

## Plural Verb Marking in Historical Swiss German Heritage Data

Anita Auer

*Université de Lausanne*

Swiss German dialects distinguish themselves from each other in terms of lexicon, phonology and morpho-syntax. To illustrate a morphological difference, plural verb inflections of full verbs (*wir/ihr/sie gehen* ‘we/you/they walk’) display an east-west contrast where the eastern half of the Swiss German dialect area uses the same form in all three persons, e.g. *-ed/-ed/-ed* in Glarus and Zurich. In contrast, the western half uses two forms in the plural, e.g. *-e/-it/-e* or *-i/-it/-i* in parts of Bern, Solothurn and Lucerne. In addition a north-south divide can be observed in that the southern Valais dialect uses three forms in the plural, of which the majority forms are *-e/-et/-unt;-ent* (Christen et al. 2013: 296-270). Similarly, the verbs *haben* (‘have’) and *sein* (‘be’) display a similar east-west and north-south divide (cf. Christen et al. 2013: 298-301). The observed morphological distinctions in the Swiss German homeland are captured in the *Sprachatlas der deutschen Schweiz (SDS)*, which is based on data collected during the period *c.* 1940-1970 (cf. Hotzenköcherle ed. 1962–1997; Trüb 1982). During this period, notably in 1966-67, Brian Lewis made recordings of descendants of Glarner migrants (born between 1880 and 1910), in New Glarus, Wisconsin and its surroundings (cf. Lewis 1968, 1970, 1973). More precisely, based on a slightly revised version of Lester W.J. Seifert’s Wisconsin German Questionnaire including 700 sentences on different topics (cf. Seifert 1951), Lewis interviewed and recorded 11 Glarus dialect heritage speakers. We therefore now have New Glarus heritage data as well as contemporary homeland data at our disposal for linguistic investigations (cf. Auer & Derungs 2018).

Since the first arrival of the Glarus migrants in Wisconsin in 1845, the Glarus dialect in the diaspora has come into contact with other Swiss German and German dialects, in addition to the dominant language English. This has had an effect on Glarus heritage dialect as previously observed by Lewis (1968, 1970, 1973) and Auer & Derungs (2018). As no systematic study of plural verb marking in the New Glarus heritage data set and a comparison to the homeland data has been carried out to date, the current paper will investigate this topic. The systematic study and comparison will shed new light on the influence that dialect contact in the diaspora has had on different generations of Glarus dialect heritage speakers. The linguistic study will be further complemented and supported by socio-historical information on the New Glarus colony.

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