upper Silesian ethnolect there has been a disruption of the traditional process of intergenerational language transmission which typically relies on the home environment in which the parents (and other adults) pass on the heritage language to the

children as their first language. Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor (2021) have shown that 40 % of the adult Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers have shifted to using Polish in the home environment (see figure 3). Vann's (2000) research in Upper Silesia in the late 1990s confirms that some Upper Silesian parents put stress on using the ethnolect when speaking with their children, but some are less concerned about it, and some deliberately speak Polish to their children, reasoning that this will help them in school (Vann, 2000, p. 178). A similar statement comes from Rafał Adamus, president of the Pro Loquela Society, which is promoting the Upper Silesian ethnolect. Adamus (Tokarzewska, 2012) recounts how throughout the 1950s, '60s, and '70s people were taught that speaking in the ethnolect was a faux pas, a sign of primitivism, or lack of education, and how this attitude affected intergenerational transmission of the ethnolect:

Therefore, many parents tried to talk to their children only in Polish, because it was believed that it would be better for them. Corporal punishment was used in those past decades for someone speaking in the Upper Silesian ethnolect at school. There were no such penalties in the 1980s, but there was self-discrimination, i.e., if someone, for example, spoke in the ethnolect on a bus, everyone looked at him reluctantly, as if he was not educated, or uncultured. Although more and more people are trying to use the Upper Silesian language [ethnolect] again, we are not always able to as well as the previous generations used to. By now, Upper Silesian children struggle to prepare a speech for academic purposes or for a celebration at which they would like to show off their grandparents' language. At the moment, it is the last call to save what is now left to be saved, because in one or two generations we would be talking about the Silesian

language [ethnolect] only in a historical context (Tokarzewska, 2012).

ii. **The role of Gryfnie.com T-shirts for the very young children in intergenerational transmission of the Upper Silesian ethnolect**

The Gryfnie.com children's T-shirts, as seen in figure 18, can be viewed as a fun strategy in the transmission of the ethnolect to the very young. The dependence of very young children on their family means that there is less of an opportunity to shift from their heritage language (Crystal, 2000, p. 17). But if the adults begin to teach and speak the community's dominant language to the children, Standard Polish rather than the Upper Silesian ethnolect in this case, the heritage language, becomes endangered (Ethnologue 2021). For example, most of the words in the semantic word fields on the children's T-shirts 'Idymy do Zoo' (We are going to the Zoo) and 'Graczk' (Toys) are Germanisms (see figure 18, above) and the

Figure 18

Gryfnie.com children's T-shirts with semantic word fields. The T-shirt 'Idymy do Zoo' features Germanisms related to animals seen in a Zoo: **Tiger** (*Tiger/tygrys*), **Szlanga** (*Schlange/wąż*), **Afa** (*Affe/małpa*), **Kamela** (*Kamel/wielbłąd*), **Elefant** (*Elephant/słoń*), **Ber** (*Bär/niedźwiedź*). The T-shirt 'Graczk' shows images and Germanisms describing toys: **Flieger** (*Flieger/samolot*) **Koble** (*Knobeln/kostka do gry*), **Drach** (*Drachen/latawiec*) **Bala** (*Ball/piłka*), **Rolszuty** (*Rollschuhe/wrotki*), **Fojerwera** (*Feuerwehr/straż pożarna*). Both T-shirts function similar to a picture book by connecting images with the corresponding words. Germanisms (bolded, cursive font) are translated into Standard German (cursive font), and Standard Polish.



majority of them belong to the least frequently used Germanisms by current ethnolect speakers (see Table 4 and *Frequenzwörterbuch*, Hentschel, Fekete, & Tambor, 2021); they have been replaced by the speakers with equivalent Standard Polish words. Thus, if Upper Silesian adults do not use these Germanisms themselves, then of course, they do not pass them on to the next generation of the ethnolect speakers. Additionally, Upper Silesian children would learn how to name animals as seen on the T-shirt 'Idymy do Zoo' in Standard Polish by reading Polish children's books, through media exposure, when visiting a Zoo or when discussing such animals at the daycare or preschool. Likewise, for similar reasons, the toys seen on the T- Shirt 'Graczki' would be known to children by Standard Polish names. Both T-shirts have a comparable function to picture books in which images are visually linked with matching words. The T-shirts give the children and adults the opportunity to make connections between the images and corresponding Germanisms, learn how to read and pronounce the words, and use these Germanisms when speaking in the Upper Silesian ethnolect. There are many Upper Silesian-Polish dictionaries available now if the adults themselves need help with learning certain Germanisms.

iii. The Gryfnie.com *Tyta* as a factor in the transmission of the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the school environment

As mentioned in the previous section, researchers emphasize the importance of intergenerational language transmission in the home environment, and according to Fishman (1991) without transfer of the original vernacular language from one generation to the next within families, the efforts of schools, and communities are not likely to reverse language shift to the more dominant language in the community. Thus, even if the education system and government were to provide support for the Upper Silesian ethnolect, this will be valuable only if family adults use the language with children and continually foster acquisition and use of the ethnolect. At the same time, authors on language revitalization point out the importance

of promoting the language through the school system (Hinton, 2003; UNESCO, 2003).

Hentschel, Fekete and Tambor (2019) recommend that introduction of the Upper Silesian ethnolect into the education system would contribute to stabilization and revitalization of the Upper Silesian ethnolect (p. 19).

One of my reasons to include the *Tyta* in this analysis section, even though it is obviously not a T-shirt, is the importance of the *Tyta* in Upper Silesia in the introduction of a child to formal education. The presence of the Upper Silesian words on the *Tyta* (see figure 19) have the potential to facilitate exposure of school children to the ethnolect and its connection to the history of Upper Silesia. *Tyta* is a German based word, meaning Schultüte in Standard German. A *Tyta* is a colorful cornucopia filled with goodies and given to first graders in Upper Silesia on their first day of school to sweeten their introduction to school and encourage them to learn, explains Lipok-Bierwiazzonek a local ethnographer (Onet ŚLĄSK, 2017). According to Lipok-Bierwiazzonek (ibid.) the custom of giving first graders a *Tyta* in Upper Silesia was recorded for the first time in the interwar period. It is not a native Upper Silesian custom, but a borrowing from the German culture. In the post–World War II years the custom of the *Tyta* became popular once more in the 1960s after a gradual improvement in the financial situation of families increased the popularity of the custom – explains Lipok-Bierwiazzonek (ibid.). By now, it is difficult to imagine that a first grader in Upper Silesia would start the first school day without a *Tyta*. Moreover, there is no longer a division between families with Upper Silesian roots and immigrant families from other parts of Poland to the region - everyone knows that if you live in Upper Silesia, you should buy a *Tyta* for your child’s first day of school - added the ethnographer (ibid.). The *Tyta* is a very popular custom in Upper Silesia, but not in other parts of Poland. The *Tyta* can act as a link between generations, because a *Tyta* is quite often bought by older relatives of the first grader, by the grandma or the godparent (ibid.).

Figure 19

Gryfnie.com Tyta. **Tyta** is a German based word, meaning *Schultüte* in Standard German. A **Tyta** is a colorful cornucopia filled with goodies and given to first graders in Upper Silesia. Most of the words on the **Tyta** (that can be seen) are Germanisms:

Gyszichta/Geschichte/historia (history), **Lyniorz**/Lineal/linijka (ruler), **Klajster**/Kleister/klej (glue), **Klapsznita**/Brotschnitte/kromki chleba (sandwich), **Szwam**/Schwamm/ gąbka (sponge eraser), **Hefty**/Hefte/zeszyty (notebooks), **Tabula**/Tabelle/tabliczka (slate). Translation: Germanism/Standard German/Standard Polish (English).



This opens up ways of discussing the vocabulary that is written on the **Tyta** (see figure 19), and it brings up the opportunity for learning to read and pronounce the ethnolect words that would not be part of current expressions for school supplies known to the students or even the adults, because most of the Germanisms on the **Tyta** have been replaced by Standard Polish words by contemporary ethnolect speakers (see Table 4 or *Frequenzwörterbuch*, Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor, 2021).

Another reason to include the **Tyta** in my analysis is that it gave me the opportunity to explain, with relevant examples, the position of the Upper Silesian ethnolect within the Polish educational system which shapes the attitude of the learners toward the ethnolect and impacts the transmission of the ethnolect to the next generation. First of all, it is important to consider that children in post war Upper Silesia, who grew up speaking the ethnolect at home and with peers, were not allowed to use the ethnolect at school. The Polish sociolinguist Tomasz

Kamusella (2014) writes about his experience of having to suppress using the ethnolect when attending the Polish school system in the 1970s. Jolanta Tambor, who attended elementary school during the 1960s in Upper Silesia, writes about the shame she felt at school for having an Upper Silesian accent or accidentally using the Upper Silesian ethnolect words, and how the associated feelings of these experiences negatively shaped her self-image as an Upper Silesian and her attitude towards the ethnolect (Tambor, 2018).

According to Vann (2000) Polish schools have become far more liberal and sensitive since the 1990's when compared to those experienced by these children's parents, which may be summarized, "You are Poles, and we will punish any sign you give of being anything else" (p. 113). For the Upper Silesian pupils, the beginning of formal schooling continues to be not only a breakthrough time associated with the excitement of receiving a *Tyta*, and academic beginnings, but it is also a rite of passage in the acquisition of a new identity that is based on the choice of language used in the classroom (Vann, 2000). Drawing on her fieldwork in Upper Silesian schools in the late 1990s, Vann (2000) describes how the elementary school teacher discursively created a new social identity of "us as people in school" when first graders inadvertently used Upper Silesian words during class. Students were corrected with "we speak" followed by the word in Standard Polish in the inclusive first-person plural. The grammatical first-person plural was repeatedly pressed into the service of this redefinition, explains Vann (ibid.) as for example in the treatment of the Germanism *sztrykujom* (sie stricken/they are knitting) that a student used when describing a picture during a lesson. The teacher corrected the student by repeating the Germanism, but rather than repeating the exact form of the ethnolect word that the student said, she transformed it into the impersonal infinitive, *sztrykować* (stricken/to knit) while the desired Polish word (robimy na drutach) was expressed, like everything else, in the first-person plural "we" form creating a new identity of "us as people in school" (Vann, 2000, p. 113). Thus, the above example illustrates that current

policy on the use of the Upper Silesian ethnolect in school might not be the explicit ban of the ethnolect in school classrooms, as happened prior to 1989, but there is an implicit re-direction of the children's identity that "we", as a community, speak Standard Polish not the Upper Silesian ethnolect. Against this background the possibilities of classroom translanguaging present an alternative view in pedagogy. Garcia-Mateus, and Palmer (2017), for example, examined the effects of translanguaging pedagogy on the formation of positive identities when two languages are used. The authors (ibid.) point out that identity is important for academic achievement because language and identity are intrinsically linked. In addition, researchers identify pedagogical translanguaging not only as a component in the formation of identity, and the reconfiguration in terms of linguistic practice, but they also stress the transformative potential in terms of ideologies and attitudes among learners and teachers (Prada & Turnbull, 2008 cited in Garcia & Sylvan, 2011, p. 388). Multilingual approaches and pedagogical translanguaging can be positive for students to develop their language awareness and to value different home and school languages. The benefits of translanguaging in the classroom are not unknown in Poland but they are only implemented within selected secondary schools offering the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). Romanowski (2019) reports that most students, who are multilingual in such learning environments, apply multiple strategies to benefit from their linguistic repertoires. In addition, the teachers perceive such practices as positively affecting the students' performance (ibid.).

For Gryfnie.com to offer a *Tyta* decorated with Upper Silesian ethnolect words, including many Germanisms, signifies a stance towards the presence of the ethnolect in the classroom, at least on the first day of school. Given the importance of the *Tyta* to the first grader where the *Tyty* (plural) are compared and looked at and commented on by the new classmates, the Germanisms on the *Tyta* might invite curiosity about their meaning, pronunciation, and history. The first graders might not be able to read these words yet, but the associated images, like the *Tabula* (*Tabelle*, slate board) and *Szwam* (*Schwamm*, sponge

eraser) of bygone days might encourage curiosity and interest and open up an opportunity to engage the teacher and the pupils in a dialog about the history of Upper Silesia when a *Tabula* and *Szwam* were part of the classroom inventory and vocabulary. Grenoble (2021) emphasizes that language use is a social act, and revitalization entails social transformation. The transformation may be as basic as bringing use of the language into some domain where it was not previously found, such as the education system in the case of the Upper Silesian ethnolect. But this may involve considerable social change if it involves the introduction of language use (and thus language rights) in education and administration, and increased presence in matters of governance (Grenoble, 2021, p. 7). And this, as the author points out, is one reason that revitalization efforts are sometimes met with resistance by authorities as they are viewed as a kind of empowerment that may be threatening (Grenoble, 2021, p. 8).

The following example draws once more on Vann's (2000) observation from her research work in Upper Silesia and demonstrates not only why it would have been controversial in post WWII Poland to bring to school a *Tyta* adorned with Germanisms, but also shows how the systematic suppression of the ethnolect contributed to the attrition processes in individuals and to the loss of Germanisms in the ethnolect. Vann (ibid.) writes how one of her Upper Silesian interviewees, Luisa Sattler, recalled an incident in the local school. Luisa Sattler relayed to Vann (ibid.) what happened when her son had his first science lesson in school in the 1970s. The children were asked to write down the names of domestic plants, so her son wrote the names of vegetables his family used domestically: *Blumkol* (*Blumenkohl*, cauliflower), *Sznitbony* (*Schnittbohnen*, green beans). Luisa Sattler was called in for a conversation with the teacher, and mimicking the teacher's Standard Polish, recalled the teacher's admonition: *Przeciew, JA NiE wieM co pisze pani dziecko!* (But **I do not understand** what your child is writing! (emphasis by Vann, 2000, p. 242).

This anecdote not only illustrates the attitude toward the Upper Silesian ethnolect and the speakers in official institutions, such as an elementary school, but it also confirms how this suppression of the ethnolect use contributed to the loss of many Germanisms in the ethnolect. For example, the above anecdote demonstrates how in the 1970s even children used the Germanisms *Blumkol* and *Sznitbony*, but fifty years later both words are ranked in the *Frequenzwörterbuch* (Hentschel, Fekete, & Tambor, 2021) as being usually replaced with equivalent Standard Polish words by adult Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers. As I have discussed in an earlier section, Gryfnie.com features on their T-shirts many of these seldom or no longer used Germanisms by current ethnolect speakers.

Figure 20

Gryfnie.com T-shirt Gymizy (Gemüse, Vegetables). This T-shirt shows a semantic word field with numerous Germanisms relating to vegetables, including the above mentioned *Blumkol/Blumenkohl* (cauliflower) and *Sznitbony/Schnittbohnen* (green beans) used by a young Upper Silesian school child in a Polish science class to describe vegetables used in his home.



This is also the case for the T-shirt named *Gymizy* (*Gemüse*/vegetables) that features a semantic word field which includes the Germanisms *Blumkol* and *Sznitbony* (see figure 20, above). The T-shirt *Gymizy* is available only in the adult section on the Gryfnie.com online store, but there were 30 printed T-shirts with the ethnolect text offered under the children's tab between May 14 - May 18, 2021, when I collected data from the Gryfnie.com online store. And it is noteworthy that the majority of the Germanisms featured on the children's T-shirts belong to the least frequently used words by current ethnolect speakers (see Table 3 for the list of the children's T-shirts, and Table 4 for detailed ranking of the Germanisms featured on these T-shirts).

iv. **Gryfnie.com T-shirts aimed for older students and their potential in the transmission of the ethnolect.**

Figure 21

Gryfnie.com T-shirt Sztudynty (Studenten, Students). This T-shirt features a semantic word field related to useful items for students (high school or university). Almost all the words in the word field are Germanisms, except for the Slavic Upper Silesian word *ksionżki* (books) and *Mobilniok* which is a new Upper Silesian word coined in 2010 to replace the Standard Polish word for a cell phone 'komórka'.



The Gryfnie.com T-shirt *Sztudynty* (figure 21, above) features, like the T-shirts for the very young, and the *Tyta*, predominantly Germanisms in the semantic word field, but perhaps the most poignant feature of this particular T-shirt is the logo of the *Uniwersytet Śląski* (University of Silesia in Katowice) positioned like a signature below the semantic word field (see figure 21, image on the left). The inclusion of the University logo suggests that the ethnolect need no longer be relegated to private use only, but could possibly be taught at school, and could even enter universities. Sallabank (2005) reminds us that an important aspect of language revitalization is that of building up prestige. Research has shown that for adolescents prestige of the heritage language within the society, and how the language is perceived by peers, are key factors in the success of learning or preserving a minority language, “even if tremendous effort is exerted to preserve a minority language, if that language is not cherished by the adolescent’s peer group, he or she will likely not speak the language—even in the home” (Caldas, 2006, p.163, cited in Potowski, 2013, p. 10). For the Upper Silesian ethnolect to be taught at school or the university would certainly mean a change in status: from a position as an inferior and vulgar speech form declared unacceptable in public and official situations in the past (Kamusella, 2013; Szymeja, 2006; Tambor, 2014) to a language associated with learning and social progress. In an interview with the University of Silesia (UŚ), Klaudia Roxela, one of the founders of Gryfnie.com and an ethnographer, acknowledges that the future of the Upper Silesian ethnolect to a great extent depends on young people in Upper Silesia: “We created the Gryfnie.com website offering clothes (...) and other products to popularize the [Upper] Silesian language. We wanted to reach, above all, a young audience” (UŚ, 2018). Another important aspect of language revitalization, especially for the younger generation, is the integration of a minority or heritage language with the modern era as, for example, coining words that reflect modern and current technologies. The Upper Silesian word for a cell phone, ‘mobilniok’ was created in 2010 and is featured on the T-shirt *Sztudynty*. ‘Mobilniok’ is different from the Polish and German

words for a cell phone (*komórka/Handy*), thus demonstrating not only that the Upper Silesian ethnolect can be used to express current trends but also, that it is capable of coining expressions that are independent from the Polish or German language. As Trudgill (1991) emphasizes in his defence of saving languages: “All languages are complex and adequate systems of communication” (p. 61). The T-shirt *Sztudynty* thus features vocabulary representing contemporary Upper Silesian expressions as well as the historical Germanisms of the ethnolect. The Germanisms *Klapsznita* (Klappschnitte, sandwich) and *Kamraty* (Kameraden, comrades), *Filok* (Füllfederhalter, fountain pen), *Hefte* (Hefte, notebooks) and *Pukeltasza* (Buckeltasche/Schulranzen, backpack), as seen in figure 21, provide a linguistic link to the historical heritage of Upper Silesia. This is important in view of the absence in teaching about the region's history. According to Marcin Wiatr (2020), a researcher who is responsible for the production of a joint German-Polish textbook commission, there is ‘a gaping void’ in the presence of Upper Silesia’s German-Polish cultural landscape in Polish educational media even after 1989. The history textbook for high school students by Andrzej Garlicki, published in 1998, is exemplary in this context, points out Wiatr (ibid.). In the section on the socio-political turning point in Poland in 1989 and Poland's ethnic diversity as a theme, high school students are given this synopsis: “Poland currently has the happiest, most advantageous territory in its history and is basically a culturally homogeneous state” (Wiatr, 2020, p. 360). In this context, the presence of items like the *Tyta* or the T-shirts adorned with Germanisms that clearly are not Standard Polish words, might prompt some questions by the students about the meaning of these words, their connection to the history of this region, and the reasons behind their resurgent occurrence in contemporary Upper Silesia. T-shirts and *Tyty* might be viewed as rather banal contributions to history lessons about Upper Silesia, yet they might serve as a nudge, an opportunity to expand national textbook narratives with a multi-ethnic and thus multilingual approach. Oslislo-Piekarska (2015) underscores the importance of knowing the history of this region, and how local people, in particular the

young Upper Silesians, are becoming cognisant of the history of Upper Silesia, the influence of Germany and the German language, and are no longer willing to suppress this historic part as was required in Poland prior to the political change of 1989.

v. **Gryfnie.com strategy for the transmission of the ethnolect with T-shirts designed to appeal to the generation of 20–30-year-old Upper Silesians**

Figure 22

UberGRYFNIE. Collaboration of the Gryfnie.com company with the Uber mobile application in support of the Upper Silesian ethnolect.



Figure 22 (above) is another example how the Gryfnie.com company attempts to engage young Upper Silesians in the revitalization of the ethnolect by promoting the ethnolect in an attractive way that reflects popular culture. The Gryfnie company acknowledged the one-year presence of the Uber mobile application in the Upper Silesian province (Województwo śląskie) by offering packages of T-shirts and other products featuring the ethnolect and Upper Silesian culture for province-wide orders via the Uber application. “Most of the people using Uber in Silesia are young people to whom we want to show that [Upper] Silesian culture and the ethnolect are cool, something we can be proud of and should show”, explains Klaudia, “With such initiatives we support the [Upper] Silesian ethnolect” (UberGRYFNIE, 2017). Eisenlohr (2004) points out the importance of new technologies in

projects aimed at language maintenance or revitalization which can be particularly attractive to the younger generation by aligning the minoritized language with the contemporary world with a relevance for the future of a particular group (ibid.).

vi. Revitalization of the Upper Silesian ethnolect through emancipation

My analysis of the link between commodification and revitalization of the Upper Silesian ethnolect begun with the T-shirt **Kolo** (*Rad, Fahrrad*, bicycle) that unpacks a host of Germanisms in its semantic word field all representing different parts of a bicycle (see figures 4 & 23). As mentioned before, the lexeme **Kolo** is perceived by Standard Polish speakers and ethnolect speakers alike as a quintessential Upper Silesian expression. **Kolo** (wheel in Standard Polish) is a translation of the German word ‘Rad’ (from *Fahrrad*) and used by the ethnolect speakers for a practical but simple bicycle.

Figure 23

Gryfnie.com T-shirt Kolo. Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers usually associate **Kolo** with a sturdy, rather old-fashioned bicycle, and they use the Standard Polish word ‘rower’ for a modern mountain bike or a racing type bicycle.



I complete my analysis with a redefinition of the word Koło by the Gryfnie company, whereby **Kolo** comes full circle, so to speak, to demonstrates how the Gryfnie company

transforms the perception of the ethnolect to engage a young generation of ethnolect speakers in the revitalization process of the ethnolect.

In figure 24 the T-shirt **Kolo** is featured on a young male, paired with a racing bike, and set in an urban environment with graffiti art in the background. Yet, traditionally, Upper Silesian

Figure 24

*Gryfnie.com T-shirt **Kolo** in a new association. **Kolo** is a borrowed expression from the German word *Rad*, from *Fahrrad*, and means ‘wheel’ in Standard Polish. A bicycle is called a ‘rower’ in Standard Polish, never a **Kolo**. **Kolo** is perceived by both Upper Silesian and Polish speakers as a stereotypical Upper Silesian word (Vann, 2000, p.187).*



ethnolect speakers have a different association with the word **Kolo**. Vann (2000) reports that in her research in the late 1990s Upper Silesians of all ages, from a 6-year-old child to a person in her sixties, associated a picture of a simple city bike with the Upper Silesian word **Kolo** and a fancier racing or mountain bike with the Standard Polish word for a bicycle ‘rower’ (p.186). A closer look at the image of the **Kolo** on the T-shirt in figure 23 does show a rather sturdy bike that Upper Silesians associate with a **Kolo**, an ordinary bike that could be ridden by any Upper Silesian. But aligning the T-shirt **Kolo** with a young, urban, racing bike rider, as seen in figure 24, changes the status of the word **Kolo** to equal the Standard Polish word ‘rower’ which Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers identified with a fancy racing bike,

rather than with a useful but simple bike with a *Gepék* and *Szusblech* (Gepäckträger and Schutzblech), as shown in figure 23. For the Gryfnie.com company *Kolo* can represent a modern, cool version of a bicycle that appeals to a young urban generation. It is a conscious decision by the producers of the T-shirts, for as Kress (2011) reminds us, texts are the result of design and of composition where every choice in that process points to a decision made about an appropriate match of ‘what is to be meant’ with ‘what can best express that meaning’ (p. 39). Positioning the Upper Silesian word *Kolo* on par with the Standard Polish word ‘rower’ brings to mind Hentschel’s observation that what the Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers want is “emancipation of their variety of speech and the recognition for its regionality, in all its historical and cultural specificity” (Böttcher, 2022).

To summarize this analysis section, the images, and texts on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts for young children have a comparable function to picture books and thus have the potential to engage children (and their caregivers) in intergenerational transmission of the ethnolect. Similarly, the *Tyta*, gifted by the parents or older relatives, can act as a linguistic link between generations, introducing the first graders not only to the ethnolect vocabulary, but also open channels to discuss the history of the region. In addition, the presence of a *Tyta* adorned with Germanisms signals to students and teachers alike a stance toward a potential inclusion of the ethnolect in the education environment which would support the transmission of the ethnolect to the next generation. Enhancing the prestige of the ethnolect is another strategy employed by the Gryfnie company that aids the transmission of the ethnolect to adolescents and young adults. This strategy is evident on the T-shirt *Sztudynty* (figure 21), where the historical Germanisms and newly coined Upper Silesian ethnolect vocabulary is linked with the logo of the University of Silesia, associating higher learning with the ethnolect. Modernity and prestige are also conveyed with the Gryfnie.com T-shirt featuring a collaboration with the Uber App. (see figure 22). Finally, a gesture toward elevation and emancipation of the Upper

Silesian ethnolect from its past hick image is the Gryfnie.com association of the Upper Silesian word *Kolo* (simple bicycle) with a fancy bicycle and linking it with a young hipster crowd sporting the ethnolect on their T-shirts.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this final chapter, I present a brief summary of my research results and final points of discussion, followed by some potential future direction for this research.

Researchers and language activists emphasize that language recovery projects must be driven by the language community in question, and the participation of the communities is instrumental in the success of any language recovery project (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; Hinton, 2003). I am therefore situating this summary and discussion within the context of Hentschel's observation of what the community of Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers want, namely: "emancipation of their variety of speech and the recognition for its regionality, in all its historical and cultural specificity" (Böttcher, 2022). I will reflect on these observations by Hentschel as I summarize the main points of my analysis in support of my thesis statement that commodification of the Upper Silesian ethnolect, as exemplified on the Gryfnie.com printed T-shirts, may contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect.

This project has focused specifically on the Germanisms in the ethnolect because it is the Germanisms that have contributed to the stigmatization of the ethnolect in the past, and they continue to be a contentious issue in the codification of the ethnolect and in the recognition of the ethnolect as a regional language by the Polish state (Hentschel, 2018). This focus on the Germanisms led to my first research question informing this thesis: To what extent does the Gryfnie.com company promote Germanisms on their T-shirts? My analysis showed that the Gryfnie.com company promotes the Germanisms on several levels. More than half of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts (53 %) feature Germanisms, which is significant because the actual percentage of Germanisms in the ethnolect is much lower, estimated to be 18% (Tambor, 2014). Moreover, a substantial number (49%) of the Germanisms featured on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts are in the category of either not used, or seldom used, or even forgotten lexemes by the ethnolect speakers. Thus, the Gryfnie.com company

contributes to the revitalization of the ethnolect by promoting vocabulary that is in danger of attrition. The promotion of the Germanisms by the Gryfnie.com company is in line with the wishes of the current ethnolect speakers who are overwhelmingly (95%) in favour of retaining the Germanisms in the codification of the ethnolect (Hentschel, Fekete & Tambor, 2019). Following Hentschel's observation, Upper Silesians are aware of their distinctiveness, the cultural history in which they are rooted. The Germanisms symbolize a cultural connection to Germany and provide a tangible link to the history of Upper Silesia within Germany.

This connection to Upper Silesia's history is also presented in the construction of the contemporary Upper Silesian identity on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts and the product labels in the form of Germanisms that evoke historical symbols of the region and the local industry. In addition, the product labels of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts reveal how the Germanisms, as for example *Wihajster*, are used as distinct markers of Upper Silesianness, and as boundary-markers which define speakers of the ethnolect as members of an ethnic group. Thus, the Gryfnie.com company's T-shirts provide consumers with symbolic materials to use these language markers as a positive identity resource. In addition, by drawing on principles of translanguaging as a language practice, I have described how the Gryfnie.com T-shirts may support a shift in the perception of the Germanisms from stigmatized elements of the ethnolect to dynamic forms of linguistic creativity.

An important question informing this thesis is the role of Gryfnie.com T-shirts offered for young children, students, and young adults in the intergenerational transmission of the ethnolect. How do the texts and images engage the younger generation in the process of language (ethnolect) transmission? For the Upper Silesian ethnolect there has been a disruption of the process of intergenerational language transmission which typically relies on the home environment. Hentschel's (2019) research shows that 40% of the Upper Silesians ethnolect speakers have shifted to speak Standard Polish in the home environment. The

intergenerational transmission of a language is typically used as a standard indicator for whether a language will maintain its vitality into the indefinite future (Fishman, 1991); and the basic tenet emphasized by Fishman (1991) is that language maintenance and revitalization must involve intergenerational transmission of the language. Klaudia Roxela, one of the founders of Gryfnie.com and an ethnographer, acknowledges that the future of the Upper Silesian ethnolect to a great extent depends on young people in Upper Silesia: “We created the Gryfnie.com website offering clothes (...) and other products to popularize the [Upper] Silesian language. We wanted to reach, above all, a young audience” (UŚ, 2018). The images and texts on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts for young children have a comparable function to picture books with the potential to engage children to learn the ethnolect. Similarly, the *Tyta* (*Schulțiite*) introduces the first graders to the ethnolect vocabulary. In addition, the presence of a *Tyta* adorned with Germanisms signals to students and teachers alike a stance toward a potential inclusion of the ethnolect in the education environment which would support the transmission of the ethnolect to the next generation. Enhancing the prestige of the ethnolect and conveying modernity is another strategy employed by the Gryfnie company that aids the transmission of the ethnolect to adolescents and young adults. This strategy is evident on the T-shirt for high-school students, *Sztudynty* (figure 21), where the historical Germanisms and newly coined Upper Silesian ethnolect vocabulary (such as mobilniok/cell phone) is linked with the logo of the University of Silesia, associating higher learning with the ethnolect. For the Upper Silesian ethnolect to be taught at school or the university would certainly mean emancipation of the ethnolect, referred to in the above-mentioned observation by Hentschel (Böttcher, 2022). It would be an emancipation from a position as an inferior and vulgar speech form declared unacceptable in public and official situations in the past to a language associated with learning and social progress (Kamusella, 2013; Tambor, 2014).

My final summary point is bringing up the role of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in the linguistic landscape (public space) and answering my research question: In what way(s) does the presence of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in the linguistic landscape contribute to the revitalization of the ethnolect? Being visible may be as important for the survival of minority languages as being heard (Marten et al., 2012). Linguistic landscape refers to the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region. In the region of Upper Silesia, the language found on public signs is the official national language, Standard Polish (Olko, 2021). The printed T-shirt can be compared with other more traditional forms of signage in the linguistic landscape, like billboards, but the T-shirt has features of both spoken and written communication (Caldwell, 2017). The printed T-shirt, like the written mode on a billboard, is both a visual and a planned act of communication. At the same time, the printed T-shirt, like the spoken mode, is a face-to-face communicative act, with a potential for interactivity between wearer and viewer. Another characteristic of the printed T-shirt is that the T-shirt text and image is permanent and combined with the face-to-face dimension makes this a unique feature of the printed T-shirt. Speech is transient, but the writing on the T-shirt is a continuous ongoing permanent communication. “The printed T-shirt may be in the background to other communicated events, however, all the while it remains in the vision of spoken interaction and the public environment more generally” (Caldwell, 2017, p. 131). Järlehed (2019) reminds us that, “T-shirts are not just clothing, but mobile, multimodal and highly accessible communicative media used for displaying and indexing a wide range of things, people, places and values” (p. 61). They invite the viewer to reflect on notions such as language and its cultural heritage. This would suggest that wearing a Gryfnie.com T-shirt inscribed with Germanisms in a semantic word field invites the viewer of the T-shirt to reflect on the images, the text, the choice of the vocabulary and possibly to engage with the wearer of the T-shirt to discuss the ethnolect words. Returning to Hentschel’s observation that the Upper Silesian ethnolect speakers wish for emancipation of the ethnolect,

increased visibility of the ethnolect in the linguistic landscape can be seen as a contributing factor in the emancipation of the ethnolect by shifting the ethnolect from the colloquial context of individual speakers into the public domain. In addition, the presence of the written form of the Upper Silesian ethnolect in the linguistic landscape not only serves to confirm the ethnolect's existence but also that of a distinct (regional) community associated with it.

I have concluded the summary of my research results with a discussion on the role of the Gryfnie.com T-shirts in the linguistic landscape which brings me to a potential future direction for research linked to economy related revitalization efforts and the linguistic landscape. Such revitalization efforts can start on a small scale within local businesses and services and may eventually be adopted by larger companies. This has been the case with the Gryfnie.com company. Inspired by the Upper Silesian ethnolect texts found on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts, the Silesian Bank, ING BANK ŚLĄSKI, commissioned a mural to be installed on their building in a central location in Katowice, the capital of the Voivodship Silesia. The mural (see figure 27, below) features Upper Silesian lexemes, including Germanisms and illustrations found on the Gryfnie.com T-shirts. As Wicherkiewicz (2021) points out, efforts such as advertisement in regional languages could be used as evidence in favour of more language planning arrangements that aim to promote these language varieties. Consequently, the economy could develop into a valuable ally in language revitalization, regardless of the official attitude of the authorities. But there is also tension associated with commodification of language and heritage. As mentioned in a previous section, Koterska (2018) relates endeavours linked to commodification of language and heritage to self colonization, as for example, in the marketing of the Upper Silesian cultural and language heritage by local entrepreneurs and artists in their efforts to revitalize the local ethnolect. Likewise, Łuc (2020) argues that the Upper Silesian ethnolect is being exploited by local entrepreneurs by riding the wave of the current grassroots efforts to revitalize the ethnolect.

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Appendix

Figure 25

Polish administrative districts since 1999. Within the red boundry are the Województwo śląskie and Województwo opolskie comprising the historical Upper Silesia, and the Województwo dolnośląskie (Lower Silesia).



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Figure 26

Historical and present region of Upper Silesia (Oberschlesien)

The blue portion on the map is showing the historic Prussian/German Upper Silesia, within the Polish administrative districts of Województwo śląskie and Województwo opolskie in Poland, and the Moravskoslezský Kraj of the Czech Republic. The Silesia region became part of the Prussian realm in 1740. Administratively Upper and Lower Silesia formed the Prussian Silesian Province since 1815, in 1866 the province joined the German Confederation, and in 1871 became part of the German Empire.



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