Lexical developments in Texas German*

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This paper offers new insights into on-going research on lexical borrowing in language contact situations by presenting a typology of lexical borrowings in Texas German (TxG), a critically endangered dialect that will go extinct within the next 30 years. We show that the lexicon of TxG has not undergone any dramatic changes over the past four decades and that the dialectal origins of words that were still apparent when Gilbert collected his data in the 1960s can still be found today. We also argue that TxG should be classified as "stage 2" in Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) 5-stage borrowing scale ("slightly more intense contact"), which is characterized by lexical borrowing and slight structural borrowing in combination with conjunctions and adverbial particles.

1. Introduction

One of the most prominent features of contact languages is the borrowing of lexical material. In casual contact situations, languages exhibit relatively slight lexical borrowing, while in long-term intensive contact situations extreme structural borrowing may occur (Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 74–76). Thus, in the case of (American) English contact with Finnish, for instance, only one or two words have been borrowed from Finnish into English (*sauna* and possibly *sisu* 'guts'), while the much more intensive contact with French during the Norman period fundamentally altered the structure of English (the stress system of Old English differs radically from the stress system of Modern English, for instance, which is traditionally attributed to contact with French). In communities with high levels of bilingualism that are subject to socioeconomic and/or political pressures, one speaker group may eventually shift to the more prestigious language. As the language with the lower prestige is used less over time, its lexicon erodes.

This paper investigates lexical borrowings in Texas German (hereafter TxG) to establish how far lexical change has progressed over the past century.[1] We first outline the status and history of TxG. Next, we present an overview of the literature on lexical borrowing in TxG and apply it to earlier studies of TxG. The summary of previous accounts of lexical erosion serves as the basis for our analysis of the present-day data in Section 4. We focus on a select number of phenomena to illustrate the types of changes taking place in the lexicon of TxG. Section 5 discusses the question of lexical erosion in present-day TxG, and Section 6 presents our conclusions.

2.   The history of Texas German

The German language has a long history in Texas. Promises of land grants and transportation to Texas attracted a significant number of immigrants, mainly from northern and central Germany, beginning in the 1840s.[2] By 1850 there were 8,266 German-born immigrants living in Texas (Jordan 1975: 48), and by 1860 there were approximately 30,000 Texas Germans, both immigrants and their American-born children (Jordan 1975: 54). German immigration to Texas eventually slackened, but the number of Texas Germans continued to increase: Eichhoff (1986) estimates that there were approximately 75,000–100,000 Texas Germans in 1907, Kloss (1977) states that in 1940 there were approximately 159,000 Texas Germans, and Nicolini (2004: 42) suggests that at the beginning of the twentieth century approximately 1/3 of all Texans were of German ancestry.

For the first several decades of German settlement in Texas, the Texas Germans were relatively isolated, thanks to a number of political and social factors, ranging from the anti-slavery views held by most German settlers to deliberate attempts at self-sufficiency (see Salmons 1983 and Benjamin 1909, respectively, on these points). This isolation, coupled with serious attempts at language maintenance, allowed for the development and spread of TxG: there were 145 church congregations offering German-language church services as of 1917 (Salmons & Lucht 2006: 168); there were numerous German-language newspapers and periodicals, some with very healthy circulation numbers (*Texas Vorwärts*, published in Austin, had a circulation of approximately 6100 in 1900, according to Salmons & Lucht 2006: 174); there was

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1.   There is a long history of research into TxG, ranging from the pioneering studies of Eikel (1954) and Gilbert (1972) to more recent works like Fuller and Gilbert (2003), Nicolini (2004), Salmons and Lucht (2006), Boas (2009), and Boas et al., (forthcoming).

2.   See Biesele (1928), Moore (1980), Salmons (1983), Ausperger-Hacker (1984), Nicolini (2004), Boas (2005a, 2009), Salmons and Lucht (2006), and Boas et al. (forthcoming) for additional overviews of German immigration to Texas and the changing status of German in Texas.

a wide range of German literature written in Texas; there were German-language schools and numerous social organizations, including choirs, shooting clubs, and so on (see Nicolini 2004: 46–49 for further discussion of such groups).

This situation eventually changed dramatically, starting with the passing of an English-only law for Texas public schools in 1909 (Salmons 1983: 188). World War I, especially following America's entry into the war in 1917 and the resulting increase in anti-German sentiment, along with the passage of another English-only law for public schools in 1918 (Salmons 1983: 188), led to the stigmatization of German and the beginning of its decline.[3] World War II reinforced the stigmas attached to Germany, Texas Germans, and the German language. Institutional support for the widespread maintenance and use of German was largely abandoned, with devastating consequences for TxG. German-language newspapers and periodicals stopped publishing (*Das Wochenblatt*, published in Austin, stopped publishing in 1940) or switched to English as the language of publication (the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* was the last to switch to English, in December 1957);[4] some German-language schools closed and German instruction was dropped in others; and German-speaking churches replaced German-language services with English-language ones.[5]

After World War II, the increasing migration of non-German speakers to the traditional German enclaves and the general refusal of these newcomers to learn German led to the large-scale abandonment of German in the public sphere. The increased use of English in the public domain pushed German even further into the private domain. At the same time, younger Texas Germans left the traditional German-speaking areas for employment, education, or military service (Jordan 1977; Wilson 1977), and consequently switched to English as their primary language, which in turn weakened their command of TxG. Also, Texas Germans increasingly married partners who could not speak German, and in such linguistically mixed marriages, English typically became the language of the household. Children raised in such households are typically monolingual in English, or have only a very limited command of TxG, normally a few stock phrases like prayers or profanities (Nicolini 2004; Boas 2005b). Finally, the development of the American interstate highway system starting in 1956 made the once-isolated TxG communities much more accessible. This new accessibility cut both ways, as it was now easier both for non-German speakers to visit or live in the

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3.   This situation was not unique to Texas; similar situations arose in various other states with a strong German presence.

4.   See Salmons and Lucht (2006: 173–178) for further discussion of the German-language press in Texas.

5.   Some German-language services were retained, especially on holidays like Good Friday and Christmas (Nicolini 2004: 101), and at least one church still offers a German-language service on 'fifth Sundays' (Roesch 2009).

originally German-speaking communities, and for German-speakers to accept employment in more urban areas. Both of these possibilities led to the spread of English at the expense of German.

Despite these factors, in the 1960s approximately 70,000 speakers of TxG remained in the "German belt," which encompasses the area between Gillespie and Medina Counties in the west, Bell and Williamson Counties in the north, Burleson, Washington, Austin, and Fort Bend Counties in the east, and DeWitt, Karnes, and Wilson Counties in the south. Today, however, only an estimated 8–10,000 Texas Germans, primarily in their sixties or older, still speak TxG fluently (Boas 2003, 2005b, 2009), and English has become the primary language for most Texas Germans in both private and public domains. With no signs of this language shift being halted or reversed and fluent speakers almost exclusively above the age of 60, TxG is now critically endangered and is expected to become extinct within the next 30 years.[6]

3.   The Texas German Dialect Project

In 2001 Hans C. Boas founded the Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) in order to record, document, and analyze the remnants of TxG; preserving TxG is seen as a less crucial (and probably impossible) task.[7] Over the past eight years, members of the TGDP have recorded three different types of data. The first type of data consists of English word lists and sentences taken from the *Linguistic Atlas of Texas German* (Gilbert 1972) and from Eikel (1954). An interview begins by eliciting personal information (date and place of birth, level of education, language spoken at home when growing up, etc.) from the interviewee. Interviewers read the English words and sentences to the informants who are then asked to translate these words and sentences into TxG. The interviews last about 20–60 minutes, are recorded using various devices, and normally take place at the informants' homes, nursing homes, museums, or local churches. The use of word lists and sentences enables the comparison of the current recordings with data collected over four decades ago, and also provides well-focused and well-controlled data sets giving information about the distribution of specific phonological, morphological, and syntactic features in present-day TxG.

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6.   Our assessment of the current situation therefore differs sharply from the claim of Nicolini (2004: 165) that "Interviews mit alten Texanern lassen den Schluss zu, dass die deutsche Sprache am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts lebendiger ist, als es in der germanistischen Forschung gemeinhin gesehen wird."

7.   See Boas et al. (forthcoming) for more extensive discussion of the TGDP, including technical details.

The second type of data seeks to capture the informants' daily use of TxG. An eight page questionnaire serves as the basis for sociolinguistic interviews conducted in German. At the beginning of an interview, interviewers speak (standard) German to the informants to begin eliciting personal information about the informants in TxG (date and place of birth, place of origin of informants' ancestors, languages spoken with the parents at home, etc.). During this first phase of the interview, informants are typically aware of the recording device and pay attention to their speech. However, they soon become more relaxed, forget about the recorder, and begin to respond to questions in TxG. The second section of the interview consists of about 140 questions in German about a wide range of topics, including childhood activities, the community, religion, education, living conditions, tourism, government, language, and current activities. These questions are designed to produce casual, relaxed conversation in which informants are given the chance to respond freely in TxG without being asked to produce specific linguistic structures. Allowing informants to speak freely also makes it possible to examine linguistic features of TxG that were not noticed by previous studies that did not include such elicitation methods. These interviews typically last 40 to 60 minutes.

The third type of data seeks to capture the informants' use of TxG when participating in activities with other Texas Germans. In order to record this type of data, we chose card-playing activities, dinner preparation, and farm chores. After filling out the consent forms, informants are given wireless microphones which are linked to a recorder. Interviewers leave the area and do not get involved in the 60–100 minute long recording activities. The three scenarios enable the collection of data in a variety of environments that involve different usages of TxG.

The three types of spoken data are augmented by a written biographical questionnaire. This questionnaire elicits information about age, date of birth, level of education, domains of language use (TxG and English), and language attitudes, among others. The biographical data are used to create the metadata records for each informant and each interview to be included in the digital on-line archive. Since the beginning of the project, members of the TGDP have interviewed more than 330 speakers, totaling more than 650 hours of data, available in the on-line Texas German Dialect Archive (TGDA), available at <www.tgdp.org>. We rely heavily on this data in the following sections, and turn now to an analysis of the evidence involving recent lexical borrowings.

4. Lexical borrowing

4.1   Social contexts supporting borrowing

Thomason and Kaufman (1988) maintain that borrowing can be classified according to the types of settings in which it takes place, and propose a borrowing scale of different levels, each representing an increasing intensity of contact as well as an increasing

typological distance. Perhaps the two most important social features of their borrowing scale are intensity of contact and cultural pressure. Winford (2003: 30) presents the following abridged version of Thomason and Kaufman's scale:[8]

Table 1. Thomason & Kaufman's (1988) borrowing scale (Winford 2003: 30)

Stage		Features
1	Casual contact	Lexical borrowing only
2	Slightly more intense contact	Slight structural borrowing; conjunctions and adverbial particles
3	More intense contact	Slightly more structural borrowing; adpositions, derivational affixes
4	Strong cultural pressure	Moderate structural borrowing (major structural features that cause relatively little typological change)
5	Very strong cultural pressure	Heavy structural borrowing (major structural features that cause significant typological disruption)

Winford notes that stage 1 is the most typical scenario, where there is only marginal contact with other languages. Individual words are borrowed, but speakers of the recipient language typically do not achieve fluency in the donor language. Examples include native American words such as *skunk* or *teepee* borrowed into American English during the English colonization of North America or the introduction of English loanwords such as *bat* and *song* into Japanese (with phonological adaptation) beginning in the mid-nineteenth century (Winford 2003: 30–31).

Stage 2 usually involves some degree of bilingualism in the recipient language community. Winford (2003: 33) makes particular reference to the languages of immigrant groups and ethnic minorities in this context, which are often absorbed into a larger host community. According to Winford, the languages of such groups are particularly open to lexical borrowing from the dominant language. During the first half of the 20th century TxG speakers were at this second stage, first becoming bilingual while at the same time borrowing more and more words from English into TxG, and eventually shifting entirely to the donor language, i.e. English.

This process can be promoted by social factors such as the asymmetry in power and prestige of the languages involved. In the case of TxG, Boas (2009) argues that its massive loss of prestige following World War I was one of the main factors that curbed the use of German in the public domain and even among some TxG families who decided to raise their children in English. Over time, English crept into more and

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8. See Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 74–76) for a significantly more detailed version of this scale. For a detailed critique of this borrowing scale, see Wolgemuth (2009).

more private domains, eventually replacing TxG as the main means of communication in families. As one New Braunfels informant states: "As the oldest kid in the family, I was raised in German, but my four younger siblings were all raised in English. Once my brothers and sisters were old enough to carry on conversations, I talked to them in English, because they did not understand any German. Soon after that, I also switched to English when talking to my parents." We return to this point below and show that by the mid-twentieth century TxG had already adopted a substantial amount of loans from English and was on its way towards stage 3 of Thomason and Kaufman's model.

Stage 3 is typical of more intense contact situations (more bilinguals, attitudes favoring borrowing, etc.). At this stage, both basic and non-basic vocabulary is borrowed. Some structural features are also borrowed at stage 3, but typically without significant typological change in the recipient language (Thomason 2001: 70). Below we argue that in the middle of the 20th century TxG exhibited features characteristic of Thomason & Kaufman's stages 2 and 3.

Stage 4 is characterized by intense language contact where very heavy bilingualism is the norm among speakers of the borrowing language. Strong cultural pressures promote the borrowing process, leading to lexical borrowing in all sections of the lexicon, as well as moderate structural borrowing, leading to minor typological changes in the recipient language (e.g. the beginning of word order changes in the recipient language). Finally, stage 5 takes place under very strong cultural pressure, which promotes heavy structural borrowing that eventually leads to typological disruptions in the recipient language (Winford 2003: 30).

Factors like "need" and "prestige" also promote lexical borrowing.[9] Speakers often need new words when they are exposed to new areas of cultural knowledge or technical innovation. Such needs clearly motivated the borrowing of words such as *armadillo*, *electricity*, and *county commissioner* from English into TxG: armadillos are not native to Germany, electricity was not yet used by the time the majority of German immigrants left for Texas, and German immigrants were not familiar with the concept of county commissioner and consequently lacked a native word for it. Borrowing words from English into TxG thus allowed its speakers to fill gaps in their lexicon easily without having to invent new words. We now turn to the question of how loanwords are integrated into the recipient language and whether there are any constraints on borrowing.

4.2 Structural constraints on borrowing

A number of structural factors restrict the degree and type of lexical borrowing. Following earlier accounts by Whitney (1881) and Haugen (1950), Muysken (1981)

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9. See Poplack et al. (1988) and Treffers-Daller (1994) for discussion of other factors influencing the degree of borrowing.

proposes a hierarchy of borrowability which captures the general observation that open-class items such as nouns and verbs are more easily borrowed than closed-class items such as pronouns and subordinating conjunctions (see also Poplack et al. 1988 and Poplack & Meechan 1998 on this point).

> Nouns > adjectives > verbs > prepositions > coordinating conjunctions >
> quantifiers > determiners > determiners > free pronouns > clitic pronouns >
> subordinating conjunctions

Figure 1.   Hierarchy of borrowability

Syntagmatic constraints between lexical items also determine whether lexical items are borrowed. For example, Winford (2003: 51–52) observes that categories like verbs or prepositions are not as easily borrowed as nouns and adjectives because they govern other categories and assign case to them. Similarly, lexical categories with greater morphological complexity in their paradigms are borrowed less frequently than those without such complexity (Winford 2003: 52–53). Before determining the make-up of the lexicon in present-day TxG, we discuss the relevant literature on English borrowings into TxG from the 1960s and 1970s to establish what types of words were borrowed earlier and to what degree.

4.3   Earlier accounts of borrowings into TxG

Gilbert (1965) provides the first in-depth study of loanwords in TxG, based on data he had collected himself as well as data from other published sources. According to Gilbert (1965: 104), early written sources of TxG (letters and diaries starting in the 1840s) show the "enthusiasm with which newcomers absorbed the English language and culture during the first few years – or months – after their arrival" in Texas, along with the frequent use of English terms for a number of plants and animals, utensils, and particular types of activities such as *campen* 'to camp'.[10] Gilbert (1965) further notes that more and more words from the semantic domains of higher culture, government, technology, and contact with the world in general were eventually borrowed into TxG, especially after the decline in prestige of German. A handful of conjunctions such as *because*, *but*, and *except* were borrowed into TxG, and have replaced the corresponding German forms (Gilbert 1965: 110). Gilbert's inventory of borrowings includes loan translations such as *der Feuerplatz* 'the fireplace'; loan extensions such as *die Kann* 'the bucket', 'the can of food'; and hybrid compounds such as *die peach pie*, among others.

These loan words were integrated to different degrees into the TxG phonological system. In Gilbert's view, the oldest loanwords such as *der Norder* 'northerly wind'

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10.   This particular example is now also frequently used in standard German, alongside the older term *zelten* 'to camp' (from *das Zelt* 'tent').

were totally assimilated phonologically, while later loanwords like *der Blanket* or *der Television* were only partially assimilated or were left unassimilated (Gilbert 1965: 110). Age clearly influenced the degree of integration, as fewer younger people attempted to integrate borrowed words phonologically into TxG. They instead tended to aim for "a more or less faithful reproduction of the English model, even if the process entails the injection of a gross foreign element into nearly every utterance, thereby endangering the integrity of the language as a system" (Gilbert 1965: 110). Finally, despite the apparent ease with which Texas Germans borrowed words from English, Gilbert (1965: 110) observes that the actual number of English words in TxG as spoken at the time of writing "remains small, probably less than 5 percent".

In a slightly later study, Meister (1969) offers an analysis of English loanwords in TxG that includes more detailed information about pronunciation. Based on the data collected for Gilbert (1972), Meister documents extensive dialectal variation across the German-belt, which he treats as a reflex of the vocabulary brought to Texas by German immigrants. For instance, based on Gilbert's sentence *The animal died out in the pasture* (later published in Gilbert 1972, Map 10), Meister (1969: 8–9) investigates the different lexical variants of *to die* and their dialectal origins. In addition to the more common form *gestorben*, Meister discusses the distribution of *krepiert* and *verreckt* (both denoting quite miserable ways of dying), and concludes that the distribution of these three forms in TxG largely reflects their distribution in the donor dialects of TxG. On the other hand, the most common way to express 'to die' in TxG was *totgegangen*, which does not appear in all traditional German dialects, according to Meister (1969: 9).

Meister further shows that Gilbert's TxG data contain both native German words and their (borrowed) English counterparts. He indicates that there is a continuum of borrowing English words and replacing native German words with them: at one end of the continuum we find large numbers of English loanword variants and few German counterparts for a given word or phrase, e.g. *the creek* (Gilbert 1972, Map 137), which is used by almost all of Gilbert's informants, and which is phonologically integrated into German. Other English variants borrowed into TxG include *branch* and *gully*, which are used to a lesser degree (particularly in the eastern part of the German-belt). German words occasionally used for *creek* include *Bach*, *Bruch, Wassergang*, *Graben*, *Strom*, and *Fluss*, all of which refer to different types and sizes of flowing water (Meister 1969: 44).[11] On the other end of the continuum we find a strong use of German words, with English loanwords replacing German words only occasionally, e.g. *drawer* (Meister 1969: 27–28), where ninety percent of

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11.   Other examples where TxG speakers predominantly prefer to use English loanwords include *icicles*, *pumpkin*, *candy*, and *tank*, among others (Meister 1969). For the most part, these loanwords are phonetically integrated into TxG, which suggests that they were borrowed into TxG comparatively early on.

Gilbert's informants preferred German *Schublade* (or some lexical variant thereof) to the English loanword *drawer*.

Wilson (1977) emphasizes the strong regional differences in the TxG lexicon. Focusing on the area around Giddings and La Grange (about 60 miles east of Austin) he observes that the local variety of TxG is influenced by Wendish (e.g. *der Bobbak* 'boogeyman'), Saxon (e.g. *schmoochen* 'to smoke'), and English (e.g. *der Belt* 'the belt', among many others). With respect to English borrowings, Wilson (1977) maintains that the most common type of English loan words in TxG are words for new concepts with which the settlers were not familiar (*die Roach*, *der Airplane*, etc.). In Wilson's view, the settlers maintained their German vocabulary to a large degree and therefore did not feel a need to replace more words. In fact, he points out that some German words such as *Luftschiff* 'airship' (although meaning 'airplane' in TxG), *Auto* 'car' and *Kaugummi* 'chewing gum' existed alongside English words. As for phonology, the phonological integration of English loanwords is not always complete. Wilson (1977: 53) views the use of [v] for [w] ('it was vunderful') as one of the defining characteristics of the "German accent" of the area surrounding Giddings and La Grange. At the same time, Wilson reports considerable phonological interference from English in the speech of younger speakers without much knowledge of German. Wilson (1977: 57) concludes that "Texas German is essentially good standard German."[12]

Jordan (1977) offers a more general account of TxG spoken in the western Hill Country, i.e. to the west of New Braunfels. With respect to lexical changes, he points out that the time between 1845 and 1945 was a century of tremendous change. Along the lines of earlier observations made by Gilbert and Wilson, he identifies technological developments like trucks, road graders, telephones, phonographs, radio, television, and so on, as the impetus for many English borrowings into TxG. In describing the differences between Standard German and TxG Jordan (1977: 61) notes that "while German built up its new vocabulary in Europe, the German Texans borrowed the needed terms from English, and hundreds of English words slipped in by default." Besides words describing unknown objects or processes, TxG also borrowed words for which there were already German words available, such as *das Rope* (Standard German *das Seil*) and *die Fence* (Standard German *der Zaun*).

Jordan also reports the borrowing of nouns such as *car* and *cotton*, as well as compounds nouns made up of English and German words such as *Stacheldrahtfence*

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12.   Compare here the statement by Gilbert (1965: 102) that TxG "deviates in certain characteristic ways from Contemporary Standard German as described by Siebs and Duden. Nevertheless it is sufficiently intelligible to the speaker of Standard German to be classed as a colonial variety of the standard language and not as a separate entity. Mutual intelligibility is still very good."

'barbed wire fence' and *Schweinepenne* 'pig pen'. Besides nouns, Jordan notes the borrowing of multi word expressions such as *Vieh aufrounden* 'round up cattle', *die Kuh dehornen* 'dehorn the cow', and *den Draht stretchen* 'stretch the wire', among many others. Verbs such as *cranken* 'to crank' were also borrowed (and are normally weak). Many borrowings were apparently phonologically integrated, or at least exhibit what Jordan (1977: 63) calls "a distinct German flavor and a strong German intonation." At the end of his paper Jordan (1977: 68–71) provides an extensive list of almost 300 English loanwords from various semantic domains such as administration, technology, agriculture, nature, transportation, and education, albeit without any exact indications of pronunciation, stating only that "the pronunciation is a somewhat Germanized form of the local Texas English norm" (Jordan 1977: 68).

4.4 Evaluation of earlier accounts

One of the challenges in evaluating earlier accounts of borrowings into TxG is that they only offer anecdotal evidence. For instance, Jordan's (1977) impressive list of borrowings from various semantic domains lacks detailed information on the degree of phonological integration, while Meister (1969) offers phonetic transcriptions, but only covers a small set of English borrowings. Ideally, we would like to have an exhaustive corpus of borrowings into TxG accompanied by precise phonetic transcriptions. Despite the absence of such a corpus, it is obvious that borrowings from English into TxG have been somewhat limited in size and type. As noted above, Gilbert (1965: 110) estimates the amount of English lexical material at the time of writing at about 5%, and all the analyses discussed above seem to agree that borrowings affect almost exclusively the semantic domains of administration, education, technology, agriculture, telecommunication, and transportation, among others. The degree of phonological integration suggests that the majority of borrowings were readily integrated into TxG, with some variation between speakers.

Returning to Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) borrowing scale discussed above, the question arises as to how we should classify the TxG lexicon at this stage. Besides lexical borrowings, which are indicative of stage 1, previous analyses also mention slight structural borrowings. For example, Gilbert (1965: 109–110) reports that "English verbal constructions of the forms 'he goes,' 'Does he go?' and 'He is going'" have exact counterparts in German. Similarly, the function and syntactic position of English *for* seems to have influenced its use in sentences such as *Was solln mir fighten for?* 'What should we fight for?' (Gilbert 1965: 110). Besides slight structural borrowings, Gilbert also reports borrowing of conjunctions such as *because*, *but*, and *except*, but only to a limited degree (see above). His claim that these conjunctions "have been incorporated into various syntactic constructions" (Gilbert 1965: 110) suggests that they did not replace their German counterparts across the board. Instead, they appear to be only tied to specific syntactic constructions and multi-word expressions, indicating that the borrowing of

these closed-class elements presumably took place not as individual words, but instead occurred when specific multi-word expressions (idiomatic phrases, particular syntactic constructions, etc.) were borrowed into TxG and were later reanalyzed.

In sum, the historical data indicate that the TxG lexicon of the mid-twentieth century exhibited characteristics of Thomason and Kaufman's second stage, which includes slight structural borrowing as well as borrowing of conjunctions and adverbial particles (besides, of course other lexical borrowing at stage 1). None of the previous analyses up to the 1970s offers any evidence for more intense structural borrowing characteristic of the higher stages of Thomason and Kaufman's model.[13]

5.   Lexical borrowings in present-day TxG

To compare the historical TxG data with more recent data, we now turn to the interview data recorded by the TGDP with 52 speakers in New Braunfels between 2001–2006. A full-fledged comparison and analysis of all of the relevant data would go far beyond the scope of this work, so we focus on a few illustrative examples representative of the overall trends.   All New Braunfels speakers exhibited fluent speech during open-ended interviews, and were typically at ease with a wide range of topics. The only types of words that were problematic were from the semantic domains in which heavy borrowing from English was already described by earlier research (education, administration, nature, technical innovation, etc.) Consider the following data from open-ended sociolinguistic interviews where a question or a short hesitation signals that the speaker does not know the appropriate German word.[14]

(1)   a.   Aber   die   habn   zusammengspielt   in   ihr   ihre
            but   they   have   together-played   in   their   their

            uh   *Schulyard*. (1-27-1-11)
            uh   school-yard

            'But they played together in their schoolyard.'

      b.   …da   war   ein – ein   uh   *Highway Patrolman*   da. (1-32-1-2)
              there   was   a   a   uh   highway patrolman   there
            'There was a highway patrolman.'

      c.   Ich   hab   uh   *business*   studiert. (1-45-1-4)
            I   have   uh   business   studied
            'I studied business.'

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13.   There is also some very minor borrowing from Spanish into TxG (largely in Medina County), which we do not address here.

14.   The numbers following each example are the unique file numbers referencing the files in the on-line TGDA. See Boas (2006) for details.

d. Wie sagt man … *naturalized*? (1-51-1-1)
    how says one   naturalized
    'How do you say naturalized?'

We now discuss some specific examples from the translation task. The first two examples, *Beerdigung* 'funeral' in Table 2 and *Fussboden* 'floor' in Table 3, come from the relatively basic semantic fields "life and death" and "areas in the house". Gilbert's (1972) data for the two words show very little dialectal variation, and no English loanwords. The TGDP data are almost identical with Gilbert's data, except for two small differences. First, for each of the two words one informant used an English borrowing instead of the German word. Second, a fifth of the informants did not remember any German translations for *funeral*, which we tentatively attribute to the replacement of German as an active church language by English in New Braunfels by the 1960s.[15]

Table 2. *eine Beerdigung* ('a funeral') (Gilbert (1972), Map (114)

	Beerdigung	Begräbnis	Beerdigung and Begräbnis	funeral	None
Gilbert (1972)	4 (**27%**)	9 (**60%**)	2 (**13%**)		
TGDP-Informants	24, 25, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 71, 72, 76, 79, 80, 84, 88, 107, 123, 124, 125, 129, 139, 159, 165, 167	27, 28, 33, 77, 78, 82, 83, 128, 138, 153, 160, 164, 170, 171, 173	96	75	26, 60, 62, 85, 108, 110, 155, 161, 168, 169, 172, 174
Total-TGDP	23 (**59%**)	15 (**38%**)		1 (**3%**)	12

Table 3. *Fussboden* ('floor') (Gilbert (1972), Map (122)

	Fußboden	Boden	Fuß	floor	None
Gilbert (1972)	1 (7%)	14 (**93%**)			
TGDP-Informants	24, 26, 27, 30, 32, 33, 35, 72, 75, 76, 79, 80, 85, 88, 123, 125, 129, 139, 153, 160, 161, 165, 171, 172, 174	25, 28, 29, 34, 62, 71, 77, 78, 82, 83, 84, 96, 107, 108, 110, 124, 128, 138, 155, 159, 167, 168, 169, 170, 173	60	164	
Total-TGDP	25 (**48%**)	25 (**48%**)	1 (2%)	1 (**2%**)	

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15. Numbers in the table refer to speaker numbers in the TGDA.

Next, consider the various TxG realizations of *pecan tree* reported by Gilbert (1972) and how TGDP speakers differ from Gilbert's informants. Table 4 shows that the hybrid compound *Pecanbaum* 'pecan tree' continues to be used more often than the native German *Nussbaum* 'nut tree'. The most significant point revealed by the TGDP data is the great number of speakers who did not provide an answer to this word. In comparison, a much smaller number of present-day speakers did not remember the translation of *garden rake*, as Table 5 illustrates. At the same time, the TGDP informants exhibit a much greater degree of lexical variation for this word that can be found in Gilbert's (1972) data.

Table 4. *Pecan(nuss)baum* 'pecan tree' (Gilbert 1972, Map 140)

	Pecan-baum	Nuss-baum	Nussbaum and Pecanbaum	Baum	None
Gilbert (1972)	10 (**67%**)	1 (**6%**)	4 (**27%**)		
TGDP-Informants	25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 33, 75, 88, 110, 125, 128,	32, 35,		138	24, 27, 34, 60, 62, 71, 72, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 96, 107, 108, 123, 124, 129, 139, 153, 155, 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174
Total-TGDP	11 (**79%**)	2 (**14%**)		1 (**7%**)	38

Table 5. *Gartenrechen* 'garden rake' (Gilbert 1972, Map 108)

	Garten-rechen	Garten-reche	Rechen	Garten-rake	Harken	Other[16]	None
Gilbert (1972)			14 (**93%**)		1 (**7%**)		
TGDP-informants	24, 25, 29, 32, 76, 79, 82, 83, 123, 138, 160, 171	72, 96, 125, 129	26, 27, 80, 88, 110, 124, 139, 155, 159	30, 35, 84, 153, 165, 167, 172, 174	164, 173	71, 75, 128, 170	28, 33, 34, 60, 62, 77, 78, 85, 107, 108, 161, 168, 169
Total-TGDP	12 (**31%**)	4 (**10%**)	9 (**23%**)	8 (**21%**)	2 (**5%**)	4 (**10%**)	13

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16.   This category includes lexical variants such as *Gartenharge*, *Gartenreke*, *Gartenrech*, and *Gartenrache*.

Finally, consider the loanwords *creek* and *candy* in Tables 6 and 7. The data demonstrate that both words were well established in TxG some four to five decades ago, although in different ways. While *creek* had been phonologically integrated into TxG for the most part, *candy* retained its Texas English pronunciation. This is still generally the case in the TGDP data, although some speakers now use the English pronunciation of *creek*, while others also use comparable German equivalents such as *Fluss* 'river' and *Bach* 'creek, brook'.

Table 6. *Bach* ('creek') (Gilbert (1972), Map (136)

	Krik	**Krike**	**Creek**	**Fluss**	**Bach**	**Other**
Gilbert (1972)	13 (**87%**)	2 (**13%**)				
TGDP-Informants	24, 25, 29, 30, 33, 35, 71, 72, 76, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 88, 96, 108, 110, 123, 124, 125, 129, 138, 139, 153, 155, 159, 160, 171, 172, 173, 174		26, 27, 77, 161, 164	34, 60, 75, 107, 128, 169, 170	28	32, 62, 78, 165, 167, 168
Total-TGDP	33 (**72%**)		5 (**11%**)	7 (**15%**)	1	6

Table 7. *Bonbons* ('candy') (Gilbert (1972), Map (139)

	candy	**Zucker**	**None**
Gilbert (1972)	15 (**100%**)		
TGDP-Informants	24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 60, 71, 72, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 88, 96, 107, 108, 110, 123, 124, 125, 128, 138, 139, 153, 155, 159, 160, 161, 164, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174	170	62, 129, 165, 167
Total-TGDP	47 (**98%**)	1 (**2%**)	4

This brief comparison demonstrates three important points. First, the number of informants who do not remember a specific word differs from item to item. Based on the limited data discussed above, lexical loss appears to be lowest for native German words belonging to core semantic domains, e.g. *Fussboden* 'floor', as well as for well-established English loanwords such as *creek* or *candy*. It is important to keep in mind that the rate of lexical reduction in TxG is somewhat minor when compared with other studies on dying languages (e.g. Dorian 1973; Ruoff 1973; Mithun 1989, and Holloway 1997, among others). This is particularly true when the different factors discussed above (age, intensity of contact with other speakers, etc.) are taken into account, as these factors point to parallels among elderly monolingual speakers who have not used words from certain semantic domains for a long time. Second, there are apparent

exceptions to the trend that loanwords from the dominant language become more prevalent in language death situations, as noted above with the example of *sink*, where, although all of Gilbert's (1972) informants used the English loanword, a great number of TGDP informants use German hybrid compounds such as *Kichensink* 'kitchen sink' instead. At this point it is not clear whether these new forms signal an increased awareness of TxG identity or whether their occurrence is triggered by other factors. Third, although it seems possible to observe different types of lexical developments in the data, it is unclear whether it is possible to arrive at systematic patterns that would allow for predictions about whether a particular type of word will develop one way or another. Clearly, further research needs to explore this issue by systematically indexing all of Gilbert's (1972) lexical data and comparing it with the present-day TGDP data.

6.   Lexical erosion in present-day TxG?

The final thematic section of this paper considers lexical erosion and decay in present-day TxG. Lexical loss is one of the most obvious characteristics of dying languages, and it is relatively easy to identify. Absolute lexical loss usually affects words for objects that are no longer culturally relevant, such as *shoemaker's awl* (Gilbert 1972, Map 119), while partial lexical loss typically takes place in long-term language contact situations with widespread bilingualism. In these situations, vocabulary from the dominant language often replaces native lexical items, a process known as relexification (Craig 1997: 262).

An examination of the relevant literature reveals a wide range of opinions on lexical loss. It seems uncontroversial that lexical loss is typically subject to age gradation, in that older fluent speakers tend to remember more words than younger fluent and semi-fluent speakers.[17] The causes of lexical loss, on the other hand, are significantly more controversial, especially because, as Thomason (2003: 704–705) observes, multiple causation is often at work in contact-induced language changes.[18] While authors such as Woolard (1989) propose a "loans to loss" model where extensive borrowing from the dominant language over long periods results in language loss, authors like Cook (1989) claim that such convergence towards the dominant language does not occur in a moribund language. In this view, simplification such as lexical reduction is a result of internally motivated processes in the speech of semi-speakers. Thus, it is

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17.   Dorian (1973: 414) observes, for instance, that semi-speakers often "feel sure their elders had 'more words for things' than they have themselves."

18.   For instance, in some cases phonological changes are intimately tied to lexical changes, as discussed in significant detail with respect to TxG in Boas (2009).

difficult to establish universal patterns capable of predicting specific patterns of lexical loss. To avoid these problems, Andersen (1988) focuses on the role of the semi-speaker, highlighting the different situations in which the moribund language is still used; while Sasse (1992) argues that semi-speakers show the highest degree of lexical loss because of imperfect acquisition, usually caused by inadequate input and/or the limited opportunity to use the moribund language. Similarly, Wolfram (2002: 776) points out that "the lexical inventories of speakers of moribund varieties will depend on their experience in different situational domains, with frequently used vocabulary in common domains the most persistent as the language dies."

The situation-bound use of vocabulary is certainly the main factor influencing lexical decay in the TxG community. Unfortunately, the TGDP members have not been able to interview any semi-fluent speakers in the New Braunfels area. This is a situation typical of dying languages: "The 'native speaker' population itself may not agree on who falls within that category: some people may claim speaker status when others would not accept them as such; some may say they are not speakers when others would include them as speakers" (Watson 1989: 41). This situation is even more pronounced in the New Braunfels area, as many locals believe that TxG is "only" a dialect, and not comparable in prestige to Standard German. Boas (2009) reports that he had difficulty finding informants in New Braunfels, as many potential informants refused to be interviewed (even though Boas had been introduced to them by other TxG speakers who he had already known for some time), claiming that they were *Deutschverderber* 'corrupters of German' and do actually not speak any German at all. Boas (2009) states that he has had numerous such encounters with speakers of TxG during his fieldwork.

However, on one occasion Boas interviewed a semi-fluent speaker in Doss (about 10 miles northwest of Fredericksburg) whose lexical knowledge appeared to be very limited. Although he appeared to be able to understand almost everything that Boas said in German, he had difficulties remembering German words. Having decided to end the interview because Boas thought that he had exhausted the informant's knowledge of TxG, Boas happened to ask the informant about his upcoming hunting trip. As it turned out, the informant had been an enthusiastic hunter since his childhood, often going hunting with his father and brother, and they always spoke TxG while hunting. As a result, the informant could carry on an elaborate conversation about deer hunting, including different weather conditions, types of terrain and guns, finding good hunting spots, shooting and butchering deer, and making sausage.

This example illustrates that lexical loss is difficult to measure, and that we should be careful not to conclude automatically that a semi-speaker has limited competence in the language. This point is even more important when we analyze the lexical knowledge of Boas' (2009) New Braunfels area informants, who are technically fluent speakers of TxG. They have no problem following and participating in German conversations covering a wide variety of topics, although occasionally they simply do not

remember a particular word or phrase. This is even more pronounced in the elicitation tasks where they are asked to translate English words, phrases, and sentences into TxG. In this case, most TxG speakers are capable of what Tsitsipis (1989: 135) describes as manipulating creatively formulaic and lexical material as well as producing contextually appropriate figurative speech. Although their communicative competence lacks certain aspects, their overall knowledge of the language as well as the social and cultural contexts allows them to compensate for it.

Perhaps one of the most persistent problems encountered during fieldwork on TxG is that almost all informants are more than 60 years old, and have often not spoken any TxG in years or even decades. Despite their infrequent use of TxG, they are typically able to carry on long open-ended conversations about a broad range of topics, including growing up, their ancestors, attending school, ranching and farming, experiences in the military, meeting their spouse, and their communities. None of the New Braunfels informants had serious difficulties translating the Gilbert and Eikel data into TxG, except for a few words and phrases. As a result, they either did not translate the word or phrase at all, or they substituted English words for it. Boas (2009) reports that many consultants asked him to supply a particular word or phrase in German, and when he told them, they usually remembered it immediately and felt somewhat embarrassed that they forgot it. As one informant put it: "I just haven't spoken any German in such a long time so I forgot how to say *junk* in German." Another New Braunfels speaker explained: "After my husband passed away in the late 1960s I stopped making sausage so I forgot almost all the words that go with it." These examples illustrate that there is little actual difference between what Tsitsipis (1981: 117) calls "passive competence" and "active competence." The small number of cases where speakers initially did not know a word or phrase, but later on remembered it could thus be classified as "language recovery" in the sense of Hill (1979: 72) and Dressler (1981: 14).

All New Braunfels informants exhibited fluent speech during open-ended interviews, being typically at ease with a wide range of topics. The only types of words that turned out to be problematic were from the semantic domains in which heavy borrowing from English was already described by earlier research, i.e. education, administration, nature, transportation, technical innovation, etc. That is, all New Braunfels informants continue to have an excellent passive knowledge of TxG, but their active knowledge sometimes lags when it comes to particular German words or phrases that they have either forgotten or that they never acquired in the first place (presumably because they acquired an English word or phrase instead of the TxG equivalent).

In our view, this "momentary" lexical loss is not necessarily indicative of lexical erosion, but is instead a normal attrition caused by old age and/or not using the language, or certain "parts" of the language, for an extended period of time. As the example of the Doss informant illustrates, it is quite possible to exhibit a fairly significant reduction of one's lexical inventory, except for words from particular semantic domains such

as hunting, which have continued to be used throughout one's life. To be sure, we need to distinguish between the failure to acquire TxG completely and language attrition due to old age and/or disuse of the language. The written questionnaires reveal that all informants, not only the New Braunfels informants, but also the informant from Doss, were raised speaking German at home and among family, neighbors, and friends. This means that the type of lexical reduction is not caused by inadequate acquisition, but by other factors such as age, the time that the language has not been used, and the intensity of contact with other speakers.[19]

As such, we suggest that the type of lexical loss exhibited by the New Braunfels informants is parallel to that of elderly monolingual speakers who have not used words from particular semantic domains (such as children's games or high school math terminology) for decades and thus have problems remembering them. In addition, a third of the New Braunfels informants speak a little German only once a month, while another third speak it only once a year. For these informants, the opportunities to speak are typically limited to greetings at church or small talk with family, friends, or neighbors. The New Braunfels speakers thus appear to have retained a passive knowledge of basically all words, but have problems with remembering some of them. It is therefore important to keep in mind that in contrast to the one informant from Doss the lexical reduction among the New Braunfels informants is very minimal.

7.   Conclusions

This paper has shown that the lexicon of TxG has not undergone any dramatic changes over the past four decades. More specifically, we have demonstrated that the different dialectal origins of words that were still apparent when Gilbert collected his data in the 1960s can still be found in the present-day data collected by the TGDP. Based on Gilbert's (1972) data we argued that TxG has borrowed words primarily from particular semantic domains such as education, administration, telecommunication, transportation, ranching and farming, and nature, among others. In addition, a few prepositions and conjunctions were borrowed. As such, TxG can be classified as "Stage 2" according to Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) 5-stage borrowing scale ("slightly more intense contact"), which is characterized by lexical borrowing and slight structural borrowing in combination with conjunctions and adverbial particles. The comparison of Gilbert's data with the TGDP data shows that there have been comparatively few changes in the TxG lexicon over the past four decades. The small

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19.   See de Bot and Clyne (1994) and Schmid (2002) on these points.

changes observed in the present-day data do not appear to follow any systematic pattern, which has led us to argue that they are item-based. Moreover, we do not see the current changes to the TxG lexicon as signs of lexical erosion.

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