German in a contact situation: The case of Namibian German

SHEENA SHAH
University of Cambridge

1. INTRODUCTION

The German spoken in Namibia is commonly known as *Südwesterdeutsch*, which may seem surprising, as the terms *Südwestafrika*, *Südwest* and *Südwester/in* have lost their historical authority and are nowadays considered politically incorrect. In German, people rarely talk of *Namibisches Deutsch*, though in English, the direct translation, 'Namibian German', is often heard. In this research paper, I will refer to this variety of German as 'NG' (*Namibian German*).

The general view held by non-linguists is that only Standard German (SG) authorised in Germany is "correct German". In this research paper, I will be looking at the salient linguistic characteristics of NG which differentiate it from the SG spoken in parts of Germany. Researchers have previously noted that NG differs from SG primarily in respect of its lexical characteristics. The aim of this research paper is to establish whether this is in fact an accurate description of the major difference between the two varieties of German.

Despite the prestige held by the German language in Namibia, there is a lack of relevant, current and comprehensive literature on the topic. This has not only highlighted the necessity but also aroused my interest to undertake such a study. The most useful literature on the linguistic aspects of NG has been material written by Nöckler (1963), J. Pütz (2001) and Riehl (2002). Nöckler and Pütz devote their work solely to the lexical characteristics of NG, after ultimately concluding that this is the area which most differentiates NG to SG. Nöckler's work, however, is out-of-date and cannot thus be exemplary of the contemporary linguistic situation of German in Namibia. He lists lexical features present in NG, but fails to provide illustrations of usage patterns. Pütz, on the other hand, demonstrates how NG lexicon is used in a sentence, but his rather facetious and casual approach to the topic[1] is seen through his citing of us-

[1] J. Pütz (2001:15): 'Im Gegensatz zu Nöcklers Arbeit, sind die Dickschenäries natürlich alles andere als seriös! … Ironisch, sarkastisch, grobschlächtig, lustig, vulgär, provokativ – aber alles andere als akademisch.' ('In contrast to Nöckler's work, the dictionaries are everything else but serious! … Ironic, sarcastic, coarse, funny, vulgar, provocative – everything else but academic.')

age pattern examples which he himself has fabricated. Riehl's pilot study is the only study to date which places equal emphasis on the morphological, syntactic and lexical characteristics of NG. She exemplifies all her points with data collected during a two-month-stay in Namibia in 1999.

In order to establish the main loci of difference between NG and SG, I will focus on the morphological, syntactic and lexical characteristics of NG. The characteristics mentioned in this research paper are not nonce forms, but rather typical of the speech of every NG speaker. In this way, these features, despite being absent in SG, can be described as being 'standard' in Namibia. All examples used, unless otherwise stated, come from my own observations and interactions with Namibian Germans from the beginning of July 2005 until the end of August 2006.

2. BACKGROUND AND DATA COLLECTION

German was the sole official language in Namibia between 1884 and 1915, the years in which it was a colony of the German Reich. It failed, however, to be the *lingua franca* in Namibia during this period, with Afrikaans instead having this role, as only a privileged white minority and a few blacks spoke the German language. The occupation of Namibia by the South African Union troops from 1915 to 1920 marked the end of the German colonial rule in Namibia and German subsequently lost its status as the official language in the country and was replaced by Dutch and English (1920) and later by Afrikaans and English (1925). After Namibia's Independence in 1990, English became the sole official language in the country. The other eleven languages spoken in Namibia, including Afrikaans and German, are nowadays regarded as national languages.

German in Namibia is used in public and private domains. It is the language used among German-speaking Namibians in business, cultural and religious spheres. German is taught as a foreign language to approximately 4,600 pupils at thirty schools and as a mother tongue at thirteen private and state schools throughout the country[2]. German speakers in Namibia have access to German TV (*DEUKOM* transmits digital-quality German television channels via satellite in Southern Africa), a German regional radio service (fifteen hours a day of German-speaking programmes are transmitted by the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation), a daily German newspaper (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, AZ), as well as German videos, books and magazines, obtainable at German bookshops in Windhoek (the capital of Namibia) and Swakopmund (a predominantly German town) and the *Goethe Zentrum* in Windhoek. The approximately 20,000[3] German-speaking Namibians (less than 2% of the population) currently living in Namibia make up a small, but economically significant minority group in the country.

NG data was collected during numerous interactions with Namibian Germans during my fourteen-month-stay in Namibia. My informants were drawn from the friends I made while in Namibia. The research I conducted was therefore done as an integrated researcher (cf. Milroy's (1987:66) 'friend of a friend' technique) and ambiguity in the results obtained due to the 'observer's paradox'[4] was thus significantly reduced.

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[2] http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/laender/namibia.html

[3] http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/laender/namibia.html

[4] Term given by Labov (1972:113) indicating the difficulties in obtaining casual speech when a person is being interviewed and tape-recorded.

Regular contact with the group under investigation took place at work (*Privatschule Swakopmund* (one month), *Goethe Zentrum Windhoek* (three months), *Deutsche Höhere Privat Schule Windhoek* (ten months)), at home (my host-father was Namibian German), with my participation in extra-curricular activities and with my Namibian German friends from Windhoek and Swakopmund.

The characteristics of NG listed in this research paper are found in the speech of everyone who speaks German in Namibia, regardless of whether they also speak English and/or Afrikaans or whether they are just monolingual German. The absolute number of informants involved in this research was twenty-five, eighteen of whom were monolingual speakers of German[5] and seven of whom were bilingual in German-Afrikaans/German-English. The ages of the informants ranged from six to fifty-six years. The speech of NG monolinguals was examined and their German was compared with that of NG speakers who also speak another language fluently.

German in Namibia finds itself in a contact situation. Linguistic outcomes of contact situations include lexical borrowing, grammatical convergence, code-switching, first language attrition, mixed languages and the development of creoles. A contact situation is found in many countries in the world, including Canada (French and English), Wales (Welsh and English) and Switzerland (French, German, Italian and Rhaeto-Romansh) and arises when speakers of one language interact with speakers of another language. This took place in Namibia when the Germans came to the country and came into contact with the local people. German in Namibia is primarily in contact with and being influenced by two European Germanic languages, namely English and Afrikaans, with the indigenous languages playing a much smaller role in the contact situation. This therefore differentiates this contact variety from Afrikaans, which predominantly arose through contact with Dutch and the indigenous languages (cf. Ponelis 1993). The contact that NG is having with English and Afrikaans is affecting the system to a large extent, but there are nevertheless certain respects in which contact with the two languages **has not** affected the German spoken in Namibia, although in many of these respects the language of the bilinguals **does** feature this contact effect. In these instances, the bilinguals are seen to produce a German which is **even more** influenced by contact than the German generally spoken in Namibia. Such observations in which NG remains more like SG and where it has not been as contact-influenced as it potentially could have been will be added in the discussion to illustrate how different certain areas of the German in Namibia could have been, but are not, from the standard spoken in Germany.

For this study, both spoken and written data were collected. Spoken data were acquired during my day-to-day encounters with Namibian Germans. I observed their speech very carefully and kept a small notebook at hand to note down interesting features present in their language. Ten hours of natural conversation which I had had with the Namibian Germans or which they had had with each other during my absence were also recorded. Data from email, informal letter writing and mobile phone text messages were also gathered as examples of the "written spoken variety" (as indicative of either spoken NG or informal written NG – cf. Crystal 2001). Examples of typical NG features in a more formal written context were obtained through viewing compositions written by students and through reading the daily German newspaper in Namibia.

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[5] As can be expected in a multilingual country like Namibia, all subjects have at least some knowledge of English and Afrikaans, with many also having a basic command of an indigenous language.

3. STRUCTURAL PROPERTIES OF NG

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This section deals with the morphological, syntactic and lexical differences between NG and SG. Researchers claim that there is no difference between the pronunciation of SG and NG (Nöckler 1963:128, M. Pütz 1991:464). Unlike other German-speaking emigrant groups, who tended to come from a specific German dialectal area, Germans settling into Namibia came from all parts of Germany and so they did not bring along a common dialect into the new settlement area. There were, however, large numbers of German immigrants who came from the northern German area, an area where people on the whole speak SG (Clyne 1995:29). Thus, it is not surprising that researchers have found that the pronunciation of NG corresponds to that of SG. Riehl (2000:3) also holds this viewpoint, but notes that some phonetic characteristics still need to be investigated. This shows that at least one researcher has noted that there may be something more to say about NG phonology than might at first meet the ear. Phonological differences will be excluded from this discussion due to the complete lack of phonological differences found by all but one of the researchers and my own observation that they are not nearly as striking as morphological, syntactic and lexical ones, which are therefore going to be the focus of this section.

3.2. MORPHOLOGY

The verbal, prepositional and adjectival patterns as well as the case system of NG will be considered in this section and these will be compared to SG. Points of SG morphology worth noting here are that verbs in SG change their form to express various grammatical notions, e.g. tense, mood, number and person. This is usually done inflectionally, i.e. by adding endings or by changing the vowel in the stem of the verb. There are four cases in SG (nominative, accusative, genitive and dative) and these serve to indicate the role of various constituents in a sentence. This is different to English, where there are fewer case forms, as the relationship of various constituents in a sentence is shown in other ways, e.g. through the use of prepositions and through the ordering of constituents in a sentence. SG has two types of adjectives: attributive adjectives have endings which indicate certain grammatical categories and thus decline in agreement with the noun and predicative adjectives have no endings. In English and Afrikaans, neither attributive nor predicative adjectives systematically decline in agreement with the noun.

My data indicates that the morphology of NG shows some evidence of deviating from the standard language. This idea is also substantiated in secondary literature (J. Pütz 2001:16, Gretschel 1984:41), but not all sources agree (M. Pütz 1991:464).

3.2.1. VERBAL PATTERNS

When conjugating verbs, J. Pütz (2001:16) emphasises that Namibian Germans obey the rules of SG. My data shows that verbal conjugations are so well established in NG that they are even seen in action when speakers use borrowed verbs. J. Pütz illustrates this point by taking a NG verb (of Afrikaans origin), *ssükkeln*[6] (‘to suffer’ or ‘to do something with a lot of effort’), and conjugating it as a Namibian German would:

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[6] Unless otherwise indicated, spelling throughout this research paper is taken from J. Pütz (2001). Spelling reflects pronunciation. In this case, *ss* is pronounced as a voiceless [s].

(1)	ich	ssükkel	ihr	ssükkel**t**
	du	ssükkel**st**	sie, Sie	ssükkel**n**
	er/sie/es	ssükkel**t**	Perfect	**ge**ssükkel**t**
	wir	ssükkel**n**	Future	**werden ssükkeln**

My own data substantiate the above point:

(2) a. *Ich lik**e**[7] ihn eigentlich!*

(‘I actually like him!’)

b. *Du worrie**st** zu viel!*

(‘You worry too much!’)

c. *Das jobb**t** nicht!*

(‘That doesn’t work!’)

d. *Sie morsch**en** das Papier!*

(‘You’re wasting the paper!’)

e. *Der **hat** mir mal **ge**misscall**ed**.*

(‘He once miscalled me.’)

f. *Ich **werde** nicht so durcheinander **gesellsen**.*

(‘I’m not going to talk so mixed-up.’)

g. *Ich **wurde** davon so **ausgekackt**.*

(‘I got into so much crap because of that.’)

Examples like the ones above should not, however, be viewed as an indication that NG structures consistently feature large amounts of borrowed words. The above examples are simply intended to illustrate the extent to which the SG verbal inflection system is entrenched in NG.

A large proportion of the past participles in German are formed with *ge-* + stem of the verb + appropriate person ending, which for strong verbs is often *-en* (Durrell 2002:238). This is one instance in which the NG system has not been affected by contact with Afrikaans and/or English, as Namibian Germans use this rule correctly. Some of the bilinguals, however, tend to overuse this rule:

(3) *Als wir das **gehören** haben, waren wir traurig.*

Standard NG: *Als wir das **gehört** haben, waren wir traurig.*

(‘When we heard that, we were sad.’)

[7] The final *e* is not a schwa, *like* is thus uninflected.

The bilingual child is clearly not paying attention to the verbal conjugation pattern here and overgeneralising the most common ending, *-en*.

The infinitive in NG is often connected with *um…zu* (interference from Afrikaans: *om…te* (Lutrin 1999:33)) instead of just *zu*, as in SG:

(4) a. *Ich habe keine Lust,* ***um*** *morgen in der Schule* ***zu*** *gehen.*

(From Afrikaans: *Ek het nie lus* ***om*** *môre skool toe* ***te*** *gaan nie.*)

SG: *Ich habe keine Lust, morgen in die Schule* ***zu*** *gehen.*

('I don't feel like going to school tomorrow.')

Gretschel (1984:41) claims that this incorrect use of the infinitive features when the infinitive has the role of an attributive (example 4b) and an object (example 4c) and illustrates this point with the following examples:

b. *Der Weg,* ***um*** *diese Frage* ***zu*** *lösen, ist schwer.*

(From Afrikaans: *Die manier* ***om*** *hierdie vraag op* ***te*** *los is moeilik.*)

SG: *Der Weg, diese Frage* ***zu*** *lösen, ist schwer.*

('The way to solve this question is difficult.')

c. *Er ist bereit,* ***um zu*** *helfen.*

(From Afrikaans: *Hy is bereid* ***om te*** *help.*)

SG: *Er ist bereit* ***zu*** *helfen.*

('He is prepared to help.')

My data contains many *um…zu* structures in attributive and object infinitives and thus supports Gretschel's findings. My data also features correctly used infinitives (i.e. without the incorrect *um…zu*) and these correct uses are found in non-attributive and non-object infinitives.

3.2.2. PREPOSITIONAL PATTERNS

Influence from English and Afrikaans has led to three different prepositional patterns forming in NG:

a. Adding a spurious preposition in NG where SG would just have an accusative-marked object.

b. Dropping prepositions which are usually present in SG.

c. Changing the preposition used after certain verbs in NG.

To exemplify these points, the following common cases can be cited:

(5) a. *suchen* ***für*** (instead of accusative)

Ich habe ***für*** *ihn gesucht*. (From English: 'to look **for**')

SG: *Ich habe* ***ihn*** *gesucht*.

('I looked for him.')

b. *aufpassen* + object (instead of *aufpassen* ***auf*** *etwas*)

Kannst du ***die Kinder*** *aufpassen?* (From Afrikaans: *iemand oppas*)

SG: *Kannst du* ***auf*** *die Kinder aufpassen?*

('Can you look after the children?')

c. *warten* ***für*** (instead of ***auf***)

Ich habe so lange ***für*** *ihn gewartet*. (From Afrikaans: *wag* ***vir*** and from English: 'to wait **for**')

SG: *Ich habe so lange* ***auf*** *ihm gewartet*.

('I waited such a long time for him.')

The above examples illustrate deviations in the prepositions used after some verbs, as well as deviations in the valence of certain verbs in NG. A pattern emerges here, namely that verbs in NG generally take on the prepositions of the corresponding verbs in Afrikaans and/or English. Nevertheless there are specific prepositions which NG speakers consistently use correctly and these on the whole tend to be a very small set of basic prepositions, like *in, bei* and *mit* (cf. the prepositions found in creoles).

The above examples show that Namibian Germans have a tendency to overuse the preposition *für*. Spoken Afrikaans makes use of *vir* in contexts where Standard Afrikaans only has an indirect object (Carstens 2003:61-64): *Ek gee* ***vir*** *hom 'n boek* in spoken Afrikaans (Standard Afrikaans: *Ek gee hom 'n boek*, English: 'I give him a book'). This pattern has been transferred into NG (cf. example 5a above). This *vir* can also be used in contexts where Standard Afrikaans only has a direct object: *Sê* ***vir*** *hom dat hy laat is* in spoken Afrikaans (Standard Afrikaans: *Sê hom dat hy laat is*, English: 'Tell him that he is late'). NG models on this pattern: *Sag* ***für*** *ihn, der muss den Stift holen* (SG: *Sag ihm, er muss den Stift holen*, English: 'Tell him that he has to get the pen'). NG has a lot of 'extra' uses for *für* in general: *Du muss nicht* ***für*** *das worrien* (SG: *Du musst dich darum nicht sorgen*, English: 'You mustn't worry about that'). The Afrikaans *vir* + object is thus affecting NG.

Namibian Germans also use the incorrect preposition when indicating a place they would like to go to. This is expressed in SG using the preposition *nach*, in NG using *zu*, which is possible interference from English 'to':

(6) a. *Wir machen bald einen Ausflug* ***zu*** *Swakopmund.*

SG: *Wir machen bald einen Ausflug* ***nach*** *Swakopmund.*

('We will soon be going on a trip **to** Swakopmund.')

b. *Ich will sehr gerne **zu** Swakopmund gehen.*

SG: *Ich will sehr gerne **nach** Swakopmund gehen.*

('I really want to go **to** Swakopmund.')

Afrikaans cannot be responsible here, because it would use the postpositional *toe* in this instance (van Schalkwyk 1998:71) – cf. *Ek gaan Swakopmund **toe***.

Incorrect prepositions are not only used with verbs, but also with adjectives and nouns:

(7) a. *Sie war so böse **mit** uns.*

(From English: 'She was so angry **with** us.')

SG: *Sie war so böse **auf** uns.*

b. *Wir haben so Comparisons gemacht **mit** Schwäbisch und Südwesterdeutsch.*

(From Afrikaans: *Ons het vergelykings gemaak **met** Swabies en Namibiese Duits.*)

SG: *Wir haben so Vergleiche **zwischen** Schwäbisch und Südwesterdeutsch gezogen.*

('We drew comparisons between Swabian and Namibian German.')

The production of these NG sentences has clearly been affected by interference from English and/or Afrikaans. Interesting to note here is that the small set of prepositions which tend to be used correctly after verbs are sometimes used incorrectly with adjectives and nouns.

3.2.3. ADJECTIVAL PATTERNS

Adjectives from NG follow SG patterns, as the following examples demonstrate:

(8) a. *Ich habe einen lellecke**n*** (from Afrikaans: *lelik* = 'ugly', 'bad') *Sonnenbrand.*

('I have a bad sunburn.')

b. *Und dann hat er gesagt, "Das ist eine mooi**e*** (from Afrikaans: *mooi* = 'beautiful') *Tschick!"*

('And he then said, "That's a hot chick!"')

c. *Was für frott**e*** (from Afrikaans: *vrot* = 'lazy'; in NG, *frott* = 'bad', 'ugly') *Mangos!*

('What bad mangoes!')

Afrikaans does not have productive[8] adjectival inflection (Lutrin 1999:12, van Schalkwyk 1998:193) and English does not have adjectival inflection at all, but as the above examples demonstrate, NG features adjectival inflection on borrowed adjectives.

3.2.4. THE CASE SYSTEM

The dropping of the attributive genitive is a very common feature in NG (Gretschel 1984:41, J. Pütz 2001:16). In forming the possessive in NG, the genitive case is frequently replaced with a parallel found in Afrikaans (van Schalkwyk 1998:40-41) and also in some Low German dialects (Russ 1990:43):

(9) a. *Alle saßen auf **Joos sein Schoß**.*

(From Afrikaans: *Almal het op **Joos se skoot** gesit.*)

SG: *Alle saßen auf Joos' Schoß.*

('Everyone sat on Joos' lap.')

b. ***Meinem Freund seine Schwester***

(From Afrikaans: ***My vriend se suster***)

SG: *Die Schwester meines Freundes*

('My boyfriend's sister')

c. *Das ist **Henning sein Buch**.*

(From Afrikaans: *Dit is **Henning se boek**.*)

SG: *Das ist Hennings Buch.*

('That is Henning's book.')

The above examples show that possessive pronouns do not always inflect accordingly. This is also the case with possessive determiners, which are also not always declined when following a preposition:

d. *Mit **sein** Auto*

SG: *Mit sein**em** Auto*

('With his car')

e. *Ich bin in **sein** Klasse.*

SG: *Ich bin in sein**er** Klasse.*

('I am in his class.')

There is evidence of interference here from English and Afrikaans, where possessive pronouns and possessive determiners remain invariable, as both languages lack gender on nouns and do not have different forms for different cases (cf. *mit sein**em** Auto, mit sein**er** Katze* versus *met **sy** motor, met **sy** kat* and 'with **his** car', 'with **his** cat').

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[8] It is relatively systematic and basically serves to distinguish literal and figurative meanings from one another.

The uncertainty in the use of the dative and accusative case is not only characteristic of NG, but also of the German in South Africa (cf. de Kadt 2002). The dative case is used in place of the accusative after certain prepositions (after prepositions only requiring the accusative case: *durch, für* and *gegen* and after prepositions requiring both the accusative and the dative case: *auf* and *in*):

(10) a. *Er arbeitet für **ihr**.*

SG: *Er arbeitet für **sie**.*

('He works for her.')

b. *Ich habe das Zimmer durch **ihm** gefunden.*

SG: *Ich habe das Zimmer durch **ihn** gefunden.*

('I found the room through him.')

English, Afrikaans and certain North German dialects do not distinguish between the accusative and dative case and the phonological similarity between at least some accusative and dative forms in German (cf. *ihm* versus *ihn*) may make it quite difficult for those who know English/Afrikaans to pick up that German distinguishes these two cases. Stielau (1980:218-19) argues that the form of the third-person pronoun in the object position in Afrikaans (*ho**m**, haa**r***) and English (*hi**m**, he**r***) is closer to the German dative *ih**m*** and *ih**r*** than to the accusative *ihn* and *sie* and this could therefore explain the Namibian Germans' tendency to use the dative after a preposition normally requiring the accusative.

Namibian Germans frequently use the accusative instead of the dative with prepositions that govern the dative:

(11) a. *Ich spiele immer mit **die** beide.*

SG: *Ich spiele immer mit **den** beiden.*

('I always play with both of them.')

The same takes place with prepositions that govern the accusative/dative:

b. *Sie hatte Jellytots in **die** Klasse.*

SG: *Sie hatte Jellytots in*[9] ***der** Klasse.*

('She had Jellytots in the class.')

Common prepositions this takes place with are *mit, nach, zwischen* (all requiring the dative case only), *hinter, neben* and *in* (requiring either the dative or the accusative case). Interference from Afrikaans highlights the Namibian Germans' inclination to employ *die* after the prepositions *mit* and *in* above. In Afrikaans, there is only one definite article, *die*, which remains *die* regardless of which preposition precedes it and regardless of number and gender (van Schalkwyk 1998:14.5). The Namibian Ger-

[9] Very generally speaking, the preposition *in* governs the accusative case if it expresses direction and the dative if it expresses position.

mans' familiarity with Afrikaans can therefore explain their preference to use *die* after these prepositions.

The above points show that there are certain areas of similarity between NG and SG morphology, namely verbal conjugations and adjectival inflections, both of which are so well established in NG that they are even seen in action when speakers use borrowed parts of speech. Interesting to note here is that Namibian Germans correctly form the past participle. This is one area which potentially could have been affected by contact with Afrikaans and English, as the German spoken by the bilinguals demonstrates. A larger number of morphological areas have, however, been affected by the contact situation which the German in Namibia is in. These include the Namibian Germans' use of *um…zu* structures in attributive and object infinitives, the incorrect use of prepositions, the dropping of the attributive genitive and the uncertainty and incorrectness in the use of certain cases in German. In each of these cases, the pattern found in Afrikaans/English is exactly mirrored in the German of Namibia.

3.3. SYNTAX

Existing literature on the syntax of NG states that it is more or less equivalent to that of SG (Gretschel 1984:41, J. Pütz 2001:17, M. Pütz 1991:464). However, my own research has shown that the similarity of NG syntax to SG syntax has been somewhat overstated. The strict word order found in English and Afrikaans is less present in SG, where there is sufficient morphology in the language making it possible to adopt a more relaxed view of word order. Case endings in *Der Hund ißt den Knochen* and *Den Knochen ißt der Hund* ensure that both sentences mean 'The dog eats the bone', whereas the little morphology found in English and Afrikaans means that the equivalent of the above produces sentences with two different meanings: 'The dog eats the bone' and 'The bone eats the dog'. There are, however, certain areas in SG where the word order is fixed. For example, anything can be in first position in a main clause (a subject, object, adverb, etc), but the finite verb has to be the second constituent. However, in subordinate clauses, SG requires the verb to be in final position. Such subordinate clauses are created through the use of conjunctions like *dass* ('that'). *Dass* in SG can be omitted after verbs and other expressions of perceiving, feeling, hoping, thinking and believing (in the widest sense) and after verbs of saying (when introducing indirect speech), but it is usually included if the main verb is negative. The English and Afrikaans conjunctions *that*/*dat* are omitted far more frequently than *dass* in German and it is more the speaker's own choice than rules which determine the inclusion/exclusion of this conjunction in these languages. The syntactic differences between the three languages and the contact situation which the German language in Namibia finds itself in can therefore explain how certain syntactic differences between SG and NG arise.

Riehl (2002:9) mentions that in forming indirect questions in NG, the word order found when constructing direct questions is frequently used. This is the way in which indirect questions in spoken Afrikaans are created and this also makes it completely different from other varieties of German and also of Dutch (Donaldson 1993). Riehl claims that this pattern has now been transferred into NG and substantiates this point with examples, two of which are cited below:

(12) a. *Ich geh mal gucken, was macht die Kleine.*

SG: *Ich werde mal gucken, was die Kleine macht.*

('I'll go and see what the little one is doing.')

b. *Sie muss ja wissen, wie gehen die Löcher da drin.*

SG: *Sie muss ja wissen, wie die Löcher da rein gehen.*

('She surely must know how the holes go in there.')

I, however, found that this was not a very typical characteristic of **all** Namibian Germans, but instead of just a very few. I mostly found that the verb was in final position in *wh*-interrogatives, as is the case in SG. This feature cannot thus be mentioned as a characteristic of NG, as it is an occasional rather than a systematic feature of NG. Worth mentioning, however, is the word order in NG for indirect questions when a modal verb and infinitive are involved. The following word order takes place in such cases: *Ich werde sagen, was die muss machen*. In SG, the modal verb would appear after the infinitive: *Ich werde sagen, was sie machen muss*. This pattern found in NG is possible interference from Afrikaans: *Ek sal sê wat sy moet doen* (Lutrin 1999:30.2) and/or English: 'I will say what she must do'.

The positioning of the verb in a sentence containing a *weil* construction is also interesting and mirrors the situation described above with indirect questions. It is extremely common to hear speakers placing the finite verb second, straight after *weil* and the subject, instead of at the very end of the phrase. For example, *Ich gehe nie wieder dahin, weil das* ***war*** *sowas von schlimm da draußen, ne?* (English: 'I'm never going to go back there, because it was really bad out there, wasn't it?'). In SG, *war* would be positioned at the end of the phrase, i.e. after *draußen*. This could be interference from either Afrikaans (the Afrikaans conjunction *want* requires V2 word order) or English (English has SVO word order). It is nevertheless also very common to hear Germans from Germany producing sentences of the above kind (Uhmann 1998).

The V2 word order is, however, not always maintained in NG, as can be seen in the statement below (AZ 1.02.2006:1). Such examples are common in NG:

(13) *Walvis Bay bangt ums Trinkwasser. Wie der amtierende Stadtdirektor André Brummer gestern mitteilte, sind die letzten Reserven bald aufgebraucht und* ***wird*** *die Krise bis zum Wochenende andauern.*

('Walvis Bay is worried about drinking water. The town representative André Brummer announced yesterday that the last reserves have almost been used up and that the crisis will last until the weekend.')

In SG, *wird* would be placed after *die Krise* and not before it. As this illustrates what the director is reporting, it is thought that Namibian Germans believe that the verb should follow the same pattern before and after the connecting conjunction, as the second clause is also seen to be dependent on the adverbial phrase at the beginning of the first clause. This is in fact incorrect. Afrikaans may be a factor in this feature sur-

facing in NG. Such V1 continuations occur in Afrikaans (Donaldson 1993)[10] and there is also a lot of discussion of this phenomenon in Dutch where linguists have dubbed this *stijlfout* a *tante betje*[11].

J. Pütz (2001:16) claims that the dropping of the conjunction *dass* is a typical feature of NG and illustrates this point by citing the following example:

(14) a. *Ich hab' nich gewusst, der Oukie hat ein Beik.*

SG: *Ich habe nicht gewusst,* ***dass*** *der Mann ein Fahrrad hat.*

('I didn't know **(that)** the bloke had a bike.')

In SG, the conjunction *dass* can be omitted in some contexts (mentioned above), in which case the dependent clause has the order of a main clause with the verb second, but cannot be omitted in this case, due to the presence of *nicht*. The omission of *dass* has become a frequently occurring characteristic in spoken and informal written NG.

An example from an email:

b. *Ich hoffe nicht, wir müssen sehr lange warten, bis du wieder zu Swakop kommst!*

SG: *Ich hoffe nicht,* ***dass*** *wir sehr lange warten müssen, bis du wieder nach Swakop kommst!*

('I hope **(that)** we don't have to wait too long until you come to Swakop again!')

The conjunction 'that' is omitted far more frequently than *dass* in German (Durrell 2002:403) and *dat*-dropping also takes place very frequently in Afrikaans (Lutrin 1999:32). The omission of *dass* in NG is very likely to be a contact effect from English/Afrikaans.

NG follows the pattern of Afrikaans and English and places *nicht* after the modal verb or the finite verb.

(15) a. *Du musst* ***nicht*** *das sagen. Das ist unhöflich.*

(In Afrikaans: *Moe**nie** dit sê nie* and in English: 'You must **not** say that.')

SG: *Du musst das* ***nicht*** *sagen. Das ist unhöflich.*

b. *Der hat* ***nicht*** *seine Hausaufgaben gemacht.*

(In Afrikaans: *Hy het* ***nie*** *sy huiswerk doen nie* and in English: 'He has **not** done his homework.')

SG: *Er hat seine Hausaufgaben* ***nicht*** *gemacht.*

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[10] An example cited by Donaldson (1993:362-363): *In haar tuisstad word sy vriendelik op straat gegroet en* ***vra*** *mense haar handtekening* ('In her hometown, she is greeted in a friendly fashion and people ask for her autograph').

[11] See http://www.onzetaal.nl/advies/tantebetje.php and for more information on this, see also http://taaladvies.net/taal/advies/vraag/767/ and for a web discussion of this phenomenon in Afrikaans (by non-specialists), see http://groups.yahoo.com/group/taalgesprek/message/1345?viscount=100&l=1.

For further examples on the positioning of *nicht* in NG, see Riehl (2002:9).

NG speakers frequently have elements like prepositional phrases occurring after the verb (cf. example 7b). SG is quite rigid about having a verbal bracket (*Satzklammer*) and the prepositional phrases in SG should precede the verb so that the verb is right at the end of the clause. This is, however, not the normal pattern in English or Afrikaans where prepositional phrases frequently 'leak' past the verb (Carstens 2003:91)[12]. NG shows the same pattern as English and Afrikaans and this differs from other varieties of German. Examples found in an interview with a *Südwesterin* in the AZ (30.06.06:6 ('Waz On')) illustrate this point further (bold text highlights the prepositional phrases, which have 'leaked' past the verb):

(16) a. *Und weil ich enttäuscht bin* ***über einige Dinge****, die Priorität hätten haben müssen, aber einfach nicht durchgesetzt werden konnten.*

SG: *Und weil ich* ***über einige Dinge*** *enttäuscht bin, die Priorität hätten haben müssen, aber einfach nicht durchgesetzt werden konnten.*

('And because I was disappointed **about a few things** which ought to have had priority, but which simply could not be enforced.')

b. *In dieser Woche können die Schulen auch Geld sammeln* ***für ihre Bibliotheken****.*

SG: *In dieser Woche können die Schulen auch Geld* ***für ihre Bibliotheken*** *sammeln.*

('In this week, schools can also collect money **for their libraries**.')

The passive construction is less frequent in German than in English (Durrell 2002:321-322). The influence of English on NG has led to an exaggerated use of the passive (AZ 20.03.06:3):

(17) *Als eine Alternativroute über Frankreich und Spanien genehmigt wurde, hob der vollbesetzte Airbus ab. 20 Minuten später wurde die Luftraumsperrung von den Italienern wieder aufgehoben.*

SG: *Sobald die Italiener eine Alternativroute über Frankreich und Spanien genehmigt hatten, hob der vollbesetzte Airbus ab. 20 Minuten später wurde die Luftraumsperrung wieder aufgehoben.*

('When an alternative route over France and Spain was authorised, the full airbus lifted off. Twenty minutes later, the Italians again suspended the congestion in the air.')

Namibian Germans often form the future in German using '*gehen* + infinitive', instead of '*werden* + infinitive', as is the rule in SG. For example: *Ich* ***gehe*** *nicht hier in Windhoek* ***wohnen****, ich* ***gehe*** *in Kapstadt* ***wohnen***. There is evidence of interference from Afrikaans and/or English here. The immediate future in Afrikaans is formed using '*gaan* + infinitive': *Ek* ***gaan*** *nie hier in Windhoek* ***woon*** *nie, ek* ***gaan*** *in Kaapstad* ***woon***. The immediate future in English is formed in a similar way to Afrikaans, i.e. by

[12] Examples mentioned in a grammar book of Afrikaans highlight this point: *Sy het ons net misbruik* ***vir haar eie gewin*** ('She just misused us for her own benefit') and *Jan het baie verengels* ***ná sy troue*** ('Jan has become very "English" since his wedding) (Carstens 2003:91).

using 'going + infinitive': 'I'm not **going to live** in Windhoek, I'm **going to live** in Cape Town'. Despite the strong tendency of Namibian Germans to use '*gehen* + infinitive', the use of '*werden* + infinitive' is not completely absent in their language either. There are certain restrictions that exist on the use of *gehen* as a future marker and in these cases the SG rule of '*werden* + infinitive' is employed. For example, NG speakers would not say *Ich gehe in der Zukunft sterben* ('I'm going to die in the future'), whereas *Ich gehe in der Zukunft studieren* ('I'm going to study in the future') is completely acceptable. In Afrikaans and English, both possibilities with 'go' are fine. *Gehen* as a future marker in NG therefore cannot co-occur with certain types of verbs, namely with verbs suggesting inevitable processes in life, such as dying, and this thus indicates that *gehen* has not become grammaticalised to the extent that *go/gaan* have.

For the formation of the perfect tense, the auxiliary *haben* is overused by the bilingual speakers:

(18) a. *Die **hat** immer bei meiner Mutter und meinem Vater da im Zimmer geblieben. Die **hat** nie zu mir gekommen.*

SG: *Sie **ist** immer bei meiner Mutter und meinem Vater da im Zimmer geblieben. Sie **ist** nie zu mir gekommen.*

('She always stayed there with my mum and dad in the bedroom. She never came to me.')

b. *Du willst nicht wissen, was heute mit mir passiert **hat**.*

SG: *Du willst nicht wissen, was heute mit mir passiert **ist**.*

('You don't want to know what happened to me today.')

The verbs *bleiben*, *kommen* and *passieren* require the auxiliary *sein* in the perfect tense in SG. The use of the auxiliary *haben* in the above examples may be explained through interference with English and Afrikaans. Neither Afrikaans (van Schalkwyk 1998:28.5) nor English have a distinction between *haben* and *sein* when it comes to picking which auxiliary to use with verbs (cf. *Ich **habe** das gelesen* versus *Ich **bin** rechtzeitig angekommen*, whereas Afrikaans: *Ek **het** dit gelees* and *Ek **het** betyds aangekom* and English: 'I **have** read it' and 'I **have** arrived on time'). This could therefore explain why the bilinguals overdo their use of the auxiliary *haben* in the perfect tense. Namibian Germans do not generally do this, however, and make use of the appropriate auxiliary when forming the perfect tense.

Despite being able to form the perfect tense correctly, Namibian Germans do not always use the appropriate perfect tense forms when referring to events in the past. Namibian Germans are inclined to use the analytic perfect form rather than the preterite form: *Er hat es gebrochen* ('He has broken it') as opposed to *Er brach es* ('He broke it'). This is also characteristic of the German in Southern Germany (Durrell 2002:297-298). There is possible influence from Afrikaans here, as Afrikaans by and large only has one past tense, namely the synthetic perfect tense (Lutrin 1999:14) and the Namibian Germans' familiarity with Afrikaans could therefore be used to explain their preference to use this form in NG.

Namibian Germans have a propensity to form relative clauses using the pronoun *was*:

(19) *Das ist jetzt Maxine Stipp* ***was*** *redet.*

SG: *Das ist jetzt Maxine Stipp,* ***die*** *redet.*

('This is now Maxine Stipp who is speaking.')

The above sentence in German has been formed using the pattern for constructing relative sentences in Afrikaans (*Dit is nou Maxine Stipp* ***wat*** *praat*). The relative pronoun *wat* ('who', 'which', 'that') is used in Afrikaans, irrespective of whether the noun it refers to is a person, animal or thing (Lutrin 1999:26). This is not the case in German or in English. So, this is clearly another case of Afrikaans influence, as Afrikaans only has the *wat* relative marker.

The above shows that there are many points of difference between NG and SG syntax, which arise due to the influence of English and Afrikaans. Most striking here are the word order discrepancies found in NG. Various elements, such as verbs, adverbs and prepositional phrases are not as strictly assigned a position in a NG sentence as would be the case in SG. My findings highlight that NG syntax differs from SG syntax more than writers in previous literature have suggested and my research does not always agree with the points of differences raised in existing literature.

3.4. LEXICON

The above-mentioned points are less obvious to hear and see than what is to follow, as the lexicon of a language is the level of linguistic structure which speakers are most consciously aware of and can most easily manipulate. It is often claimed that the differences between NG and SG lie almost exclusively on a lexical level (Böhm 2003: 565). This can be seen through examining part of a poem which appeared in a linguistic journal (*Muttersprache 3* 1936:109-112) and which satirises the indiscriminate use of foreign words in NG.

Wer einen Weg zu machen hat,

Begibt sich "**futsam**" auf die "**Pad**".

Sprechen tut keiner, nein er "**prat**".

Und hat der "**Gent**" nicht Geld genug,

ward seine Börse schlaff und "**much**",

Muss er "**Mariwa**" borgen.

Wer Durst hat, trinkt sein "**Koppie**" aus,

Man wohnt im "**Pontok**", nicht im Haus.

"**Mooi**" deutet auf was Feines,

"**Katiti**" auf was Kleines, usw.

'Whoever has to make a journey,

Proceeds "**on foot**" along the "**path**".

No one speaks here, no, people "**talk**".

And if the "**lad**" doesn't have enough money,

His wallet becomes shapeless and "**worn out**",

And he's gotta borrow "**dosh**".

Whoever's thirsty drinks out of his "**cuppa**",

People live in "**huts**", not in houses.

"**Lovely**" points to something nice,

"**Tiny**" to something small, etc.'

The peculiarities in the lexicon of NG have arisen through its contact with other languages spoken in Namibia. The European languages, namely Afrikaans and English, influenced and are influencing the lexicon of NG far more than the local indigenous languages. This is not surprising. Firstly, the European languages carry more prestige than the local languages. Secondly, my own observations show me that most Namibian Germans are competent in both English and Afrikaans and come into regular contact with both of these languages. Interesting to note here is that the more 'ingrained' loanwords are mostly of Afrikaans origin. Such loanwords are ones that most people would not even regard as loanwords anymore, as they are so part of everyday speech. The more recent loans are, however, from English and this can be seen from the terminology that the Namibians use to talk about computers (*Könntest du den **File** von meinem **PC downloaden**?* ('Could you **download** the **file** from my **PC**?'), *Hast du einen **Backup** von dem **File**?* ('Do you have a **backup** of the **file**?')), mobile phones (*Ich muss mein **Cell chargen*** ('I have to **charge** my **mobile**'), *Der hat mir mal einen **Misscall** gegeben* ('He once gave me a **misscall**'), *Ich hab keinen **Credit** mehr* ('I don't have any more **credit**'), *Ich schick dir eine **SMS*** ('I'll send you a **text**')) and other related technology.

There are many English and Afrikaans nouns which have been adopted into NG. Some have been introduced into NG in an unassimilated form of which a few of the most commonly heard ones are *Cool Drink* (from Southern African English (SAE), meaning 'fizzy drink'), *Robot* (from SAE, meaning 'traffic light') and *Lift* (from English, meaning 'getting a lift somewhere'). Others have been integrated into NG, an example of which is *Huter* ('hooter'). There are also new words which have been created following English and Afrikaans patterns, including *Dornbaum* ('thorn tree') and *Seekuh* ('hippopotamus', from Afrikaans: *seekoei*). All nouns adopted into NG have adopted German spelling and grammar rules, i.e. they are written with a capital letter and have been given a gender. Afrikaans and English words do not have genders, but German nouns have to. How do Germans therefore decide what gender the borrowed words should have? In the vast majority of cases, I have found that NG nouns adopt the gender of the nearest German equivalent (***der** Bakkie* → ***der** Lastwagen* ('pick-up' → 'truck'), ***die** Inschuhrenz* → ***die** Versicherung* ('insurance' → 'insurance'), ***das** Biltong* → ***das** Fleisch* ('salted dried meat' → 'meat')). However, for concepts and objects that do not exist in German, this is obviously not possible. In these instances, I have found that Namibian Germans use the meaning of the noun (***der** Ou-Toppie* → ***der** alte Mann* ('the old man'), ***die** Miessies* → ***die** Frau* ('the lady')) or the form of the noun (words with endings similar to German endings adopt the gender associated with that ending) to assign the gender of the NG noun (***die** Trockenheit* ('the dryness of the land due to lack of rain'), because *-heit* is a feminine ending). My data seem to also indicate that monosyllabic nouns are most often masculine: ***der** Tronk* ('prison'), ***der** Stift* ('child'), ***der** Diehl* ('deal'), ***der** Vläi* ('pond', 'pan'), ***der** Tutts* ('test',

'exam'), ***der*** *Kraal* ('African village or cattle reserve'). This is also the case in SG, where the gender of monosyllabic English loanwords is masculine (Durrell 2002:11). On the whole, Namibian Germans tend to use the correct gender for NG nouns. My data shows that there was not much use of *die* where the German word would have taken *der/das*, a phenomenon which may have been expected in NG, reflecting the influence of Afrikaans *die*, which is the only available article in the language and just happens to look like one of the German articles.

Lexicon specific to the German in Namibia covers all areas of life, not only those areas fundamental to NG culture, environment and lifestyle. Examples of NG lexicon from a few areas, some of which do not feature as importantly and as greatly in Germany as they do in Namibia, are mentioned below:

Namibia is full of fascinating, unique and varied wildlife. It is therefore not surprising that the lexicon relating to wildlife contains many NG terms. Some of the NG terms for animals include: *Gemsbokk* ('local word for an oryx antelope'), *Bokkie* (from Afrikaans: *bokkie*, meaning 'goat') and *Chocho/a* (from Afrikaans: *gogga*, meaning 'beetle', 'insect'). Those for nature commonly heard include: *Rivier* (from Afrikaans: *rivier* and English: 'river', meaning 'dry river'), *Omuramba* (from Herero: 'Omuramba', meaning 'small dry river'), *Damm* (from Afrikaans and English: 'dam') and *Vläi* (from Afrikaans: *vlei*, meaning 'pond', 'pan').

Most of Namibia has a sub-tropical climate. The Namibian Germans often use German words for climatic occurrences, but these words do not have the same meaning as in Germany. Examples of such words include: *Regenzeit* (refers to the part of the Summer when it rains and can also be used to generally mean Summer) and *Ostwind* (refers to the sand storm at the coast, which is caused due to the wind blowing from the east).

Modes of transport often used in Namibia include: *Bakkie* (from Afrikaans: *bakkie*, meaning 'pick-up'), *Lorrie* (from Afrikaans: *lorrie* and English 'lorry'), *Beik* (from English: 'bike', meaning 'motorbike') and *Foh-bei-foh* (from English: 'four by four'). Such modes of transport are used for longer trips made by tourists and by the locals on the sometimes rough, sandy or muddy terrain of Namibian roads.

Namibia is a very meat-orientated society. Terms which Namibian Germans employ when referring to their cuisine include: *Biltong* (from Afrikaans: *biltong*, meaning 'salted dry meat'), *Breifleisch* (from Afrikaans: *braaivleis*, meaning 'grilled meat') and *Mieliepap* (from Afrikaans: *mieliepap*, meaning 'maize flour porridge').

There are various ethnic groups present in Namibia, including: *Bastert* (from Afrikaans: *baster*, meaning 'a coloured from Rehoboth'), *Chammat* (from Afrikaans: '*gammat*', meaning 'a young Malayan, a coloured, mostly from the Cape') and *Dscherrie* (from English: 'Jerry', meaning 'a German from the Republic of Germany, as opposed to a Namibian German').

As would be expected, the living conditions in Namibia differ greatly to Germany and words for the housing of the natives have adopted NG terms: *Pondock* (transferred to Afrikaans from Malay: *pondok*, meaning 'shack' or 'the hut of a native'), *Kraal* (an African word taken into Afrikaans, English and German, meaning 'an African (Owambo) village or a cattle reserve') and *Werft* ('traditional settlement, often Herero', from Afrikaans: *werf*, meaning 'yard').

Namibian Germans use more diminutive forms in their German than Germans from Germany. This takes place as a result of their contact with Afrikaans, as Afri-

kaans uses many diminutive forms (van Schalkwyk 1998:41,87-88), many more than either Dutch or German. In forming the diminutive, the word is taken and the Afrikaans diminutive -*ie* is added. Some diminutives often heard in NG include:

(20) a. *Ouk**ie***, meaning ‘chap’, ‘bloke’, ‘dude’

(From Afrikaans: *ou*, meaning ‘chap’, ‘fellow’)

b. *Lapp**ie***, meaning ‘little cloth’

(From German: *Lappen*, meaning ‘cloth’)

c. *Klipp**ie**/Klippek**ie***, meaning ‘little stone’

(From Afrikaans: *klippetjie*, meaning ‘little stone’)

d. *Stück**ie***, meaning ‘little piece’

(From German: *Stück*, meaning ‘piece’)

e. *Kopp**ie***, meaning ‘little hill’

(From Afrikaans: *koppie*, meaning ‘little hill’)

Just as nouns borrowed into NG have by and large been integrated into the language, so too have verbs. This is possible, as verbs in German have a regular form, the root of the verb + -*en*. Examples of NG verbs include: *auspahssen* (from English: ‘to pass out’), *swotten* (from English: ‘to swot’), *doppen* (from Afrikaans: *dop*, meaning ‘to fail an exam’ or ‘to drink too much’) and *ausfrieken* (from English: ‘to freak out’).

Namibian Germans show evidence of transferring the meaning of words. This takes place in all parts of speech and an equivalent in English and Afrikaans is always the influencing factor in such an occurrence:

(21) a. *(sich) wundern* (in Afrikaans: *om te wonder*, in English: ‘to wonder’)

i. *Ich **wunder, warum** Benita ihre Haare so gefarbt hat*.

SG: *Ich frage mich, warum Benita ihre Haare so gefarbt hat*.

(‘I wonder why Benita has dyed her hair that colour.’)

ii. *Und dann kam Frau Schneeweiss und hat so **gewundert**, dass Cara’s Deutsch so improved hat*.

SG: *Und dann kam Frau Schneeweiss und könnte es nicht glauben, dass Cara’s Deutsch sich so verbessert hat*.

(‘And then Mrs Schneeweiss came and she couldn’t believe that Cara’s German had improved so much.’)

b. *lecker* (in Afrikaans: *lekker*, meaning 'delicious', 'wonderful', 'lovely' – used in informal writing and speech for everything that is good or fun)

i. *Schlaf noch **lecker**!* (written: in a text message)

SG: *Schlaf noch schön!*

('Sleep well!')

ii. *Der Film war eigentlich so **lecker**, ne?* (spoken)

SG: *Der Film war eigentlich so schön, oder?*

('The film was actually quite nice, wasn't it?')

c. *klar* (in Afrikaans: *klaar*, meaning 'ready', 'finished')

*Ich krieg Hunger. Ist das Essen schon **klar**?*

SG: *Ich habe Hunger. Ist das Essen schon fertig?*

('I'm hungry. Is the food already ready?')

Idiomatic expressions from English and Afrikaans have also been directly translated into German, as the following examples demonstrate:

(22) a. *Lack schtreiken* (from English: 'to strike one's luck', meaning 'to be lucky')

b. *fischen gehen* (from the English phrase: 'to go fishing')

c. *Ssiehn choihen* (from English: 'scene' and Afrikaans: *gooi* ('to throw', 'to make'). This phrase means 'to make a scene', 'to get excited', 'to organise something splendidly', 'to show off'). Interestingly, this NG expression has both negative ('to make a scene', 'to show off') and positive connotations ('to get excited', 'to organise something splendidly'), but the direct translation of this NG expression in English 'to make a scene' is usually negative.

d. *Ssorrie fuehlen* (from the English expression: 'to feel sorry for someone')

e. *eingeben* (instead of the SG *abgeben*, meaning 'to hand something (e.g. an essay) in', from the English phrase: 'to hand in')

f. *Loeffel wegschmeissen/abgeben* (from Afrikaans: *goei die lepel weg* and *lepel in die dak steek*, meaning 'to die', 'to kick the bucket')

g. *Gute/Lekker Pad!* (from the Afrikaans expression: *Lekker pad!*, meaning 'Have a good journey!')

h. *Das Rivier kommt ab* (from the Afrikaans expression: *die rivier kom af*, meaning 'the river comes down')

i. *Plan machen* (from Afrikaans: *maak 'n plan* and English: 'to make a plan', meaning 'to find a solution', 'to improvise')

j. *leid kriegen* (from the Afrikaans expression: *jammer kry*, meaning 'to be/feel sorry for someone')

Many idiomatic expressions in NG are formed with *kriegen* (see example 22j). *kriegen* is known as a 'light' verb (Radford 1997:514-515). Light verbs and the frequent occurrence of circumlocutions occur in cases where speakers may not know the appropriate German word. A very common pattern emerges here, namely that NG speakers frequently use the very general (semantically 'light') verb along with a noun to express a concept that they do not know the correct, more specific German verb/verbal expression for. It is a very common characteristic of 'interlanguages' that speakers make use of circumlocutions involving semantically very general lexical items (sometimes called 'container verbs' – e.g. 'get' and for nouns, 'container nouns' – e.g. 'thing'). A few examples with *kriegen* are listed below; in each case, there is an equivalent phrase to be found in English and/or Afrikaans:

(23) a. *schwer kriegen* (from the Afrikaans expression: *swaar kry*, meaning 'to have difficulty in')

b. *kalt kriegen* (from the Afrikaans expression: *koud kry* and the English expression: 'to get cold')

c. *ssier kriegen* (from the Afrikaans expression: *seer kry*, meaning 'to get hurt')

d. *Hunger kriegen* (from the Afrikaans expression: *honger kry* and the English expression: 'to get hungry')

e. *recht kriegen* (from the Afrikaans expression: *reg kry*, meaning 'to manage to do something', 'to succeed in doing something')

f. *einen Lift kriegen* (from the English expression: 'to get a lift')

Another example of a common 'light' verb in NG is the verb *machen*. *Maak* is part of many verbal expressions in Afrikaans and this 'light' verb has been transferred into NG expressions (cf. example 7b). Commonly heard examples with *machen* include: *sicher machen* (SG: *sich vergewissern*, English: 'to make sure'), *Entscheidung machen* (SG: *Entscheidung treffen*, English: 'to make a decision'), *Plan machen* (SG: *Plan aufstellen*, English: 'to make a plan').

Adjectives from English and Afrikaans have been borrowed into NG. English adjectives which are frequently heard in NG include the following:

(24) a. *Ich bin* ***busy****.*

SG: *Ich bin* ***beschäftigt****.*

('I am **busy**.')

b. *Häi,* ***ssorrie****, ich kann heute nicht kommen.*

SG: *Hey,* ***es tut mir leid****, ich kann heute nicht kommen.*

('Hey, **sorry**, I can't come today.')

c. *Ach, **shame**!*

SG: *Ach, **schade**!*

(‘Ach, **what a pity**!’)

Afrikaans adjectives which are frequently heard include the following:

d. *mall* (from Afrikaans: *mal* = ‘crazy’, ‘angry’)

*Dieser **malle** Gai hat mir heute schon viermal gemisscalled*.

SG: *Dieser **verrückte** Typ hat mir heute schon viermal gemiss-called*.

(‘This **crazy** guy has already misscalled me four times today.’)

e. *papp* (from Afrikaans: *pap* = ‘exhausted’, ‘soft’, ‘deflated’)

*Ich bin ein bisschen **papp** heute*.

SG: *Ich bin ein bisschen **erschöpft** heute*.

(‘I’m a little **exhausted** today.’)

The adjectives borrowed into NG replace the often longer counterparts found in SG and may thus highlight the Namibian Germans’ preference to use these forms.

In order to emphasise an idea, adverbs from Afrikaans and English are often used as intensifiers:

(25) a. *Dann kam seine **mooi*** (from Afrikaans: *mooi* = ‘nice’, ‘pretty’) *aussehende Tannie, so ein **murrsch*** (from Afrikaans: *moers* = ‘very’, ‘big’) *fette Tannie*.

(‘Then his good-looking aunty, such a big fat thing, came.’)

b. *Das war einfach **bleddie*** (from English: ‘bloody’) *marvellous!* (a fixed expression)

(‘That was just bloody marvellous!’)

c. *Ja, und es war **wüst*** (literally ‘wild’, here: ‘very’) *weit, wir mussten viel laufen*.

(‘Yes, that was really far, we had to walk loads.’)

d. *Ich hab **wrachtach*** (from Afrikaans: *wragtag*, meaning ‘really’) *nichts heute gemacht*.

(‘I’ve really done nothing today.’)

e. *Der hat **schtief*** (meaning ‘very’) *Geld!*

(‘He has loads of money!’)

Adverbs borrowed from Afrikaans or English are integrated into NG:

(26) a. *Sie spricht mit mir nicht seit letzten Dienstag. Ich weiss* ***basisch*** *nicht, was ihr Problem ist.*

(From English: 'basically', with a common German ending for adverbs)

('She hasn't been talking to me since last Tuesday. I basically don't know what her problem is.')

b. *Ich will jetzt* ***wrachtach*** *nicht mehr in der Schule gehen, das ist einfach kack da.*

(From Afrikaans: *wrachtig*, meaning 'really')

('I really don't want to go to school anymore, it's just crap there.')

c. ***Net*** *so* ***bikie****.*

(From Afrikaans: *net*, meaning 'only' and *bikie*, meaning 'a little', following the German expression *nicht so wenig*)

('Just a little.')

In NG, there is a strong tendency to use the demonstrative pronouns *der*, *die* and *das* rather than a third-person personal pronoun: ***Die*** *macht schon wieder Pläne!* (*die* instead of *sie*) ('She's making plans once again!'), ***der*** *war gestern so lelleck zu mir!* (*der* instead of *er*) ('He was so horrible to me yesterday!'). Although this usage is also fairly common in SG, it is considered substandard and efforts are made to avoid its usage, especially if the person referred to is present. In NG, however, I found that no such efforts were made and found instead that the Namibian Germans were extremely fond of using such forms.

Namibian Germans tend to form the comparative in German using '*mehr* + adjective': *Aber ich mag* ***mehr*** *hell pink*. In SG, this would appear as *Aber ich mag* ***lieber*** *hell pink*, where *lieber* is the comparative form of *gern*. The use of *mehr* to form the comparative results from English: 'But I like light pink **more**' and/or from Afrikaans: *Ek hou* ***meer*** *van heel pink*.

In SG, the inhabitants of a country are formed by adding *-er* to the place names: *Frankfurt* → *der Frankfurt****er*** → *Ich bin Frankfurt****er*** ('I'm from Frankfurt') (Durrell 2002:498). In NG, there is a tendency to omit the *-er*. The following is typical in NG: *Ich bin Deutsch* (SG: *Ich bin Deutsch****er***). Interference from English and Afrikaans plays a role here, as the above sentence would appear as 'I am German' in English and *Ek is Duits* in Afrikaans.

The affirmative particle in NG is *ne* and is used as a tag, similar to the use of *ja* in SG: *Es geht um acht los, ja?* (Durrell 2002:201). This is an extremely common feature that is found in spoken NG and also in informal written NG. The examples below are taken from text messages: *Soccer ist interessant, ne?* ('Football is interesting, isn't it?') and *Bis bald, ne?* ('I'll see you soon, right?'). This characteristic has been borrowed directly from Afrikaans, where *ne* is used in the same way as in NG.

The above shows that attempts have been made to keep lexical differences of NG inconspicuous, by ensuring that German spelling, grammar and pronunciation rules are adopted into the lexicon. Nevertheless, lexical differences will continue to be

striking, particularly compared to phonological and morphological characteristics, as anyone hearing or seeing the German in Namibia for the first time will naturally initially notice differences in vocabulary.

4. CONCLUSION

From the above, we have seen that the German in Namibia differs from the German in Germany on various levels, most obviously on a lexical level. In most cases, it is the influence and interference from Afrikaans and English that has caused these changes to take place in the German of Namibia. As Afrikaans, English and German are very closely related to one another, it is easy for words and structures from Afrikaans and English to enter the German language. Afrikaans was the *lingua franca* in Namibia before Independence and is in many respects more like German than English, with English lacking in many ways the typical characteristics of a Germanic language (cf. König & van der Auwera 1994). It is therefore not surprising that Afrikaans has exercised a large contact effect on NG. Despite this, my observations and data show me that English is also currently exercising a large influence on the German language in Namibia (cf. terminology used for computers, mobile phones and other such technology). The increasing use of English by the people of Namibia after Namibia gained Independence in 1990, at which point English was made the official language in the country and the status of Afrikaans was subsequently reduced, can explain this. The contact situation which NG is in will carry on affecting and changing the language, though the fact that English and Afrikaans now have different statuses in the country will clearly play an important role, with English in the future most probably having far more of an impact on all aspects of the language than Afrikaans.

The German in Namibia is referred to as being in a contact situation. Several linguistic outcomes commonly found in a contact situation are mentioned at the beginning of this research paper. Evidence of some of these in NG can be seen in the body of this research paper, but not all potential linguistic outcomes which arise from a contact situation have actually materialised in this case. NG shows clear evidence of lexical borrowing (cf. lexicon) and grammatical convergence (cf. morphology and syntax). My observations illustrate that code-switching is a frequent occurrence in NG, but this was not a focus of this research paper, hence the lack of material cited here to substantiate this point. My NG data fail to show a sign of first language attrition, mixed languages and the development of a creole language. This is not surprising, as the German-speaking community in Namibia strives to maintain and promote their native language (cf. the “language struggle” in 1919, Gretschel 1995:301).

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