University of Alberta

The Use of the Conjunction *weil* among German-speaking Canadian Immigrants

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Applied Linguistics

Modern Languages and Cultural Studies

Spring 2010
Edmonton, Alberta

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Dedication

To

my incredible parents, Terry and Virginia Miller,

with my deepest love and gratitude.

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Abstract

In standard, written German, causal clauses introduced by the conjunction *weil* (because) display subordinate, verb-final word order. In spoken German, however, verb-second (V2) or main clause order has been increasingly found to follow *weil*. Early discussion of *weil* explored the possible loss of subordinate word order, the influence of English on German word order, and *weil* V2 as specific to a region or dialect. The present study addresses these and other arguments using a corpus of over 800 *weil* clauses. Spontaneous, spoken data from two groups of native German speakers who immigrated to Canada before 1970 and after 1985 were analyzed and coded for word order. The data showed an increase in the use of the conjunction *weil*, and *weil* V2 among younger native speakers. Earlier hypotheses regarding speaker origin, the influence of English and the loss of subordinate word order were either confirmed or refuted by the data.

Key Words: German, weil, variation, diaspora, sociolinguistics

Acknowledgement

This study would not have been possible without the support of many people. Special thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Jennifer Dailey-O'Cain, who graciously read my numerous drafts and for whose guidance and encouragement I am forever grateful. Many thanks as well to Dr. Claudia Kost, who offered both insight and feedback from the beginning. Thanks also to my committee member Dr. Terry Nadasdi, for his guidance and support.

Finally, a huge thank you to numerous colleagues, peers, friends and family members, who generously offered their feedback, support and love throughout the entire thesis-writing process. I could not have done it without you.

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INTRODUCTION

Variation and Change

Linguistic variation and change are as old as language itself; humans are continually changing, so too does the language we use to communicate. As Milroy (1992: 3) notes, change seems inherent to the nature of human language. Along with the advent of a standard written form of language have come claims at various times by a select few that language must be kept pure or "correct," and guarded against signs of decay. Most speakers and linguists would agree, however, that very few speak the so-called Standard language. Prescribed, standard language is itself an abstract thing, which does not account for speaker and regional variation, or social and environmental forces that act upon speakers. For example, a change in location may cause a speaker to use a different vocabulary (i.e. work vs. home) and factors like fatigue or emotional state can affect linguistic accuracy and fluency. One may argue, then, that speakers rarely hold true to every rule that Standard language prescribes (Watzinger-Tharp 2006).

The German language is no exception to this. In standard, written German, both finite and non-finite verbs are placed at the end of subordinate clauses: clauses which are introduced by a subordinating conjunction, such as the causal conjunction *weil* (because). This is illustrated in the following example, taken from the data used for this thesis:[1]

[1] All transcriptions from the Waterloo and Edmonton corpora in this thesis employ the following conventions:
(.) indicates a quick pause (as a comma in English might)
# indicates a short pause, up to 1 second in length
indicates a pause between 1 and 2 seconds
@EN indicates a code-switch from German to English
@DT indicates a switch to German
+/. indicates that the speaker's statement or question was interrupted
: between syllables or letters indicates lengthening of the sound
? indicates rising intonation
[indicates the beginning of overlapping speech; and] indicates the end of overlapped speech

Verb-final word order, Waterloo corpus, pre-1970 speaker from Southwestern Germany

(1) Jana `das wollte sie dann nicht` **`weil`** `das nicht ihre idee war`
that wanted she then not **because** that not her idea was
`then she didn't want that because it wasn't her idea`

Over the past 35 years, linguists, language purists and native German speakers alike have raised alarms about the decline of the German language as a result of the use of verb-second (or main clause) word order following *weil*. This variant word order has been increasingly found used in spoken language among native German speakers, in which the above example would then look like this:

das wollte sie dann nicht **weil** das war nicht ihre idee
that wanted she then not **because** that was not her idea
then she didn't want that because that wasn't her idea

The emergence of this syntactical variation has motivated some to predict language decay and the loss of subordinate word order in German, as well as the so-called 'death' of the coordinating causal conjunction *denn* (because). Negative attitudes towards *weil* with verb-second word order have been reflected in prescriptive grammars such as the Duden grammar as well, which initially completely ignored the existence *weil* V2. In recent years it has defected to mentioning the so-called non-standard variant word order in footnotes, citing it as "incorrect" according to the Standard (Duden: *Die Grammatik* 1998: 406). This phenomenon of *weil* clauses with verb-second (V2) word order has been labeled as a dialectal, colloquial, or non-standard form - belonging to the less-

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(xx) indicates unintelligible speech
The conjunction because/*weil* is **bolded** in both German and English, and the main verb of each *weil* clause is underlined. English colloquial translations of the German are provided directly underneath each transcription line and are *italicized*. This translation is provided under a literal English translation of the German in the first two examples. None of the German transcripts are capitalized.

educated speakers of dialects, and was generally reported to be a feature of southern German and Austrian dialects (Watzinger-Tharp 2006). Still others have blamed the influence of the English language for the so-called loss of subordinate word order. Proponents of these claims, however, often failed to provide any sort of linguistic analysis to support them. The story is different among linguists, especially those who carry out variationist studies, for whom the debate concerning *weil* clauses has centered on the cause and conditions for V2 word order as a valid linguistic feature in the German language.

Numerous linguistic and socio-linguistic conditions for *weil* V2 have been discussed as well as systematically examined in the literature over the past fifteen to twenty years, discrediting the claim that it is dialect-specific and restricted to colloquial speech (Scheutz 2001: 116). Some linguists have also proposed that *weil* V2 has taken over the function of the causal coordinating conjunction *denn* (for, because) in spoken German, pointing out the similarities in use between them and that *denn* is generally found in written, rather than spoken, language (see Pasch 1997: 268). Research on *weil* has pointed to differences between content (justifying a proposition), epistemic (justifying a conclusion) and speech-act (justifying an utterance) causality, which was seen to correspond to the use of verb-last (VL) or V2 word order respectively (see Vandergriff, 2005: 64). Some claimed that V2 order is preferred in cases when the *weil* clause refers to a main clause speech act, rather than a proposition, and the reverse in cases of VL clauses (see Günthner 1993, 1996; Wegener 1993; Vandergriff, 2005). Debate over semantic differences between the two word orders, where *weil* VL expressed a real-world cause and *weil* V2 justified a speech act, led to deeper examination of the

discourse-pragmatic functions of *weil* V2 in conversation and the differences to *weil* VL clauses (Watzinger-Tharp 2006). Investigation into the differences between the two *weil* clauses led to claims that VL and V2 word order differed further in prosodic features, or intonational patterns, and the notion that *weil* was generally followed by a short pause in V2 clauses (Vandergriff 2005: 62).

Basis for the Present Study

In his analysis, Scheutz (2001) examines a number of claims discussed in the literature and provides empirical data to refute or support them, respectively. In this variationist study, Scheutz considered the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic properties of both types of *weil* clauses in his corpus of everyday conversation in Austrian German. His data indicate that V2 clauses are not merely restricted to cases of speech-act or epistemic causality, and make up a good number of factual or content causality *weil* clauses (Scheutz 2001: 133). He found no support for the claim that the semantic type of *weil* clause determined verb position, but rather that syntactic integration was a condition for VL or V2 word order. He notes that VL and V2 *weil* clauses are used to express both content *and* epistemic causality. Scheutz's (2001) data also confirmed that the phenomenon of *weil* V2 is neither restricted to one locality, nor is it solely colloquial, though he does point out the apparent regional specificity of this variation. His analysis demonstrates the different pragmatic functions of *weil* clauses, including its conversational function as a floor-holding device to indicate that a speaker is not yet completely finished his or her turn in the conversation.

In addition to his own corpus, Scheutz (2001: 116) reviews three previous studies' findings of *weil* use among speakers of various regions, and notes a general regional specificity for *weil* V2: verb-second clauses were found to rarely occur in northern Germany and seem to be restricted to southern German and Austrian dialects. More recently, however, Vandergriff (2005: 63) notes that *weil* V2 was approaching standard status in Germany, having probably spread from southern dialects throughout the country, across regional and social boundaries (in Watzinger-Tharp 2006). Since Scheutz's (2001) analysis, however, there has been no variationist research undertaken to study the current and possibly changing use of *weil* in spoken German or to examine the current situation among German speakers, particularly in Germany. While earlier studies have looked at particular regions within Germany and Austria, no new data incorporating all of Germany to examine *weil* V2 clauses has been put forth to examine whether this phenomenon is indeed found mainly in southern German dialects, or is rather diffuse among various regions. As such, there is little to no recent data on the current use of the conjunction *weil* among native German speakers, particularly with respect to differing regions.

The question remains open, then, as to how *weil* is presently used among native speakers throughout Germany. This question also remains open in relation to speakers outside of Germany, since to the present there has been no research carried out among German-speaking immigrants living in Canada in regards to the use of the conjunction *weil*. This absence of data for older generations of native German speakers, as well as for present-day speakers within Germany, led to the basic question relevant to this study,

namely: 'What differences are there in the way recent German-speaking immigrants speak German compared to those immigrants who have been in Canada much longer?' More specifically, my first research question asked which, if any, differences exist in the use of the subordinating conjunction *weil* by native German speakers in Canada who immigrated over 50 years ago and those who came in the past 20 years. My second research question then asked whether these differences are attributable to language contact, natural language variation or the loss of the subordinating clause in the German spoken by Canadian immigrants, as a result of living in Canada for so long. Thus, this thesis seeks to provide a better understanding of the use of *weil* V2 word order among native speakers of German, as well as shed light on the linguistic situation concerning *weil,* before *weil* V2 caught the attention of linguists. More importantly, it aims to provide fresh, relevant data on language maintenance and change among speakers who have been isolated from Germany and other European German-speaking communities, and on the linguistic changes that are taking place in those areas.

In order to answer to these two questions, I examined the use of *weil* among German-speaking immigrants in the Edmonton, Alberta and Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario areas of Canada. 809 occurrences of *weil* were counted and coded during interviews with 33 native German speakers. After subtracting all occurrences of broken *weil* clauses, the remaining 678 *weil* clauses were analyzed for verb-second, verb-last or no word order, as in cases when *weil* is used as a floor-holding device. Groups of speakers were then analyzed for *weil* use in relation to date of immigration and speaker origin to examine differences between speakers who left German-speaking areas before 1970 and after

1985.[2] This is the most recent data collected among native speakers of German with very diverse geographical, linguistic, social and educational backgrounds (compare with Uhmann 1998: 133-134).

This study is unique in that its corpus provides a group of speakers which is distinct from previous studies: native German-speaking immigrants to Canada, who form two groups for comparison. The group of pre-1970 native speakers provides insight into the effect that isolation has on language over time, when speakers are separated from their native language and live in an English-dominant community. This group also reflects the spoken German of a particular generation, from a number of geographical locations in German-speaking Europe, with different linguistic (dialectal) and social backgrounds. The post-1985[3] group of speakers represents more recent spoken German from nearly all areas of Germany, with different regional dialects and social and educational backgrounds. In both groups, participants were approximately 20 years of age or older when they immigrated to Canada.

These two groups offer a snapshot of the spoken language of two separate generations of native German speakers[4], and provide a unique opportunity to analyze linguistic change over time through their comparison. This analysis, then, can provide answers as to how the German language has changed over time within Germany, as well as among German speakers living in English-dominant areas. Because this study adds fresh data to the discussion on *weil*, it is able to provide new data for comparison, expand

[2] There are no immigrants in the data who came between 1970 and 1985 for two reasons: the data available fell roughly into these two groups; and the early 1970s in the literature marks the beginning point for this phenomenon, and a 15-year gap allows for time during which *weil* V2 use developed.
[3] The earliest date of immigration in this group is 1990 (2 speakers).
[4] In this thesis, a native speaker of German is defined as a person who learned the German language as a child and spoke it in the home as a main language growing up.

on earlier socio-linguistic research, and address a number of claims about the use of *weil* V2. The data presented here demonstrates that verb-second word order has not, to the present, completely replaced verb-last order in German, nor has subordinate word order in German been altogether lost. The data clearly indicate that *weil* VL clauses continue to be used on average more--not less--often than V2 clauses overall for the majority of speakers. A number of speakers were found to use V2 word order as often as and at times more often than VL order, but it did not follow that V2 *weil* clauses outnumbered VL clauses overall, for either group of speakers. Indeed, VL clauses made up the majority of *weil* tokens in both groups. A comparison of the groups revealed that the use of *weil* overall has increased among younger native speakers, in addition to the number of V2 clauses produced, which has of yet gone unnoted in the literature.

The comparison of two groups in this study demonstrates that claims that V2 *weil* clauses are the result of influence from English are not borne out in spoken data. This study provides strong contradictory evidence to this claim, as the pre-1970 immigration group's data bore a number of similarities to the post-1985 group in terms of *weil* use. Even after having lived over 50 years in English-dominant communities, their data still contained more VL *weil* clauses overall. It also demonstrated a clear difference in speaking style from the other group with a lower overall number of *weil* clauses, higher numbers of VL tokens and a higher frequency of causal *denn* (because), and not just from speakers in the North as previously claimed (see Scheutz 2001: 116).

Due to the uniqueness of the corpora, this study is also able to provide evidence that the phenomenon of *weil* V2 may in fact have a longer history than cited by linguists. We may obtain a glimpse at the spoken language of native German speakers, dating from

before linguists began to systematically study phenomenon of *weil* V2. Not only does this study provide information on the use of the conjunction *weil*, it also contributes to the larger field of sociolinguistics in terms of understanding the effects of dominant language on minority language speakers and the impact of language contact after long-term exposure to a dominant language. It also shows the kind of change, if any, that may take place when speakers live in isolation from their native language. Through the analysis of one linguistic feature, the conjunction *weil*, this study provides evidence of the strength of the German language over time among immigrant native German speakers in spite of the possible lexical and syntactical influence of English, and sheds light onto the change in the use of *weil* in German over the past 50 years.

The following sections of this paper will first review the literature on the conjunction *weil* (because) in spoken German over the past decade, and then look at who German-Canadians are as well as their history in Canada. The methodology section which follows that will discuss variationist methodology and how this study was carried out using this method of analysis. The results and analysis section thereafter will report the data examined in this study and provides examples to support its claims. The final section will conclude this thesis and discuss the implications and relevance of this analysis, as well as directions for further research.

THE CASE OF SPOKEN *WEIL*

The Conjunction *weil*

As in English, the word '*weil*' (because) in German is a subordinating conjunction that expresses a causal relationship in a sentence. This sentence, consisting of two or more clauses, forms a dependent causal relationship in which a complete proposition is expressed. Thus the state of affairs in the subordinate clause (or clauses) gives the reason for the proposition expressed in the main clause.

While there is no difference in English word order for main and subordinate clauses, standard German prescribes a subordinate word order that differs syntactically from main clause order (Scheutz 2001: 112). In German main clause word order, the finite verb is the second element (except in the case of inversion) in the clause. In contrast, the finite verb in subordinate clauses is obliged to take the final or last position of the clause (except for double infinitives), pushing all other clause constituents to the left. This is the canonical word order in prescriptive grammars of standard German for subordinate clauses following all subordinate conjunctions. For example:

Main clause: Er ist nach Hause gegangen.
He has gone home.

Subordinate clause, starting with *weil*:

Du kannst nicht mehr mit ihm sprechen, **weil**
You can't speak with him anymore, ***because***

er nach Hause gegangen ist.
he has gone home.

The Variation of *weil*

In addition to the prescribed standard, subordinate, verb-final word order, *weil* clauses have been increasingly found in spoken German to have main clause, verb-second word order. A sentence with this word order would look like the following:

Verb-second word order, Waterloo corpus, pre-1970 speaker from Austria

(2) Nils: man kann hören, woher die kommen **weil** deutsche
*you can tell where they come from **because** Germans*

und österreiche verlieren ihren dialekt ganz
and Austrians have a really hard time losing

ganz schwer
their accent

This word order, deemed "incorrect" in prescriptive grammars for standard German, has been noted as early as the beginning of the 20th century as a regional or dialectal anomaly, not permissible in written language (Selting 1999: 168).

In one of the earliest studies of *weil*, Kann (1972, cited in Küper 1991: 133) found examples of *weil*-clauses with main clause word order in his data, and later asked whether this showed a move toward a simplification of syntax. Günthner (1996) also found examples of this phenomenon in data collected from 1983 – 1995, and noted the increasing use of *weil* clauses with verb second word order during the previous 10-15 years in both colloquial German and certain written genres. She notes that the systematic analysis of spoken language really began in the mid-1970s, a point that had been noted earlier by Gaumann (1983: 1), who wrote that the phenomenon of *weil* V2 had been noticeable for some ten years previous to her study. Indeed, Pasch (1997: 255) states that she was aware of the use of *weil* with verb-second word order around the mid-1970s, since which she has watched this phenomenon attentively. One may argue, then, that the

phenomenon of *weil* V2 is not a recent event, but has rather only been noticed and systematically analyzed in more recent literature. Selting (1999: 168) contributes to this idea as she notes that this phenomenon has most likely been around much longer than the 1970s, and cites academic papers as old as 1899.

The phenomenon of *weil* followed by main clause (verb-second) word order has been well noted in spoken German (Küper 1991: 133). This variant is generally not widespread, and certainly not acceptable, however, in standard written German (Gaumann 1983: 13). There is evidence, though, that this variant is found with some frequency in written language as well as in spoken German; above all in cases where printed material reports or reproduces spoken discourse, or is written to imitate spontaneous discourse, such as interviews and reported speech (Gaumann 1983: 2). The use of *weil* V2 has also been increasingly noted in other written texts such as the Feuilleton, the arts and literature section of many German newspapers, and works of fiction (ibid.).

In search of an explanation for this variation, some linguists have commented that verb-second order reduces the syntactic complexity in spoken language and may, therefore, be used in order to make a speaker's language less complicated for his listener, as demonstrated in the tendency to paratactic (main clause) word order (Chafe 1985, Höhne-Leske 1975 in Günthner 1993: 39). Subordinate clauses are more complicated structures with the finite verb pushed to the end of the clause, after which listeners can fully decode the message with the rest of the sentence information. Gaumann (1983) hypothesized that verb-second *weil* clauses make conversation simpler and take less time

to process, which eases spoken communication as speakers 'give up' syntactic complexity (in Günthner 1993: 39).

Perceptions of *weil*

Earlier attitudes towards *weil* V2 were less than positive, as this variation was considered a type of laziness, or else characteristic of "sloppy" language (Engel 1988: 730) or imperfect education (Wegener 1993: 289-291). According to scholars such as Eisenberg (1986: 19), the use of *weil* V2 was considered grammatically incorrect and even an example of the "wrong way" to use the conjunction *weil* (cited in Küper 1991: 135). Language purists and native speakers alike have also labeled V2 *weil* clauses as incorrect, alongside prescriptive grammars. Even native speakers who were found to use *weil* V2 themselves in conversations judged such clauses to be grammatically incorrect. Indeed, Günthner (1993: 40) found this variation to be used less in formal interaction, as speakers paid more attention to the 'correct way' of speaking, in contrast to its frequency in informal conversation.

The use of *weil* V2 was highly criticized, especially in cases of native German-speaking prominent public figures or professionals who made their living with language (such as journalists and authors), as well as in letters to the editor and public discussion. Many of the general population in Germany also objected to *weil* V2. Some objected so strongly that an initiative called *Rettet den Kausalsatz* (save the causal clause) was founded in Hamburg (Matenaar 1996). Though this variation was noted to occur with increasing frequency in spoken German, transgressors were reminded of their public role and the example that they set (in Uhmann 1998: 93). This "mistake", while categorized

as grammatically incorrect--and verb last, subordinate clauses described as the proper use of *weil* clauses--was previously virtually unrecognized in prescriptive grammars (Günthner 1993: 38). The Duden *Grammatik*, a well-established prescriptive German grammar, at first ignored the phenomenon of *weil* V2 altogether.[5] There was no mention of V2 clauses under causal conjunctions and *weil* until 1984, some 10 years after it had begun making waves in linguistic and non-linguistic circles alike, and despite its increasing usage in everyday conversation (Günthner 1993: 38).

Slowly, the phenomenon of *weil* V2 clauses started to appear in grammars under the heading of *weil*, where it was stated that the conjunction still required verb-last (VL) word order, the correct form to be used after *weil*. Clauses with V2 order were considered 'incorrect' according to the Standard, and restricted to spoken German (vernacular). The 1998 edition of the Duden grammar, *Die Grammatik,* mentions V2 word order and, citing contemporary literature, notes that it is a possible spoken variation for *weil* – restricted to the vernacular (*Duden: Die Grammatik* 1998: 406 §731). V2 *weil* is said here to be followed by a pause in such instances (earlier considered indicative), and is considered a form of ellipsis (Scheutz 2001: 114; Uhmann 1998: 104; Haller-Wolf 1999: 91).[6] Linguists have criticized these descriptions as both simplistic and imperfect, as they do not take syntactic restrictions for V2 into account, nor is this phenomenon a case of ellipsis[7] (Uhmann 1998: 104).

Where *weil* with V2 word order is not outright labeled as incorrect, it is often branded as dialect-specific, a feature of southern German and Austrian vernaculars. It

[5] The Duden collection of prescriptive dictionaries, grammars and reference works, named after Konrad Duden, is considered the authority on the German language. http://www.duden.de/ueber_duden/

[6] Where for example, something like "...and the reason I ask/say this is because..." is implied.

[7] Uhmann (1998: 104) notes that, aside for the implausible analysis, the *Grammatik* fails to note that syntactic ellipses are not marked by pauses as a general rule, and certainly not when they are 'noticeable'.

has been argued that this feature is more pervasive in southern German varieties, in comparison to the relatively little evidence found in northern Germany. This 'tendency' has been described as a characteristic of the Leipzig dialect (Baumgärtner 1959), as a southern German variant (Boettcher & Sitta 1972), and even claimed to be part of Austrian syntax (Wessely 1981 in Günthner 1993: 38, 39), and the assumption that V2 was more likely to be found in dialects held its ground for some time. It was thus regarded as an "acceptable" variation within the realm of spoken dialects, which are not bound by standard norms. Speakers could therefore be forgiven the ungrammaticality of *weil* V2 as a dialectal feature, but were expected to adhere to *weil* VL in standard language.

In addition to being considered "incorrect", *weil* with V2 word order has been argued to have caused the demise of the causal conjunction *denn* (because) in spoken German, which is also followed by main clause word order and functions as a coordinating conjunction. It has been claimed that the increasing use of *weil* V2 in spoken German has taken the place of *denn* as a causal conjunction with the same word order, such that its use decreased as *weil* was used more and more. Pasch (1997) has especially argued this point, claiming that *denn* was widely used as a causal conjunction in northern Germany up to the end of the 1960s (in Uhmann 1998: 132), in contrast to literature that notes the relatively little use of *denn* as a causal conjunction in spoken German (Günthner 1993: 54, Uhmann 1998: 96). Uhmann (1998: 132) dismisses Pasch's claims that *denn* was in fact dominant in the north, and notes that *weil* V2 has merely taken the place in spoken German that *denn* fills in written German. Uhmann (1998: 132) also states that *denn* has not been lost as a lexeme, but is found to be used as

a modal particle rather than causal conjunction (Uhmann 1998: 100).[8] Linguists have discussed the retreat of *denn*/takeover of *weil* V2 at some length. It has been shown that in those areas where *denn* had supposedly fallen out of use, it proved to be used relatively little or not at all as a causal conjunction in spoken German, especially in southern Germany. Rather, *denn* was to be found frequently in written language, and found used as a time adverbial in conversations.

In addition for the apparent loss of *denn*, *weil* V2 has also been cited for the demise of *weil* followed by a subordinate clause, and of subordinate clauses in general (Eisenberg 1986: 37). Weinrich (1984) had predicted that verb-second word order would take hold in German, and even replace verb-last word order in the wake of *weil* V2's increased usage (in Günthner 1993: 37). He echoes other language purists and preservers, who claim VL word order will fall victim to V2 order as the use of main clause word order increases, and even goes so far as to predict that subordinate word order itself would eventually be choked out (Weinreich 1984: 37). Günthner (1993: 39), however, argues that it is simplistic to declare that subordinate word order will disappear in the wake of this new phenomenon, if for no other reason than the fact that language is too complex for such a simplistic explanation. She further points out that subordinate word order and clauses enjoy continued and significant use in spoken German, as evidenced by many other subordinating conjunctions such as '*dass'* (that), '*ob'* (whether) and '*als'* (as) to name a few examples. These conjunctions still cause subordinate clauses and do not lead one to surmise subordinate word order has been lost (Günthner 1993: 38). Indeed, it has been noted that out of some 40 German subordinate

[8] The same case is noted for *da* (because), found in corpora as a modal particle rather than causal conjunction (Uhmann 1998:100).

conjunctions, there are only two, possibly three, conjunctions that, aside from *weil*, have two possible word orders (Günthner 1993: 39).[9]

Recent Literature

The discussion on the use of *weil* and other subordinating conjunctions among linguists and in the literature has produced many different hypotheses. These hypotheses and many claims regarding the use of *weil* V2, however, have often gone unsupported by empirical data. A portion of earlier literature has been non-variationist in nature, in which the authors who discussed *weil* at some length provided self-constructed or borrowed examples to support their claims - but not spoken data (see Eisenberg 1986; Weinreich 1986; Küper 1991; Wegener 1993, 1999; Häcker 1994; Willems 1994; Keller 1995 and Pasch 1997). As such, their discussion was unable to provide strong evidence to support claims regarding *weil*. In contrast, there have been a number of variationist studies carried out to examine the use of *weil* among German speakers, reaching back as far as Eisenmann in 1973 (see also Gaumann 1983; Schlobinski 1992; Günthner 1993, 1998; Dittmar 1997; Scheutz 1998, 2001; and Uhmann 1998). These studies systematically analyzed a certain amount of recorded, spoken data from a defined group of speakers (the corpus). They defined the linguistic variable(s) for their analysis (i.e. *weil*) and looked at all occurrences of its variants (i.e. V2, VL) within their corpus. Based on what speakers actually did during conversation, this data provided empirical evidence about the frequency with which *weil* V2 was used among speakers from various regions, and could better refute or support previous claims about the use of *weil*.

[9] This tendency has been noted to some degree with the conjunctions '*obwohl'* (although) and *wobei* (whereby). See Günthner 1993, 1996 and 2000.

As a result of such studies, *weil* with V2 word order is no longer considered dialect-specific. Though Scheutz (2001: 116) notes that this phenomenon seems more common in southern Germany and Austria[10], it was not found to be restricted to particular dialect when corpora were compared. As Günthner (1993: 38) points out, this phenomenon goes beyond vernaculars as part of German as a whole language system, and adds that syntax--here, the choice of word order--cannot be treated as dialectal. Nor is this feature random or unpredictable as claimed in earlier literature, but rather follows particular rules and restrictions (Scheutz 2001: 113; Uhmann 1998: 102; Günthner 1996).

In addition, more recent literature finds the argument that *denn* has been replaced by *weil* as unlikely. As a causal conjunction, *denn* has been noted to be hardly used (if at all) in southern German, Swiss and Austrian dialects, and to be less popular in everyday conversation, symbolizing a more "official" use of language (Günthner, 1993: 54). Indeed, Uhmann (1998: 132) notes that *denn* was scarcely to be found in southern German, Swiss and Austrian corpora in a number of studies. This conjunction, generally unused in spoken German, is thus not likely in reality to be "replaced" by a conjunction that is in fact used frequently in spoken language: *weil.*

The hypothesis that there were two meanings for *weil*, such that *weil* with V2 word order and *weil* with VL order were considered two different conjunctions with two different structures, was also discussed in earlier literature on V2 *weil* (Küper 1991: 133). Keller (1993: 20) discusses these two variations as 'factual' and 'epistemic' *weil*, two semantically different conjunctions, from which speakers can choose to employ. He notes that epistemic *weil* was the "better" choice, and would eventually replace

[10] Küper notes that V2 is almost standard in Austrian dialects, according to Weiss (1975): cited 1991: 144.

subordinate (VL) word order, which was inadequate in light of what V2 order allowed speakers to express (Keller 1993: 28). Willems (1994: 276), however, strongly admonished this notion, which has been ultimately discarded. *Weil* VL and *weil* V2 are now considered two variants of one conjunction, rather than two distinct conjunctions (Uhmann 1998: 94; Willems 1994: 275). It was further argued that *weil* had not changed in meaning, as Keller had earlier suggested (Willems 1994: 261; Uhmann 1998: 46, 94). Williams (1994: 271) rightly points out that it was not *weil* that was changing, but rather the structure that followed it. Discussion also focused on whether *weil* operated in the content, epistemic, or speech act domain, which was considered relevant for V2 and VL word order (Günthner 1996).

In each of these three domains, *weil* was understood to function in a different way. A *weil* clause operating in the content domain provided a reason for the proposition (or content) in the main clause (Günthner 1996). In the speech act domain, the *weil* clause gave a causal explanation of the preceding speech act (the main clause) (ibid.). A speech act, or illocutionary act, is an action performed by an utterance (Searle 1985: 1). Examples of speech acts include propositions, questions, orders, warnings and promises, among others. Speech acts are said to have their own illocutionary force, which is the speaker's intention behind the production of an utterance (Searle 1985: 1). For example: to request, demand, ask, warn, or promise. As such, *weil* clauses operating in the speech act domain, in addition to giving an explanation for the preceding speech act, are said to have their own illocutionary force, different from the speech act of the main clause (Günthner 1996).

It was argued that VL (subordinate) word order was used where the *weil* clause appeared in the content domain of *weil*, whereas *weil* V2 was to be found in the epistemic and speech act domains. Thus word order was assigned by function: when the causal conjunction denoted the reason for a fact (content), it took subordinate word order, and took V2 order when it marked a belief or conclusion (epistemic) – i.e. why speaker knows or thinks something - or performs another, independent speech act. In terms of syntax, Keller and Wegener (cited in Scheutz 2001: 133) propose that the difference between propositional and epistemic causality was in direct correspondence to the syntactic opposition of the VL vs. V2 clauses. Scheutz (2001: 133) points out, however that it is not the case that VL word order is fixed and specialized to propositional causality and V2 to epistemic causality. He also argues that there is no significant difference between epistemic *weil* and *weil* in the speech act domain, since 'epistemic' *weil* clauses also generally perform a separate speech act, and argues the case of syntactic integration as the condition for VL vs. V2 *weil* clauses (Scheutz 2001: 122). Furthermore, he notes that he found no empirical support for the hypothesis that V2 clauses are used exclusively, or even "in most cases", for epistemic purposes (Scheutz 2001: 123).

Another facet of the discussion on the two forms of *weil* was the difference between word orders, as it was argued that the term 'subordination' no longer adequately described *weil* clauses, and that the terms 'hypotaxis'[11] and 'parataxis' ought to be used for precision. These terms could describe clauses that were related in meaning but not in a relationship of dependency (Lehmann 1988: 182, in Schleppegrell 1991: 324). *Weil*

[11] Hypotaxis refers to the grammatical arrangement of sentence constructs, which are functionally similar but play an unequal role in a sentence. For example, subordinate clauses. Parataxis refers in grammar to the placing together of sentences, clauses or phrases without conjunctions.

clauses with VL word order were thus hypotactic (subordinate), and *weil* clauses with V2 order paratactic (coordinating). The dichotomy of theme vs. rheme[12] was introduced for *weil* clauses that paralleled the factual/epistemic distinction, where VL clauses are always thematic (containing known information) and *weil* V2 clauses are rhematic (containing new information) –as epistemic causality assumes the listener doesn't know what came before (Scheutz 2001: 115). It was noted also that thematic clauses only allow VL word order (Küper 1991: 138), and assumed that the theme/rheme difference (presumed known vs. new information) was a conditioning factor for the type of *weil* clause (Gaumann 1983, in Günthner 1996). While that generally is the case, Küper (1991: 138) notes that it is not decisive.

Another condition discussed at some length was the apparent role of intonation in the choice between *weil* V2 and VL structure. Küper (1991: 138) found that weil V2 usually follows the main clause when it has a rising intonation, or at least one that does not fall. Keller (1995) took this idea further and claims that VL word order follows clauses that end with a falling or level intonation and form one intonational contour, or unit (Wegener 1983, in Günthner 1996). In contrast, V2 word order was said to follow clauses with a final rising intonation so that at a whole sentence displayed two intonational contours. Thus, falling intonation indicated *weil* VL word order.

Finally, Pasch (1997) discusses a noticeable pause before the *weil* clause, as an indication for V2 word order. Pasch (1983: 125) also claims that this pause is an important *weil* V2 criterion alongside intonation. This claim was earlier repeated in prescriptive grammars such as the Duden *Grammatik* published in Germany as an

[12] The theme (or topic) of a sentence refers to what is being talked about, and the rheme (or comment) is what is being said about that topic. In the discussion of *weil*, the theme is generally considered to be 'old' information, whereas the rheme is 'new' or 'unknown' information.

explanation for *weil* V2 clauses. This claim, however, has since been discarded and pauses are no longer considered a condition of *weil* V2 (Uhmann 1998: 104; Engel 1995: 267; Schlobinski 1992: 335). Indeed, Scheutz (2001: 114) considers this thesis an oversimplification, noting that patterns are not conditions for *weil* V2, although they can reflect word order choice. For example, *weil* must not necessarily be followed by a pause, but a pause may reflect verb-second word order. This discussion had originally arisen from the assumption that *weil* VL and V2 were to be considered two conjunctions, which was later strongly rebutted in the literature. Rather than two different types of *weil*, it was argued that the VL and V2 *weil* clauses were two variations of the same lexeme that are not functionally equivalent (Günthner 1993: 55; Uhmann 1998: 94).

Semantic, Pragmatic and Syntactic Issues

Uhmann (1998: 94) points out that hypotactic *weil* clauses form one integrated speech act, while paratactic *weil* clauses together with their main clauses form two connected independent speech acts, but maintains that subordinate word order still exists as one of two variations for one meaning of *weil*. It has been pointed out in the literature that V2 clauses fulfill different pragmatic functions in comparison to VL clauses--excluding the notion of functional equivalence for the two variations--and that *weil* V2 clauses are not only epistemic in nature.

It has also been shown that *weil* V2 exists in both factual (i.e. content) and non-factual (i.e. epistemic) contexts. Non-factual cases--cases of epistemic causality and independent speech acts--are easily recognized, but *weil* V2 may also be found in cases of factual causality, where it still expresses a reason for the preceding main clause and is

at the same time a separate speech act, in contrast to Keller's earlier claims. Uhmann (1998: 118) notes the functions of VL and V2 *weil* clauses in greater detail: *weil* VL can only give a reason on the propositional level for the content (or 'fact') of the preceding clause; *weil* V2 clauses have more possibilities: they can give a reason for why the speaker assumes in the main clause assertion[13] and can also give reason for propositional content in the main clause in the same way *weil* VL does.

It has been noted that *weil* with V2 word order corresponds in spoken German to *denn* (because) as it is used primarily in written language, and may therefore fill a gap that exists in spoken language (Haller-Wolf 1999: 92). In this way, *weil* V2s "replacing" *denn* would be a logical, natural speaker phenomenon, as without *denn* speakers would look for a way to express themselves in conversation in the same way they do in writing. Reinforcing this claim, Uhmann (1998: 110) notes the role that internal and external syntax plays in the choice of *weil* VL or *weil* V2, and that strongly integrated clauses will be strongly connected pragmatically and semantically.

In the discussion on functional equivalence, it has been shown in the literature that the semantic meaning and discourse-pragmatic function of clauses will determine VL/V2: which structure is allowed and its interpretation (Günthner 1993: 40). Günthner (1993: 38) argues that the examination of discourse-pragmatic functions shows that *weil* VL and V2 are not interchangeable, nor do they share the same functions, such that one cannot allude to a general tendency to V2/main clause word order in subordinate clauses. Günthner (1996) also notes that a specific *weil* clause word order is used for particular discourse-pragmatic reasons.

[13] For example: I think/assume p, because q (where there is plausible causal relation, inferable fact) Uhmann 1998: 118.

It has been emphasized that *weil* V2/VL structures have particular functions and express certain things: *weil* V2 gives a reason for the conclusion a speaker came to, rather than the reason for a proposition–the reason for knowing or asserting the main clause proposition, not reason for fact of that clause. This follows Uhmann's (1998: 120) hypothesis that *weil* VL is one integrated speech act in two clauses, and that *weil* V2 clauses have their own illocutionary force (independent of the preceding clause) to form two speech acts. Günthner (1996) adds that there is a strong clausal connection to discourse-pragmatic function. *Weil* V2 has also been noted to perform pragmatically as a floor-holding device in conversation, to indicate that a speaker is not yet finished (Günthner 1993: 35). Günthner (1993: 54) notes that *denn* was never found to be used as floor-holding device in her data, adding weight to the arguments that *weil* V2 and VL are not the same thing, nor is V2 driving *denn* out of use.

More recent literature on the case of spoken *weil* has emphasized the role of syntax to explain the use of *weil* V2. Some linguists have noted the abundant examination of semantics, and the role of syntax in this discussion. Uhmann (1998: 95) claims that more emphasis needs to be placed on syntax, which has too often been ignored in the literature. In her syntactic hypothesis and analysis, Uhmann (1998: 111) notes the specific structures that VL and V2 clauses form, and the syntactic positions that *weil* VL and V2 may and may not take in a sentence because of syntactic rules and restrictions. *Weil* clauses are now widely recognized to be restricted in their use. Firstly *weil* V2 can only appear in post-posed *weil* sentences (Scheutz 2001: 113; Uhmann 1998: 102; Günthner 1996)**.** Secondly, pre-posed *weil* clauses must always be followed by VL/main clause word order, as dictated by both syntax and semantics (one must complete

the idea!). This clause will naturally be thematic, as it must finish the preceding incomplete (dependent) thought.

Upon deeper analysis of the role of syntax regarding *weil* V2 and VL, a number of linguists have noted the significance of syntactic integration for *weil* V2 clauses. They have pointed out a direct relation between the semantic relation of clauses and the strength of their syntactic combination (Günthner 1993: 55). Thus, semantic and syntactic closeness or integration is related to the choice of VL or V2 word order after *weil.* As such, *weil* VL clauses have a closer semantic relationship to the preceding clause,[14] while V2 order demonstrates a looser relationship (Scheutz 2001: 111). Scheutz (2001: 112) notes that syntactic integration decides V2 or VL, as do the formal and functional properties of each *weil* clause. He also emphasizes the role that syntactic integration plays in the textual cohesiveness and relative dependence or independence of *weil* clauses (Scheutz 2001: 129). As a cohesive measure, both types of *weil* clauses can be employed to maintain internal as well as external textual cohesion (Scheutz 2001: 130). Subordinate word order maintains sentence-internal cohesion, while main clause *weil* clauses maintain external cohesion, as in the case of adding ideas to ones previously given.

Finally, Uhmann (1999: 116) identifies clear syntactic differences between *weil* VL and *weil* V2, and shows that this conjunction may be used in particular, separate circumstances, and functions as other subordinate and main clause conjunctions do. She further notes that *weil* V2 acts like *denn* in written German, allowing each syntactical frame (coordinating and subordinating) to have a causal conjunction for its use (ibid.).

[14] Günthner also notes a close togetherness of clauses is a condition for *weil* V2 (1993: 49).

The Advantages of Two Variants

Over time, the conjunction *weil* with verb-second word order has come to be acknowledged not only in the literature but also in prescriptive German grammars such as *Die Grammatik* by Duden. This would indicate that this variant of *weil* is indeed used frequently by a substantial number of native speakers. Linguists have noted that two variations for one conjunction offer more expressive opportunities to speakers. Günthner (1993: 55) notes that *weil* V2 represents an important means of discourse that signals the dependency relationship between clauses and their semantic interpretation. She also notes that these two syntactic options are resources, which speakers may exploit in order to communicate specific discourse-pragmatic meaning (Günthner 1996).

Three main advantages of the *weil* V2 variant have been pointed out: 1) Increased expressive possibilities, including *weil* V2's highlighting function (Hackstein 2006); 2) Speakers are able to add comments to, or express their attitude toward what they just said; and 3) Speech economy. The function of *denn* in written German may be used in spoken language via *weil* V2, allowing speakers to express themselves the same way in spoken as in written German without seeking out a new conjunction (Günthner 1996; Haller-Wolf 1999: 93). It has even been noted that these two variants may presently perform in the same way as the conjunction *wande* (because) in Middle High German, which also had two possible word orders (Sandig 1973: 42, in Gaumann 1983: 23). Whether the conjunction *wande* is in fact being used again in the form of *weil* is open to discussion, but the notion that this phenomenon is either a "mistake" or "poor language" cannot be supported in light of such literature. Further, it has been pointed out that this

very same phenomenon exists in both English and French,[15] with almost identical traits in terms of semantics, pragmatics and syntax and may therefore be seen as a natural language phenomenon (Uhmann 1998: 94).

Working with *weil*

In the most recent variationist study of *weil*, Scheutz (2001) outlines in detail the characteristics of spoken *weil* based on a corpus of over 400 *weil*-clauses. This corpus consisted of everyday conversations of 2-4 participants from a number of different areas in Upper Austria, who spoke colloquial Austrian German and a dialectal variety of middle Bavarian (Scheutz 2001: 116). After reviewing past research on *weil*, Scheutz goes on to support or refute popular theories regarding the semantic and pragmatic properties of *weil* V2, including the conviction of numerous linguists that *weil* clauses with verb-second and verb-last word orders fulfill mutually exclusive pragmatic roles. Supported by empirical data of everyday spontaneous speech, Scheutz (2001: 111) demonstrates that both types of clauses are used in propositional (factual) and epistemic clauses.

In his discussion of *weil*, Scheutz (2001: 127) outlines the semantic, pragmatic and syntactic characteristics of different *weil*-clauses, and shows the various ways in which German native speakers use *weil*. In addition to VL and V2 clauses used for propositional and epistemic reasons, he found that *weil* might also be used as a discourse particle in the form of a floor-holding device (ibid.). Scheutz's findings of *weil* in his corpus are outlined in the following sections.

[15] English 'because' and French 'parce-que', also used in epistemical ways and as floor-holding device as well as purely clausal conjunction (Uhmann 1998, Schleppegrell 1991).

weil Clauses with Verb-Last Word Order

Propositional *weil* clauses, which made up the majority of verb-last (VL) clauses in Scheutz's data, were shown to have a cohesive intonation (either falling or level), the primary accent of the sentence in the *weil* clause, and a final feature (clause) that was semantic in nature. He notes that the "*weil* clause constitutes a sufficient condition for accepting the state of affairs in the matrix clause as true" (Scheutz 2001: 117). In other words, the *weil* clause is evidence or the reason for the preceding clause. He also notes, however, that main clauses with falling intonation were also found in the corpus. Furthermore, such intonational patterns were found in epistemic VL clauses as well, which demonstrated that this intonational pattern may be indicative of verb-last clauses, but not a condition for them (Scheutz 2001: 120).

Scheutz (2001: 120) also notes how VL clauses are (most) often used as cohesive devices to facilitate topic and conversation continuation, and that the syntactic dependency of VL clauses demonstrates how close ideas expressed in *weil*-clauses are to the preceding clause(s). Non-propositional *weil* clauses were those "where the *weil* clause does not account for the proposition of the preceding main clause but instead states the evidence which serves as the speakers reason for the assertion of the main clause" (Scheutz 2001: 118). This assertion, then, is not a reason for the content of the main clause, but rather a justification for the assertion made in the main clause. Scheutz gives the following example:

(3) A: da war i aber erst ein jahr alt.
I was just a year old then

B: naja (-) mhm (--) ganz klein bist [halt dort
yeah mhm you were pretty small

gewesen
then

A: [jaja (--) ja
yeah yes

weil wir (-) **weil** wir ein jahr beim binder <u>waren</u>
because *we* ***because*** *we were at Binder's for a year*

In this example, speaker A expresses a belief (that he was a year old then), where the reason for the main clause assertion is expressed in the *weil*-clause. Scheutz (2001: 122) notes that non-propositional clauses deviate from the norm, and that genuine epistemic cases are rare. He also states that most non-propositional cases can be classified as pseudo-causal or as a metacommunicative comment, where the clause serves to explain the reason for the speaker's contribution to the discourse (Scheutz 2001: 123).

Some linguists have made the distinction between epistemic clauses and a speech act conjunction which also holds its own illocutionary force (see Sweetser, 1990; Küper, 1991; Gaumann, 1993), but Scheutz (2001: 122) sees no substantial difference between the two, since in both cases the main clause is an assertion or belief for which the *weil*-clause provides justification. He notes that the only difference between the two would be that *weil* clauses in speech acts can also be connected to non-asserting main clause speech acts (such as questions, assumptions, advice-giving, etc.) (Scheutz 2001: 122).

weil Clauses with Verb-Second Word Order

Despite previous arguments to the contrary, Scheutz (2001: 124) found that verb-second (V2) clauses were used predominantly to express propositional causal

relationships, where the speaker "explains the reason for the proposition in the main clause. For example, one might say "The reason I don't want to go is because....", as in the following:

(4) A: er is zwar gleich kommen, (-)
he came immediately

hat gsagt, i muss mit neue reifen kommen. (-)
and said I have to come with new tires

aber i kann bis morgen net,
but by tomorrow it is impossible

weil i muss mirs erst (-) besorgen.
***because** I have to buy them first*

Here the speaker gives the reason for why he cannot come with new tires: he first has to purchase them (Scheutz 2001: 124). Scheutz notes here that pauses did not prove to be obligatory in V2 clauses in his data (Scheutz 2001: 124). Though pauses were present, they were not a condition for V2 word order**,** and rarely found to follow *weil* in VL clauses**.** Scheutz (2001) argues that *weil* V2 is important in its role as the instigator of syntactically and pragmatically independent utterances, which reflect a preference for reduced syntactic complexity in spoken discourse; and that it opens up possibilities for syntactic organization and differentiation of information structure that autonomous structures have. He discusses the conversational function that the phenomenon of "left-dislocation" in *weil* V2 clauses, where speakers move specific information closer to the beginning of the main clause (Scheutz 2001: 124). This allows for the pre-posing of contrastive elements, resuming a previous reference, establishing new topics and even embedding complement clauses, and may look ahead by functioning in a potentially turn-expanding manner (Scheutz 2001: 125-126).

Scheutz's data also revealed *weil* V2 clauses that established epistemic causal relationships. In these clauses, a claim may have been corroborated or supported by supplying presuppositions or assumptions (of the speaker) as evidence for the previous clause (Scheutz 2001: 126). Scheutz (2001: 126) notes that the syntactic and illocutionary independence of the *weil*-clause is evident in these instances. The *weil*-clause is therefore independent of the preceding clause, as in this example:

(5) A: der war a achtevierziger. oder a neunervierziger
he was born in the year forty-eight or forty-nine

jahrgang sowas war er. (-)
something like that

B: ach so
really

A: ja. **weil** i (-) bin fuffzig
*yeah **because** I was born in fifty*

In this example, the *weil*-clause gives evidence to support A's assertion regarding when someone was born, rather than giving a reason for what is said in that assertion (Scheutz 2001: 126). Furthermore, Scheutz (2001: 124) observed no noticeable differences in intonational pattern of VL versus V2 *weil*-clauses, in comparison to the claim that *weil* VL clauses necessarily have a falling or level intonation and V2 clauses have a rising intonation (see Küper 1991).

In his data, Scheutz (2001: 127) found *weil* to also have an important function as a floor-holding device (*weil* FH), indicating speaker continuation. In these clauses, the conjunction *weil* is semantically empty and does not express a causal relationship, but is used rather to maintain the flow of conversation by signaling general syntactic continuation or establishing cohesion. A speaker uses *weil* here as a signal that he/she

intends to hold the conversational "floor" and continue speaking. In this way, the conversation may avoid gaps or long pauses, although short pauses may be found after *weil*. Scheutz (2001: 130) points out that there is strong evidence for this hypothesis, as speakers waited for their interlocutors to continue after *weil* FH and indicated their recognition of *weil* functioning in this way. The following example comes from the present study's data:

weil as a floor-holding device, Waterloo corpus, pre-1970 speaker from Lower Silesia

(6) INT: warum (.) warum sind sie hierher gekommen?
why (.) why did you come here?

Ilse: **weil**(.) **weil** auch deutsche (.) die da da war (.)
***because** (.) **because** Germans also that were there*

da war (.) ähm ## plumber (.) was ist das #
were there um ## plumber what is that

INT: [klempner
plumber

Ilse: [installat – ja klempner
plumb- yes plumber

In this example, the speaker Ilse wants to continue her turn, but experiences difficulty when she is unable to find the German word for plumber. She uses *weil* here to hold her turn in the conversation as she searches for the right word, which is further evidenced by many pauses and halting speech.

Finally, Scheutz (2001: 130) notes that broken or incomplete *weil*-clauses make up 15% of his corpus. For him, this is demonstrative of thought processes and the connective function of *weil*, where speakers add afterthoughts to the conversation. He notes that these clauses are often broken off immediately after *weil*, a fact that was noted in the present study's data as well.

This section has summarized the literature on *weil*, which focused on the use of this conjunction in Germany and Austria. The following section will look at the so-called German-Canadians, who immigrated to Canada from various German-speaking areas in Europe. It will discuss who they are, and the history of both German-Canadians and the German language in Canada over the past three centuries.

GERMAN-CANADIANS

The "Germans"

The terms *Reichsdeutsche* (Imperial German), for Germans who were born and grew up within the boundaries of the German Reich as it was before 1945, and *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic German), for Germans who were born and grew up outside the boundaries of the German Reich as it was before 1945, have been used to describe two groups of people who share the German language--and usually another German dialect as well--as their mother tongue (Bassler 2009). These terms have been used to identify German people by their place of birth, as citizens of the German *Reich* (empire) - including Germany itself and areas that once belonged to the Prussian Empire. These terms became both problematic and disfavoured due to their association with National Socialism, and the Nazi ideology of a dominant German Reich and a superior race. The term *Reichsdeutsche* referred to citizens born within the former German Empire, including Prussia, East Prussia and Silesia. The term *Volksdeutsche* referred to citizens of the German Reich who lived in countries that had never belonged to Germany - including many speech islands in Eastern Europe where they were isolated areas of German native speakers living in areas with a different dominant language. These so-called 'displaced Germans' lived in eastern European countries such as Russia, the Baltic lands (Lithuania and Latvia), former Prussia and parts of the Czech Republic, Serbia, Slovakia and Romania.

As a result of the connotation these terms took on with Nazism, *Reichdeutsche* can no longer be used to refer to people of German descent without implying the Nazi ideology. Immigrants among the so-called *Reichsdeutsche* may in fact refer more often

to their geographic origin within Germany and instead call themselves, for example, Bavarian, Swabian, Palatine or Saxon (Bassler 1991: 7). The term *Volksdeutsche*, however, may still be used to identify people of German descent from eastern European countries. Indeed, participants in my study referred to themselves as *Volksdeutsche* when talking about their origin in a number of interviews. For these people, this term seems to have much less of a negative connotation than *Reichsdeutsche*, associated rather with the fact that they were people of German-speaking communities, with German schools, churches and community, outside the borders of Germany. It is an acknowledgement that while they may not have German citizenship, they still feel connected with Germanness in many ways, including language.

In order to acknowledge this connection, the term 'Germans' is used in this study to refer not only to immigrants from the Federal Republic of Germany, but also to German-speaking immigrants from across Europe. Indeed, English speakers might use the term "German" to refer to peoples from West Prussia and Mecklenburg, the former Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires or East Prussia, from the Sudetenland (in the present-day Czech Republic), Transylvania (Romania), the Federal Republic of Germany and the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), from Austria, Saxony, the Baltic countries, or anywhere along the Danube river (Prokop and Bassler 2004: 8-9). The speakers who refer to themselves as German[16] in the data used for this thesis hail from the Sudetenland, East Prussia, Hungary, Austria, Poland, western Germany and the former GDR.[17] Canada has a long history of immigration of native German speakers from the above-mentioned areas in Europe, reaching as far back as the 17th century.

[16] With the exception of Nils, who notes proudly that he is Austrian, all other participants referred to themselves as German, some even directly stating that they would never deny their German identity.
[17] The German Democratic Republic

Indeed, people of German descent can claim more than three centuries of permanent presence in Canada (Bassler 1991: 4). These people from Germany and other parts of Europe historically shared a common language, often the learned standard, written High German,[18] in addition to regional dialects such as low German, Transylvania Saxon[19] or Danube Swabian, which they brought with them to Canada and used in the home (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 260). Bongart (1977: 27) notes that in the Kitchener-Waterloo area of Ontario in 1974, 25% of people of German descent spoke High German, while the remainder spoke a Hessian, Alsatian, Palatine, Swabian, Saxon or Transylvania Saxon dialect.

From the 17th – 19th centuries, many German-speaking peoples came to Canada because of war--either in Europe or North America--many of whom originated from southern Germany (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 229). Migration had already been taking place in Europe, after the Hapsburg dynasty directed the migration of the Swabian people from Baden-Württemberg and the Palatinate regions of Prussia to southeastern Europe, Catherine the Great invited people from Hessen to the Volga areas of Russia, and Alexander I brought people from Baden-Württemberg, Alsace-Lorraine and Hessen to southern Russia (Liebbrandt 1977: 23). North America, however, became the ideal land for many migrating people, and many came willingly in the search for a better life. They came even after the governments of the German states of Baden, Württemberg and Hessen had shipped its people to Quebec and New Brunswick in response to terrible conditions in Europe, including widespread famine and poverty (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 229). From the 19th century on, social and economic conditions in Europe including civil

[18] Referred to as *Hochdeutsch* or *Schriftsprache* (written language) in German.

[19] Though called *Sächsisch* by participants, this is not the same dialect as the German Saxon. Rather it is a Transylvanian/Romanian dialect (Dailey-O'Cain & Liebscher 2009: 211)

unrest and unemployment further pushed German-speaking peoples to Canada (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 229). A continual influx of immigrants began after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, which had devastated the land and left many within Germany's borders with almost nothing to look forward to. People were left with little arable land, and faced over-population and famine as they were exploited at the hands of despot rulers (Liebbrandt 1980: 24). Many came to North America in search of land, freedom and opportunity. As Bassler (1991: viii) points out some two to three hundred years later, the resulting presence of German-speaking pioneers and settlers can be traced to every region in Canada, and their contributions to Canada's growth visible in every stage of Canadian history.

As such, Canada's history is also a history of German-speaking immigrants. In 2006, Canada was still home to just over 3 million people of German descent, about 9% of its population.[20] The provinces of Alberta and Ontario in particular owe their foundation and growth to the German-speaking people who settled there, and are bound in German history, as it were. Bassler (1991: 4) has noted that groups of settlers opened up and developed much the country, and may even be called co-founders of Canada. Census figures have shown that people claiming German descent are one of the largest ethnic groups from coast to coast in every part of Canada, and form Canada's largest and oldest non-French, non-British and non-native ethnic group (Bassler 1991: 3, vii). The present study takes its focus in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario and Edmonton, Alberta,

[20] Total figure for single and multiple responses. Single ethnic origin responses was 670,640 and the number of multiple ethnic responses was 2,508,785. Retrieved from: http://www12.statcan.ca:80/english/census06/data/topics/RetrieveProductTable.cfm?ALEVEL=3&APATH=3&CATNO=&DETAIL=0&DIM=&DS=99&FL=0&FREE=0&GAL=0&GC=99&GK=NA&GRP=1&IPS=&METH=0&ORDER=1&PID=92333&PTYPE=88971&RL=0&S=1&SUB=0&ShowAll=No&StartRow=1&Temporal=2006&Theme=80&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=&GID=837928. Accessed on October 21, 2009.

where German influence has been and still is particularly predominant. The term 'Germans' will hereafter be used in this thesis to refer to native German speakers or German-speaking immigrants.

The 'Germans': Ontario, Canada

The province of Ontario owes much to the Germans, and in particular the first large group of immigrants called the Hessians, who came to fight in the War of 1812 and stayed to settle in different areas of eastern Canada (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 233). These highly skilled professionals, intellectuals, artists and craftsmen, who were trained and further disciplined through war, contributed much to the Canadian economy; not only when they settled here by marrying and having large families, but also through their many businesses, starting as many as 27 industrial firms between 1852 and 1870 (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 240). As Bongart (1977: 26) notes that in the city of Berlin,[21] especially in the second half of the 19th century, there was rarely a business or industry that hadn't been founded by European-born Germans or people of German descent. The War of 1812 had also driven so-called German loyalists and Swiss Mennonites in the United States to migrate north because of their aversion to war and war sympathies, to search for land for themselves and future generations (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 232, 233). Many of these people settled in the Niagara, Toronto, Ottawa and Kitchener-Waterloo areas.

The combination of awful conditions in Europe and an abundance of Canadian land drew immigrants from the 1850s onward to Toronto, Kitchener and the Niagara region as well as other rapidly growing Canadian cities to form the first German-

[21] Renamed Kitchener in 1916.

Canadian urban communities (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 258). German settlers contributed to the steady growth of Canada in Niagara, St. Catherines, Welland, Vineland, Beamsville, Grimsby and Dundas in particular, who were attracted to the area by co-religionists (Liebbrandt 1977: 3). At one time, German immigrants made up 3-4% of Canada's entire male population (Bassler 2007: 2). Indeed, as Liebbrandt (1977: 13) points out, the townships of Woolwich and Wilmot in Waterloo country were the most densely populated in all of Upper Canada in 1825, with the exception of York (Toronto).

So many German nationals, Swiss Mennonites, Amish from Alsace-Lorraine, Russian Germans and *Volksdeutsche* from Eastern Europe settled in Canada that most major Canadian cities had German communities by the 1860s, literally shaping the face of many present-day towns and cities (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 238). Liebbrandt (1977: 28) notes that Pennsylvania Deutsch Mennonites were crucial for settlement, as they were the kind of colonizers that Canada as a young country needed, who loved the land and formed a resident population upon which an economy could be built. This settlement and the founding of Preston, Waterloo, and Ebytown (renamed Berlin in 1833 and Kitchener in 1916)[22] in Waterloo county attracted more German immigrants and played a vital role in the formation of these and other areas (Liebbrandt 1980: 10-11). To this day North Americans also have Germans to thank for a number of traditions including the Christmas tree, a German custom introduced in 1781 (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 230), *Oktoberfest* celebrations, and even the Easter Bunny (Bassler 1991: 1).

In Berlin (now Kitchener), Germans were recognized as a charter group by English Canadians until the First World War, with their strong sense of culture and

[22] See Bongart 1977: 25; Liebbrandt 1980: 11.

enduring sense of community (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 240). One could not overlook the numerous skills and strong work ethic of German-speaking immigrants. These people were entrepreneurs, professionals, artists and tradesmen, who brought their skills to Canada and soon formed a major part of the labor force from Halifax to Victoria (Bassler 2009). Bongart (1977: 26) notes that especially after 1948, a new influx of immigrants once more brought people of German descent who were academics, salesmen, technicians, tradesmen and workers trained in mining (especially among immigrants from Germany), who helped build the industry and infrastructure of the province.

Ontario, and in particular Waterloo County, is well known for its German heritage. The city of Kitchener is known for its yearly *Oktoberfest* celebration as well as the *Christkindlmarkt* (Christmas market) before Christmas, both of which continue to this day. Known at one time as New Germany, and even called *Deutschländle* (little Germany) by residents, this area was dominated by Germans until 1916 and the War (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 240). Having always been the "most attractive" province for German immigrants from both the German and Austro–Hungarian empires, Ontario owes much to those people who not only settled the land they carved out of forest, but also started many businesses, clubs and cultural events within the community, and organized many concerts, dances, parades and picnics as well as educational, cultural and charitable projects (ibid.). German-speaking immigrants were also present via German-language newspapers, radio and even television programs, numerous German clubs, and bilingual schools (Bongart 1977: 31-32).

In turn, Kitchener and many German-speaking immigrants themselves owe much to the Mennonites who originally settled and flourished in Waterloo county, whose love

for and good management of the land, hard work, and firm belief that language was integral to their faith anchored the area as "German", and attracted many more German immigrants for over a century (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 236). Their sense of community and hospitality, and the linguistic closeness of the Mennonites' Pennsylvania Dutch (low German) dialect to southern German dialects made many new immigrants feel at home in the area and encouraged further immigration (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 240). Waterloo County thus continued to preserve its German character as continued immigration helped keep German culture, customs and language alive. Credit for the settlement, continued immigration and survival of German culture is due for the most part to Mennonites who settled in the area. The existing settlements played a significant role in establishing the area and attracting additional immigrants, who found a place to come to where they could even continue to speak their own language (Liebbrandt 1980: 26). As Liebbrant (ibid.) writes, had it not been for the Pennsylvania German Mennonites who settled in the area, the influx of German farmers, artisans and skilled workers would hardly have taken place. In general, German-speaking immigrants outside of these areas quickly assimilated into Canadian life and did not retain their language and heritage to the same degree (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 238)

The 'Germans': Alberta, Canada

In western Canada, the province of Alberta has a long history of German-speaking settlers as well (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 80). Although it was the last Canadian province to be settled, with a much shorter history of settlement, Alberta shares similarities with Ontario in respect to immigration and the impact that German-speaking

immigrants have had on the development of the province. Settlers of German origin would eventually open up close to 90 previously unsettled areas all over Alberta, and were among the earliest farming pioneers in the province (Bassler 1991: 80-81). Indeed, Prokop & Bassler (2004: 80) consider them among the "founders of the social and economic fabric of the province." Over time, German-speaking immigrants and settlers came to be considered among the most preferred settlers in the province by both French and English Canadians alike (Bassler 1991: 82).

The late 19th century saw the beginnings of German settlement in Alberta with the founding of colonies in Pincher Creek in 1882, and later south of Medicine Hat in 1889 by some 630 Germans from Galicia (Bassler 1991: 80). Although later German-speaking immigrants would permanently settle in Pincher Creek around 1896 (Lehmann 1986: 240), many of the area's first settlers moved north after initial years of drought was compounded by an unfamiliarity with the land, which proved to be unsuited for mixed farming (Lehmann 1986: 247). Instead, they were able to settle further north, where the land was more suitable for farming, and in turn attracted more settlers to the area in the 1890s, including German-speaking immigrants from Ontario and the United States, up until 1897 (Lehmann 1986: 243).

This group of settlers founded Hoffnungsau and Rosenthal (near Stony Plain), Josephsberg (near Fort Saskatchewan), Heimthal, Lutherort (now Ellerslie), and Leduc, Bruderheim and Bruderfeld (near Edmonton), to name a few (Bassler 1991: 80). As a result of the migrations before 1896, the Edmonton-Wetaskiwin-Camrose triangle was first settled by German-speaking people, who were attracted to the area (ibid.). German-Americans who settled in Red Deer, Wetaskiwin and Leduc also brought large-scale

American migration to western Canada from 1893 on, so that both north and south of Edmonton became strongholds of German settlement after 1896 as more and more German-speaking co-religionists were attracted to the area (Bassler 1991: 80). The area south of Edmonton, along the Calgary-Red Deer-Wetaskiwin-Edmonton railway line, became the largest district of German settlement in Alberta (Lehmann 1986: 244). Lehmann (1986: 244) cites large numbers of Lutheran Germans from Russia, who founded the Heimthal colony, as well as Lutherort, Ellerslie, and Leduc. There were some 100 families in Leduc by 1904, and by 1911 German-speaking settlers had become the majority in that township on both sides of the Wetaskiwin-Edmonton railway line (Lehmann 1986: 244). Continued migration to the area gave German-speaking settlers prominence (the majority) not only in Leduc, which became the largest area of German settlement, but in 11 adjoining townships in 1911 as well (Bassler 1991: 80). Bassler (1991: 81) notes that between 1901-1911, the number of settlers in Alberta of German origin grew to 41,656 people, to make up 11% of the province's total population. Lehmann (1986: 245) also points out that immigration to Alberta's capital city of Edmonton was particularly strong 1895-1905, as the economic success of settlers attracted more immigrants to the area. In addition to German-speaking immigrants from Europe, Alberta also attracted Mennonites from Waterloo country as early as 1893, who settled in Didsbury. These people were later followed by more Mennonites from Ontario and the United States (Lehmann 1986: 239). German-speaking Hutterites from the United States also sought refuge in Alberta, establishing 12 communal farms in 1918, choosing to remain distanced from the rest of the population (ibid.)

The city of Edmonton, just north of Leduc, also attracted many immigrants and became chief destination of many Germans (Lehmann 1986: 245). By 1911 there were 1,650 Germans in Edmonton--approximately 19% of the city's population--a figure which nearly tripled to 4,983 two decades later (Lehmann 1986: 250). As in other Albertan cities, German-speaking merchants and entrepreneurs played a visible role in Edmonton's economy while German-speaking immigrants made up a sizeable portion of the industrial labour force in Alberta, such as in the coal mines of Lethbridge and Medicine Hat (Bassler 1991: 80). The area comprised of a strong German element from Germany itself, as immigrants from Germany operated large businesses and were managers in large firms, workers of all sorts and craftsmen, as well as small store owners (Lehmann 1986: 250). Among these were professionals and tradesmen, whose strong work ethic and skills contributed immeasurably to the development of Edmonton and other Albertan cities.

In cities with large numbers of German-speaking immigrants, as in Edmonton, Calgary[23] and Medicine Hat, German-speaking immigrants developed their own distinct neighbourhoods, a presence felt not only in business, but in every day activities as well (Bassler 1991: 80, 82). In addition to starting a number of businesses, German-speaking residents founded social clubs like the Edelweiss club (founded 1905) and *Gesangverein Germania* (founded 1908), organized activities such as German concerts, picnics, theatres, parades, started German language schools, and founded at least five weekly newspapers: three in Edmonton and two in Calgary (Bassler 1991: 82). As evidence of their strong sense of community and culture, German Days was started in 1928 to

[23] Calgary's population of German-speaking immigrants was slightly lower than in Edmonton (Lehmann 1986: 251)

celebrate German traditions, culture and language (History of 'German Days'). This celebration of cultural heritage lasted three days and featured choir performances, sports activities, folk dancing and even art displays, celebrated by settlers, their descendants, and non-Germans alike (History of 'German Days'). This social event in turn led to the foundation of more German clubs (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 57).

The Impact of War

Unfortunately German-Canadians and Canada share a sad history of war in the 20th century. Many things changed almost overnight for German-speaking immigrants in Canada during the First World War, as paranoia and distrust of anything German emerged within Canada (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 57). Although the compatibility of German customs and culture with those of English Canada had never been questioned, Germans almost overnight became considered alien enemies (Bassler 1991: 4). German-Canadians came to be judged not by their contributions to Canada, but rather by the events taking place in Europe (ibid.). German ceased to be taught as a foreign language when anti-German sentiments reached their peak in 1916, after which the German language was to be avoided (Bongart 1977: 30).

Newspapers were shut down or forced to print in English, and celebrations such as German Days in Edmonton ground almost to a halt as people were run out of business or lost their jobs (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 57). Despite an initial call from English-speaking Canadians for the fair treatment of "the Germans", internment camps were eventually set up, and immigration to Alberta and Canada was halted (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 58). Many German speakers sought to hide their German identity behind a

different one such as Dutch, Scandinavian or Russian (Bassler 2009). Although most, if not all, accusations against them were unfounded and false, most German-speaking citizens were economically ruined and ostracized socially by the First World War, and it took a long time before things returned to how they had been previously (Bassler 2009). To the present day, war has also overshadowed the significant contributions that German-speaking immigrants have made to Canada, which have gone unacknowledged for the most part in standard works on Canadian history (Bassler 1991: vii).

Not many years later another World War again led to a distrust for all things German, and caused many German immigrants to wonder if it was worth being in Canada. Eventually this War also came to an end and fears subsided, allowing for the return of German events and everyday life. Immigration eventually resumed, at first in a wave of *Volksdeutsche* from Eastern Europe, who had fled their homes or been expelled after the war by the Soviets (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 59). After immigration bans were lifted in 1950, tens of thousands of immigrants poured into Canada from divided Germany as well as central and eastern European countries - immigrants who had come to Canada and the U.S. via Germany or Austria. Immigrants of German origin overwhelmingly chose Ontario after World War II, due largely to existing German communities, though numbers have dropped since 1970s as more and more continued on to Alberta and British Columbia (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 241).

Present-Day German in Alberta and Ontario

Although there has been a decline in the immigration of German-speaking immigrants, bilingual German schools and Saturday schools in Ontario and Alberta still

exist, as well as local German-language newspapers, radio and television programs, and ethnic groups and clubs.

There has been an almost parallel decline or drop in the use of the German language,[24] for a number of reasons. Younger generations have either abandoned German in favor of English or did not grow up with German in the home, making it more difficult to maintain and later pass on as their heritage language. Group membership and participation in clubs and cultural events, as well as language use, had historically been strong in cities such as Edmonton and Kitchener due to large numbers of German immigrants and strong German-speaking communities. Indeed, Bongart (1977: 27) states that many German-speaking people who immigrated to Canada at a young age still had a firm command of the language, even at the age of 60, if they had spoken German as a child in the home, even if they spoke little to no German as an adult. This is, he notes, perhaps a result of the "German atmosphere" in Kitchener-Waterloo that seemed to keep the language alive (ibid). Lehmann (1986: 247) also notes that the Peace River colony in Alberta, founded in 1916, still had German priests at the time of publication, where the German language had been retained. Conversely, he notes accelerated Anglicization in areas without any German clergy, and that the willingness of German-speaking immigrants to make life in Canada work facilitated assimilation as well (ibid).

Understandably, things also changed as a result of war. Beyond that, however, many German immigrants simply assimilated well into Canadian life, which included adopting a new language. Scholars have noted that many immigrants "abandoned" or gave up their native language soon after immigrating, stating that they were "in Canada

[24] As an example, the 1971 census found 83,000 people in Ontario used German in the home compared to 41,000 in 1991 (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 260).

now" (Bassler 2009). [25] Liddell (1983: 41), for example, notes the "remarkable ability" of German-speaking immigrants to merge with Canadian society that suggested a strength of purpose to adopt the new world as home and take on Canadian customs in addition to their own.

A more recent picture of the linguistic situation reveals that in 1996 almost 30% of native German speakers lived in Toronto or Waterloo County (Ontario), though they were older speakers (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 249). For that same year, Kitchener was found to be the urban locality with highest number of people speaking German in the home (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 251). In Alberta, the number of people with German as a mother tongue grew 3% between 1991 and 1996, despite the fact that only 1% of children in Edmonton were growing up with German as a native language (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 76). This was due mainly to Alberta's Hutterite and Mennonite populations, who have continued to speak German in the home, since the number of native German speakers in Edmonton itself decreased by 6% (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 77). Indeed, the decreasing numbers of German native speakers found in the Edmonton and Kitchener-Waterloo areas point out a striking difference between rural and urban areas (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 259).

In spite of such figures, German is still quite present in Alberta and Ontario. In 2001, 100, 000 Albertans claimed to be able to conduct a conversation in German, almost 20% of whom were in Edmonton (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 80). In that same year, approximately 243,700 Ontarians said they could conduct a conversation in German if they had to (Prokop & Bassler 2004: 258). Moreover, events such as German Days in Edmonton and *Oktoberfest* in Kitchener still draw large numbers of participants, even to

[25] This was heard also in interviews – why they stopped speaking German in the home.

the extent that event-specific German words have long become part of residents' vocabulary (Bongart 1977: 28). Clubs such as the Concordia, Alpine, Transylvania, Schwaben clubs in Kitchener, the Concordia and German Club in Edmonton, and the German Cultural Association, German-Canadian Association and the Trans-Canada Alliance of German-Canadians[26] continue to celebrate, support and maintain German language, customs and culture to this day. One may still overhear people in various stores speaking German,[27] as German speakers from Europe continue to immigrate to Canada and German-Canadians pass on their native language. Further, many people, especially in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, can name relatives who still speak German and keep German customs and traditions. Even to the present, there are a good number of native German speakers in these areas who work to keep German language and culture alive.

This section has discussed the history of German-speaking immigrants and the German language in Canada. German-Canadians make up a large number of native speakers who live outside of, and isolated from, German-speaking countries in Europe. This group of speakers provides a corpus for the analysis of *weil* in this study. The next section discusses variationist methods of analysis, which inform this thesis, and their application to the use of *weil* in spoken German among German-Canadians.

[26] The TCA is a central German-Canadian institution that attends to the interests of all German-Canadians (Bongart 1977: 29).

[27] I have had numerous conversations with German-speaking immigrants, old and young, where I work in Edmonton in the past year and noticed German speakers in Kitchener-Waterloo while a student there for four years.

METHODOLOGY

Studying Variation

Linguists who carry out variationist studies in the field of sociolinguistics seek to find patterns between language variation and change and social factors based on observed data (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 88). Thus they allow for the examination of linguistic and social factors together, and how linguistic (or dependent) variables are affected by social (or independent) variables or factors (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 8). Studies like these look at social variables such as gender, social status, age, generation cohorts, distinct ethnic groups, and socially patterned variables among speakers (Milroy & Gordon 2003: 88). Linguists using a variationist approach aim to describe variation as naturally occurring in language, rather than treating language as invariant and designating variation as unstructured and of little theoretical value (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 8). These linguists treat variation as a variable and independent structural unit, and make reference to social and linguistic information in order to specify its constraints (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 4-5).

Using this approach, I defined the linguistic variable for my study, w*eil,* as consisting of three possible variants: *weil* with verb-second word order, *weil* with verb-final word order, and *weil* used as a floor-holding device (with no word order).[28] Cases of *weil* used as a floor-holding device differed semantically from instances of so-called broken *weil* clauses. There is no word order to speak of in cases of *weil* FH since speakers use the conjunction to hold their place in the conversation, where they might not continue with the preceding topic. In cases of broken *weil*, the topic is continued but

[28] When the conjunction *weil* is used in this way, there is no word order (either verb-final or verb-second) that follows in a causal relationship to that particular *weil*.

broken off or interrupted before the speaker is able to complete their thought, whereas *weil* as a floor-holding device serves to hold the speaker's place in order to continue on the same or a different topic. Most often it is in instances in which the interlocutor might take the conversational floor and the speaker wants to gain time. Broken *weil* tokens are followed by a clause of some length, whereas *weil* FH tokens are followed by most often by longer pauses, then a conjunction or preposition in order to continue the preceding thought, or a new sentence altogether. The following two examples will highlight this difference:

Floor-holding *weil*, Waterloo corpus, post-1985 speaker from Northern Germany

(7) Claudia: da muss ich erst mal nachdenken (.) **weil**
I have to think about that first (.) ***because***

hmm ## okay, kannst du das nochmal stellen
 # hmm ## okay, can you repeat the question

In this example, Claudia uses *weil* to keep her turn in the conversation after stating she had to think it over, which would otherwise be a place for her interlocutor to take a turn in the conversation.

Example of broken *weil*, Waterloo corpus, post-1985 speaker from Northern Germany

(8) Claudia: ich weiß eben noch viel mehr aus deutschland
I still know so much more about Germany

als die, **weil** die kaum +/. die haben
than they do, ***because*** *they hardly +/. they*

vielleicht +/. die sind vielleicht mit fünf
have maybe +/. they came here maybe when

jahren oder so mal ausgewandert
they were five years old or so

In this example, Claudia continues her thought but restarts her sentence twice in the process.

My social variables were identified as date of immigration to Canada and speaker origin; variables that I expected would affect the number of *weil* tokens that each speaker produced. Participants were divided into two groups by their date of immigration, and their spoken data was analyzed for the three possible variants of *weil*. These variants were coded as *weil* V2, *weil* VL or *weil* FH, and were then counted in the data to reveal how often each variant was produced by each speaker, in each group. The two groups were then compared to show differences among speakers, in light of the two social variables. In this way, I was able to examine the effect that the social variables of origin and date of immigration have on the use of *weil* among native speakers of German who have immigrated to Canada.

My Research Questions

The two research questions that are examined in this thesis are presented below:

1. Which, if any, differences exist in the use of the subordinating conjunction *weil* by native German speakers in Canada who immigrated over 50 years ago and those who came in the past 20 years?
2. Are these differences attributable to language contact, natural language variation or the loss of the subordinating clause in the German spoken by Canadian immigrants, as a result of living in Canada for so long?

The Present Study

In Canada, many languages co-exist in a population made up of numerous ethnic groups. Employing a variationist framework in my study allowed me to examine how

social factors such as the length of time in Canada (as measured by date of immigration) and origin affect the language of German-speaking immigrants, factors which are significant in understanding changes that may have occurred. These speakers are likely to use German differently from speakers in their native countries as a result of extended isolation from a German-language dominant community. Using a variationist approach, I was able to examine factors that affect how native German speakers in Canada use the conjunction *weil*. I wanted to examine which differences, or similarities, exist in the use of the subordinating conjunction *weil* by German speakers who immigrated to Canada over 50 years ago compared to those who came within the past 20 years, and whether differences indicate normal language contact, language change or the loss of the subordinate clause in Canadian German.

The Corpus

The data used in this study was taken from the German-Canadian project, which collected a corpus of spoken data of German-speaking immigrants to Canada and their descendants.[29] The cities in which data was collected are home to large German immigrant populations in Canada, and the largest numbers of native German speakers. The twin cities of Kitchener-Waterloo in Ontario had a population of 302,143[30] in 2006,

[29] The corpus was collected in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario and Edmonton, Alberta by Dr. Grit Liebscher and Dr. Jennifer Dailey-O'Cain as part of the SSHRC-funded research project 'German identity in urban Canada: A qualitative and quantitative study of language and discourse' (SSHRC#410-07-2202).

[30] This is the combined population of Kitchener (204, 668) and Waterloo (97, 475) together. Retrieved from (Kitchener): http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=3530013&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Kitchener&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom= . October 19, 2009, and from (Waterloo): http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=3530016&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Waterloo&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=. October 19, 2009.

of which 222, 470 (or 73.6%)[31] claimed German ethnic origin.[32] That same year, the metropolitan area of Edmonton in Alberta had a population of 1,034,945,[33] of which 196,575[34] (or 19%) claimed German ethnic origin.[35]

Ninety participants were interviewed about why they immigrated to Canada and their experience of German culture within Canada. These speakers originated from different regions in Germany and other German-speaking areas of Europe, including the Sudetenland (now the Czech Republic), Silesia, Poland, former East Prussia, Romania, Hungary and Austria. Conversations with native German speakers were recorded as part of this project, and demographic information such as biographical and linguistic background data was simultaneously collected via a background questionnaire.[36]

From the German-Canadian corpus, twenty-nine 1-2 hour interviews were obtained to form the corpus for this study's analysis. Thirty-three native German speakers participated in these interviews, which amounted to approximately 33.4 hours of

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[31] This number is the total of the combined numbers from Kitchener and Waterloo. Statistics for Kitchener retrieved from: http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/topics/RetrieveProductTable.cfm?ALEVEL=3&APATH=3&CATNO=&DETAIL=0&DIM=&DS=99&FL=0&FREE=0&GAL=0&GC=99&GK=NA&GRP=1&IPS=&METH=0&ORDER=1&PID=92333&PTYPE=88971&RL=0&S=1&SUB=0&ShowAll=No&StartRow=1&Temporal=2006&Theme=80&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=&GID=838006. October 19, 2009. Statistics for Waterloo retrieved from: http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/293601FE5DB4A6438525762E00631400/$file/Bulletin_8.pdf?OpenElement. November 9, 2009.

[32] This is the total number of single and multiple ethnic origin responses for Kitchener. Single origin responses totaled 47, 380 and the number of multiple origin responses was 77, 635. For Waterloo, single origin responses totaled 32,260 and the number of multiple origin responses totaled 84,535.

[33] Retrieved from: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=835__&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Edmonton&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=. October 19, 2009.

[34] This is the number of single and multiple origin responses for the city of Edmonton out of a total of 1,024,820 responses (%). The number of multiple origin responses was 157, 230. The number of single responses was 39, 345. Retrieved from: http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/demo27v-eng.htm. March 23, 2009

[35] In 2006 Alberta's total population totaled 3,256,355, of which 679,700 claimed German origin, based on single and multiple origin responses. Retrieved from: http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/demo26j-eng.htm. November 9, 2009.

[36] This project collected data to look at German identity in cities among German immigrants. The topic was therefore in no way related to mine and is a good representation of spontaneous speech. It was generously made available to me in the spring of 2008 by Dr. Dailey-O'Cain at the University of Alberta.

spoken data. Interviews selected for analysis were entirely or mainly conducted in German (at least 80%), where the interviewee was born in a German-speaking country, spoke German as their native language, and were approximately 20 years or older at time of immigration to Canada. This age was chosen to ensure that they had used German long enough to reflect the linguistic situation of their home area at that time.

The interviews were divided into two groups by year of immigration: before 1970 (pre-1970) and after 1985 (post-1985).[37] This cut-off date was chosen with the literature in mind, which cites the 1970s for the first systematic research on *weil* V2. Some have argued that this may have been the beginning point of this phenomenon, and I sought to look for differences among speakers before and after this time frame, as it might be argued that speakers did not use *weil* verb-second clauses before this time. One might then hypothesize that the pre-1970 group of speakers would use fewer (or none) *weil* V2 clauses, especially since immigration for all but one of the speakers in the group took place before 1960. If indeed it is the case that *weil* V2 came into use around the 1970s, the group that reflected the German of the 1940s and 1950s would provide a comparison in the development of *weil* V2 to post-1985 speakers, who reflect the present linguistic situation in Germany. The data itself fell roughly into these groups, as the interviews chosen for analysis came from participants who had immigrated between 1950-1965 or after 1990.

It must be noted that the majority of participants who immigrated before 1970 and after 1985 lived in Waterloo and Edmonton, respectively. This dichotomy was beyond my control and may have influenced the data. It is impossible to know to what extent

[37] Two interviews were excluded from analysis, where date of immigration was 1974 and 1976, respectively. These were excluded on the grounds that being in the middle of the division might skew results.

where participants lived influenced their language. I also noticed that most of the immigrants who came after 1985 achieved a much higher level of education (B.A., M.A., PhD) compared to those who came much earlier. This may have also had an effect on the data. However, all of the *Volksdeutsche* in the pre-1970 group spoke High German, in addition to their regional dialect (Saxon, Austrian etc.), since they grew up in German-speaking communities and went to German schools. All participants interviewed used Standard (or High) German as the interview language, which was flavoured by regional pronunciation and lexicon.

The Data and its Analysis

Each of the 29 interviews was analyzed for tokens of *weil*. All instances of *weil* were counted, regardless of word order, function or completion, for a total number of *weil* tokens. From this total, the number of broken *weil* clauses (where the clause was incomplete and could not be coded as either VL or V2) was subtracted for a total number of *weil* clauses. These clauses were then analyzed and coded as verb-last (VL), verb-second (V2) or as a floor-holding device (FH). Tokens of each type of *weil* clause were counted in each interview, for each speaker, and then totaled for individual *weil* token and *weil* VL, *weil* V2 and *weil* FH clause totals. The numbers for all speakers were then combined to obtain group totals for all these categories in both groups. Tokens of *denn* (because), *da* (since, because), *obwohl* (although) and *wobei* (whereby) were also coded and counted in the data for a more robust picture of the use of causal and subordinate conjunctions among speakers. Such data could provide additional information regarding earlier claims about the use and possible loss of causal *denn* and subordinate word order

following the subordinating conjunctions *da*, *obwohl*, and *wobei*. It was thought that this data could provide further (negative) evidence regarding how *denn* was used in spoken German and its apparent replacement by *weil*, and the extent of change in word order following three particular subordinating conjunctions.

The data were then analyzed to determine if there was a relation between the date of immigration to Canada (and, conversely, length of time in Canada), place of origin, and the use of the conjunction *weil*. Group totals were compared to each other to discover differences between the pre-1970 and post-1985 speakers. Totals were reanalyzed as a factor of *weil* tokens over the number of causal clauses in which *weil* could have been used. Speakers were then compared within their own group, to reveal the origin of speakers who used the most and fewest *weil* clauses, as well as who used more VL than V2 clauses, and vice versa. Following this analysis, independent T-tests were used to obtain statistics on differences within and between groups in the use of *weil*, in terms of pure numbers and in respect to place of origin. In this way, I was able to see whether or not speakers did use *weil* V2 before 1975 in everyday speech, whether length of time in an English-dominant community would affect how *weil* is used among German speakers, whether there is any difference in the use of *weil* among different generations of German speakers, and if any difference exists among speakers of the same generation but differing origin.

In this section, variationist methodology was discussed in relation to language change and its application in this study. The next section presents the findings of the analysis of the corpora.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Spoken *weil*

While this study differs in focus from Scheutz's 2001 variationist study of *weil*, his findings provided a starting point for analysis, against which I was able to note similarities and differences in the present corpus of immigrant native speakers of German. Would this analysis show that native German speakers who came from southern Germany and Austria use *weil* verb-second (V2) more often than speakers from more northern areas? This study's data could also show whether *weil* V2 was used among those who immigrated in the 1950s, and if so, whether they were related to an Austrian or southern German dialect. This data would therefore indicate how *weil* was used before the 1970s, when linguists began to systematically analyze *weil* V2, and show whether *weil* with V2 word order was used before that time, or if it has mainly come into use within the past 35 years.

The data in this study reflect the influence that prolonged isolation from one's home country has on the language of native speakers of German who have immigrated to Canada. It is likely that more recent immigrants to Canada would have results which resemble Scheutz's data, as they came after the phenomenon or *weil* V2 had been well established in a number of German-speaking areas, whereas immigrants who left German-speaking areas much earlier would be likely to produce far fewer *weil* V2 clauses, if any at all. Indeed, if speakers who have lived in Canada for many years produced high or higher numbers of *weil* V2 clauses, one might be led to conclude that this word order is the result of English influence on the German of Canadian immigrants. The scope of this study did not include ratios for propositional or epistemic *weil* clauses,

or intonational patterns, though pauses were noted in the corpus. This study sought to discover whether there were differences in *weil* VL and V2 usage among two groups of native speakers, who represent the German language as spoken in Germany at a particular point in time.

The Analysis of *weil*

Table 1: Total Numbers of weil Tokens and Clauses for both Groups

	Raw no. *weil* tokens	**Broken *weil* tokens**	**Total *weil* clauses**	**VL clauses**	**V2 clauses**	**FH *weil* tokens**
pre-1970	272	56 (20.59%)	216	126 (58.33%)	80 (37.04%)	10 (4.63%)
post-1985	537	75 (13.97%)	462	229 (49.57%)	187 (40.48%)	46 (9.96%)
Totals	809	131 (16.19%)	678	355 (52.36%)	267 (39.38%)	56 (8.26%)

It was immediately clear that post-1985 immigrants not only used *weil* V2 more often than the pre-1970 group, but also produced more than twice as many *weil*-clauses, averaging approximately 31.58 tokens per person compared to just over 17 per person in the pre-1970 group. This raised the question as to whether the pre-1970 group would also have a lower number of V2 *weil*-clauses overall. *Weil* V2 clauses did appear in pre-1970 data, although the ratio is lower: there were almost twice as many as VL clauses as V2. These numbers, however, must be considered in light of the total number of causal clauses in the data. While the post-1985 speakers used *weil* in 99% of causal clauses, pre-1970 speakers used *weil* only 78.6% (in 272 clauses from a total of 346) of the time, using the conjunctions *da* (since, because) and *denn* (because) as well.

Table 2: Total Numbers of Causal Clauses and Conjunctions for both Groups

	Total number of causal clauses	Number of other causal conjunctions[38]	Raw number of *weil* tokens
pre-1970	346	74 (21.4%)	272 (78.6%)
post-1985	542	5 (0.09%)	537 (99%)
Totals	887	79 (8.9%)	809 (91.2%)

Although T-Tests revealed a significant difference in the use of *weil* between the two groups, they revealed that the difference in the number of causal conjunctions used overall was not significant between groups.[39]

In the pre-1970 group, there was a lower number of tokens of *weil* used as a floor-holding device, such that whereas post-1985 data counted 9.96% of all *weil*-clauses as floor-holding, the pre-1970 data counted 4.6%. This included the *weil weil* or 'double *weil*' phenomenon, in which two conjunctions are found to follow each other: one functioning as a floor-holding device, followed immediately or almost immediately by a causal *weil* with either VL or V2 order, or possibly broken. There were two instances of this double *weil* in the pre-1970 data, and three participants in the post-1985 data who produced it numerous times. Scheutz (2001) did not note this particular use of *weil*, nor has it been noted anywhere in the literature to date. Though post-1985 immigrants used *weil* twice as many times as a floor-holding device, pre-1970 data revealed 4.6% of *weil* tokens to be used in this way, possibly more than might be expected for this seemingly recent phenomenon. There were a number of different reasons for holding the

[38] Number of causal conjunctions other than *weil*. The two other causal conjunctions found in the data were *denn* (because, for) and *da* (because, since)
[39] T-Tests results were P = .098 for possible conjunctions; P = .035 for *weil* VL; and P = .024 for *weil* V2.

conversational floor, indicating that perhaps this is not a brand new linguistic phenomenon.

The pre-1970 data were found to have a lower overall number of broken or incomplete *weil*-clauses, but when compared to the overall number of *weil* tokens, this group had a higher percentage of broken clauses. This may be attributed to having lived more than 50 years in an English dominant environment, immersed in their second (or perhaps third) language, where German lexicon may have been replaced by the frequent use of its English equivalent. Code-switching and the influence of English was noted in the speech of many of this group's participants.

The so-called broken clauses were *weil* clauses that were broken off by the speaker before completing their thought, even in cases where there was a verb but complete change of thought, and instances where the speaker was searching for a lexical item. In addition, the conjunction *weil* was considered broken when followed by the conjunction *wenn* (if) or by relative pronoun. This was because the word order in that clause was no longer related to the use of *weil*, but to these words, which require subordinate word order. Roughly 16.2 percent overall of the corpus (both groups) was found to be broken. In terms of each group, 20.59% of the pre-1970 data was broken while 13.97% of the post-1985 data was coded as broken. These figures may be explained in part by age and date of immigration, as many broken *weil* clauses for pre-1970 speakers involved searching for forgotten German lexical items. They may also be explained by the fact that spoken language generally includes some reformulation, incomplete thoughts, etc.[40] In this analysis, all tokens of *weil* were first counted, from

[40] The fact that there are more broken *weil* clauses among older people may be attributable to age and the effect that has on cognitive processes. It may also be a result of having lived for more than 50 years in an

which tokens of broken *weil* were subtracted. The remaining *weil* clauses were then coded for either VL or V2 word order, or as a floor-holding device.

The Early Immigrants

The pre-1970 group consisted of 16 German native speakers who immigrated to Canada before 1970, all but one in the 1950s. Out of the total 272 tokens of *weil* counted, 56 (20.59%) were counted as broken, ranging from 1 to 9 occurrences per person. These were subtracted from the data analysis, leaving 216 *weil* clauses. Clauses were considered broken for a number of reasons. In many cases, there was a long pause right after *weil* before continuation, or right after *weil* + a single word (e.g. *weil* ich #). Clauses that were either broken off or restarted and reformulated were also counted as broken, as it was impossible to code the clause as having either VL or V2 word order, even when there was a verb before the clause was broken off. Such occurrences were thus incomplete clauses, as in the following example:

English-speaking community, coupled with speaking less German over time, such that lexical items have been forgotten and need to be searched for before a thought can be completed. Participants also spoke of events that happened long in the past, and broken clauses may have been cases where the speaker had to search their memory during conversation. In contrast, many of the broken clauses among the post-1985 data were a result of rapid speech, where participants reformulated or changed what they had begun to say.

Broken *weil* clause, Waterloo corpus, pre-1970 speaker from Romania

(9) Nora: bis dass sie uns einen platz gefunden hatten wo
until they had had found a place for us where

wir äh (.) ah arbeiten konnten (.) **weil** wir eben
*we um (.) um could work (.) just **because** we*

durch den (.) wir sind durch das staatliche #
through the (.) we were through the state um

Karl: [programm

Nora: [ah
um
programm ja die haben uns die fahrt bezahlt
program yes they paid our trip for us

The speaker here, Nora, restarts her sentence a number of times after the conjunction *weil*. After beginning what might have been VL *weil* clause, Nora begins a V2 or main clause word order which no longer causally relates to *weil*. Clauses such as in the above example were counted as broken, since they could not be definitively coded with either V2 or VL word order.

Table 3: Participants who immigrated before 1970

	weil tokens	Broken clauses	*weil* clauses	*weil* VL clauses	*weil* V2 clauses	FH device	Origin
Franziska	21	6	**15**	7	7	1	Schleswig-Holstein, Germany[41]
Frederike	35	9	**26**	21	5	0	Hungary
Florian	8	2	**6**	3	3	0	Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
Gerda	7	0	**7**	7	0	0	Berlin[42]
Herbert	22	5	**17**	12	4	1	Poland
Hans	17	3	**14**	9	2	3	Poland
Ilse	42	6	**36**	22	12	2	Lower Silesia[43]
Ivo	10	3	**7**	4	3	0	East Prussia[44]
Jana	7	1	**6**	4	2	0	North Rhine-Palatinate, Germany[45]
Julia	9	1	**8**	6	2	0	Berlin
Jutta	12	2	**10**	3	6	1	East Prussia
Karl	7	1	**6**	1	5	0	Sudetenland
Nora	26	7	**19**	9	9	1	Romania
Nils	24	5	**19**	9	10	0	Austria
Niko	11	1	**10**	3	7	0	East Prussia
Sven	14	4	**10**	6	3	1	Baden, Germany[46]
Totals	**272**	**56**	**216**	**126**	**80**	**10**	

[41] The state of Schleswig-Holstein is found in northern Germany, between the North and Baltic Sea coasts.
[42] The city-state of Berlin is located in eastern Germany, approximately 100 Kilometers west of Poland.
[43] Lower Silesia is situated in the southwest of present-day Poland along the Czech Republic border.
[44] East Prussia is located in present-day northern Poland, on the coast of the Baltic Sea.
[45] The state of North Rhine Westphalia (in German: Nordrhein-Westfalen) lies in western Germany and shares borders with the Netherlands.
[46] The region historically known as Baden in southwestern Germany now makes up the western part of the state of Baden-Württemberg, and shares part of Germany's western border with France.

The Early Immigrants: Pre-1970 Use of *weil*

This group produced 272 tokens of *weil,* which averaged approximately 16.27 tokens per person. After removing tokens of broken *weil*, there remained 216 *weil* clauses, in which 126 were followed by VL clauses, 80 by V2 clauses, and 10 were used as floor-holding devices. Fewer than half (N = 6) of the 16 participants used *weil* ten times or less in their conversations, which ranged between 50 and 90 minutes long, totaling approximately 16.25 hours of spoken data. Five of the group's speakers produced between 10-20 tokens of *weil*, four more between 20-30, and two speakers produced more than 30 *weil* tokens in total. All but three speakers used *denn* (because) as a causal conjunction in their conversation, while three in particular used it more than 10 times. One participant, Gerda, produced only *weil* VL clauses: she had neither V2 clauses, nor broken or floor-holding tokens of *weil*. This may be a result of origin: Gerda is from Berlin. According to Dittmar's (1997) study, VL is the preferred word order among Berlin speakers, which may be reflected here in Gerda's data.

Although this group produced more VL than V2 *weil* clauses in total, and appears to share many similarities in numbers among its speakers, it is important to note that there was much variation within the group and that the pre-1970 speakers come from many different regions of Europe. Almost half (N=7) were *Volksdeutsche* from Transylvania, East Prussia, Lower Silesia**,** Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, while the rest of the speakers came from all areas of Germany and from Austria. Six of these speakers produced fewer than 10 tokens of *weil,* the majority of whom had a higher number of VL than V2 clauses, and came from within Germany's present borders including the city-

states of Hamburg and Berlin, North Rhine-Westphalia[47] and Rhineland-Palatinate.[48] These speakers also used the causal coordinating conjunction *denn* at least once, indicating the prevalence of standard language norms in terms of word order. The notable speaker in this group was Karl, from the Sudetenland,[49] who produced five times more V2 than VL *weil* clauses *as well as* 17 tokens of *denn*, suggesting a strong preference for main clause word order. These data also seem to suggest the *weil* V2 perhaps enjoyed use among native German speakers outside of Germany earlier than the 1970s.

The most *weil* clauses came from five different speakers, who produced 20-30, 30-40 and just over 40 *weil* clauses each, respectively. These speakers were also *Volksdeutsche* from Hungary, Poland, Lower Silesia, Transylvania and Austria. Ilse, originally from Lower Silesia, produced the most *weil*-clauses of all in the pre-1970 group, and a higher number of *weil* tokens than anyone from southern Germany or Austria. Interestingly enough, though, she also produced the second-highest number of *denn* tokens (N=12) and had a near 2:1 ratio of VL vs. V2 clauses, in contrast to Karl, who produced 17 tokens of *denn* but a 5:1 V2 vs. VL ratio. These five speakers also produced the conjunction *obwohl* (although) for the most part with standard verb-last word order.

The Early Immigrants: Verb-last Clauses

More than half of the total number of *weil*-clauses in this data group (58.33%) had VL word order. Over half of the speakers (N=9) had a higher count of VL than V2

[47] North Rhine-Westphalia is located in mid-western Germany.
[48] The Rhineland-Palatinate is in southwestern Germany.
[49] Present-day Czech Republic.

clauses, seven of whom had a clear 2:1 ratio or higher of VL to V2 word order. This group demonstrated a moderate frequency of causal *denn*, which was used by all but two speakers at least once, more than three times by over a third (N=7) of participants, and more than ten times by three of those seven. Neither of the two who produced the highest number of *denn* tokens came from northern Germany, where it has been argued that speakers use *denn* in everyday speech quite frequently (Pasch 1997: 255). Moreover, there was variation between the two speakers: Karl produced only 7 *weil* tokens, 5 of which were V2 clauses; and Ilse, who produced the most *weil* tokens in the group, had a 2:1 VL ratio overall - and even used *obwohl* (although) thirteen times with only VL word order. The data of another speaker, Frederike, suggests that *weil* and *denn* are used by some speakers to enable them to use both subordinate and main clause word order, as she had both a high number *denn* (V2 order) and *weil* VL clauses. Finally, it is interesting to note that the conjunction *da* (because) was also found used twice in the pre-1970 data. This conjunction was followed each time by the canonical subordinate word order, which suggests that subordinate order is not disappearing altogether, but rather only changing in respect to a limited number of conjunctions.

The Early Immigrants: Verb-second Clauses

Although verb-second (V2) clauses did not make up as much of the data as VL *weil* clauses, they were nevertheless quite present in the pre-1970 group's data, making up just over 37% of the total number of *weil* clauses. Only a quarter of pre-1970 speakers (N=4) had a higher number of V2 than VL clauses, who were all *Volksdeutsche* from East Prussia, Austria or the Sudetenland. Two of these participants, Jutta and Karl, produced

relatively few *weil* clauses, but used almost exclusively V2 word order with a ratio of more than 2:1 ratio of V2 to VL clauses. Curiously, these two participants also used a number of causal *denn*, (3 and 17 respectively) as mentioned above. Among the four speakers who produced more V2 than VL clauses, it appears that to some degree *weil* and *denn* filled the same semantic role with differing word order. This hypothesis is corroborated by two other speakers in the data, Nils and Niko. These two speakers both had a high number of V2 clauses and produced a number of *denn* tokens.

The Early Immigrants: Verb-second vs. Verb-last

In this group, a higher count of *weil* V2 clauses than previously expected was discovered while coding the data. The number of these clauses was more surprising because they did not generally disrupt the flow of conversation as might be expected with pausing. Indeed, only 19 (2.4%) of the group's 80 verb-second *weil* clauses were followed by a pause, while the majority of V2 clauses were not announced by a pause after *weil*. In the following example, the V2 clause following *weil* differs in no way from any of the speakers' VL *weil* clauses in terms of speed and intonation:

Verb-second word order, Waterloo corpus, pre-1970 speaker from East Prussia

(10) Jutta: berlin konnte man nur eine seite
one could only visit one side in Berlin

weil die andere seite war war zu

because *the other side was was closed*

INT: [ja:
yes

Jutta: [nich?
right?

In this propositional causal clause, Jutta gives the reason for why one could only visit one side of Berlin at the time: because of the Berlin Wall. Though the verb comes second in the *weil* clause, there is no pause after *weil*.

This group demonstrated the individuality of the spoken *weil* phenomenon. As an example, the *weil* ratios for a married couple, Karl and Nora, were 7:26 for overall *weil* tokens, 1:7 for broken *weils*, 1:9 for VL clauses and 5:9 for V2 clauses. Unlike her husband from Sudetenland, Nora (who was from Transylvania) produced a greater number of *weil* VL than V2 clauses and no tokens of *denn*.

The Early Immigrants: *weil* as a Floor-holding Device

There was a relatively low number of occurrences in which *weil* was used as a floor-holding device (FH) in this group's data, as tokens of *weil* FH made up just 4.63% of the data. This was approximately half the amount for the post-1985 group, as fewer than half (N=7) of the pre-1970 speakers used *weil* at least once to hold their place in the conversation. Only one speaker produced more than two FH *weil* tokens, and the total number for these tokens was lower than that of broken clauses. The following example demonstrates how a speaker may hold his place in the conversation to make time to answer the interviewer's question:

Floor-holding *weil*, Waterloo corpus, pre-1970 speaker from Baden[50]

(11) INT: warum gefällt ihnen das [nicht dass wir
why do you not like it that we

englische wörter benutzen
use english words

Sven: [**weil** das (.)
because *that (.)*

weil # **weil** ihr äh äh (.) deutschland isch
because *#* ***because*** *you um um (.) Germany is*

deutschland deutschland isch net kanada (.)
Germany Germany is not Canada (.)

oder isch net england
nor is it England

Sven, who used *weil* as a floor-holding device more than once in this example, is able to hold his turn even after two false starts. He indicates that he is not yet finished his thought, and continues with a new sentence and his reasoning for why German speakers should not use English words when speaking German.

The Later Immigrants

The post-1985 group consisted of 17 native speakers of German who immigrated to Canada within the last 20 years from various regions of Germany. They produced a total of 537 tokens of *weil* in just over 17 hours of recorded conversation**.** Out of this total, 75 tokens of *weil* (13.83%) were counted as broken and subtracted to find a new total number of *weil*-clauses. As noted earlier, broken clauses included those that were reformulated or unfinished, as well as when *weil* was followed by *wenn* (if) or a relative pronoun. Post-1985 data consisted of more broken clauses of this type than the pre-1970 data, as shown by the speaker Tanja in the following example:

[50] Baden is the western part of the state of Baden-Württemberg, in southwestern Germany.

Broken *weil* clause with *wenn*, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from Saxony[51]

(12) Tanja: ne ich hab mir gedacht (.) du musst mich heiraten
no I thought to myself (.) you have to marry me

weil (.) wenn du gehst (.) ich hab keine chance
***because** (.) if you go (.) I have no chance*

als alleinstehende frau
as a single woman

Tanja uses subordinating word order after *weil* because of *wenn*, which in a sense voids *weil* as an antecedent for the rest of the clause, and changes the clause into a conditional phrase. There is even a short pause between the two conjunctions, further indicating that Tanja has started a new clause. It may be noted here too, that the same answer could have been given in a causal clause (e.g. "you have to marry me because I'll have no chance as a single mother if you go"). The situation is similar in the following example, where the relative pronoun *die* (who) becomes the referent for the clause:

Broken *weil* clause, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from Brandenburg[52]

(13) Philipp: obwohl ich weiß/ ich kenn leute (.) ah (.)
although I know/ I know people (.) um (.)

da geht's auch ueber skype also von meinem
and it works over skype to like my

kumpel **weil** die aeh schwester die ist in (.)
*friend **because** his uh sister she is in (.)*

in asien da (.) geht es dann das skypen
in asia (.) so that works then with skype

also anstatt telefonieren
instead of calling

[51] The state of Saxony in eastern Germany shares its southern border with the Czech Republic.
[52] The state of Brandenburg is situated in northeastern Germany and shares its eastern border with Poland.

Here too, the relative pronoun *die* voids *weil* as an antecedent in the clause that follows. It instead refers back to the sister, the subject, and cannot be coded as a V2 or VL *weil* clause.

Table 4: Participants who immigrated after 1985

	***weil* tokens**	**Broken clauses**	***weil* clauses**	***weil* VL clauses**	***weil* V2 clauses**	**FH**	**Origin**
Claudia	79	6	**73**	29	37	7	Schleswig-Holstein, Germany[53]
Daniel	54	6	**48**	19	17	12	North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany[54]
Edith	21	4	**17**	14	3	0	Baden-Württemberg, Germany[55]
Freya	12	2	**10**	8	2	0	Baden-Württemberg, Germany
Heike	3	0	**3**	2	1	0	Saxony, Germany[56]
Janina	55	13	**42**	27	12	3	Baden-Württemberg, Germany
Kai	0		**0**				Baden-Württemberg, Germany
Lucas	21	3	**18**	10	7	1	Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
Laura	27	2	**25**	15	7	3	Baden-Württemberg, Germany
Merle	34	10	**24**	6	14	4	Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany
Philipp	52	4	**48**	11	25	12	Brandenburg, Germany[57]
Silke	45	8	**37**	19	17	1	Baden-Württemberg, Germany

[53] The state of Schleswig-Holstein is found in northern Germany, between the North and Baltic Sea coasts.
[54] North Rhine-Westphalia in western Germany shares part of Germany's border with the Netherlands.
[55] The state of Baden-Württemberg is located in southwestern Germany and shares borders with France to the west and Switzerland to the south.
[56] The state of Saxony, south of Berlin, shares borders with the Czech Republic in eastern Germany.
[57] The state of Brandenburg is situated in northeastern Germany and surrounds the city-state of Berlin.

Sophie	17	3	**14**	5	8	1	North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany
Sonja	27	2	**25**	19	6	0	Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
Tabea	44	4	**40**	23	16	1	Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Germany[58]
Tanja	21	6	**15**	9	6	0	Saxony, Germany
Ulrich	25	2	**23**	12	10	1	Bavaria, Germany[59]
Totals	**537**	**75**	**462**	**229**	**187**	**46**	

The Later Immigrants: Post-1985 use of *weil*

The post-1985 group produced 537 tokens of *weil* overall, which averaged approximately 31.6 tokens per person. The remaining 462 *weil* clauses left for analysis, after subtracting tokens of broken *weil*, consisted of 229 VL clauses, 187 V2 clauses and 46 FH *weil* tokens. The group's interviews totaled approximately 17.25 hours of spontaneous spoken data, each one anywhere between 55 and 180 minutes in duration. Out of the 17 post-1985 speakers, only a fourth (N=4) used the conjunction *weil* less than 20 times during their interviews. Almost half of the group (N=7) produced anywhere from 20 – 40 *weil* tokens each, while two more produced between 40 – 50 tokens. The other four speakers, or a third of the group, produced over 50 tokens of *weil*.

The post-1985 group of speakers came from a number of different regions within Germany, particularly the northern, eastern and southern areas of the country,[60] and totaled higher numbers of V2 clauses than the pre-1970 group overall. Although the

[58] The state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (in German: Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) lies in northeastern Germany on the coast of the Baltic Sea.
[59] The state of Bavaria makes up half of the area of southern Germany, and shares borders with the Czech Republic to the east, and Austria to the east and south.
[60] These areas included Bavaria and the city-states of Hamburg (North) and Berlin (East), which are of note because they have been areas of focus on the literature on spoken *weil*.

post-1985 data revealed more V2 than VL clauses and larger V2:VL margins than the pre-1970 data, verb-last word order after *weil* still dominated in this group. The four speakers who produced fewer than 20 tokens of *weil* were from western Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), southwestern Germany (two very close to the Swiss border) and eastern Germany (Saxony).

Two speakers, Heike and Kai, were striking due to their very low number of *weil* tokens: just three from Heike and none at all from Kai. Further, neither speaker used *denn* to express causal relationships. Another notable post-1985 speaker was Claudia, from northern Germany, who produced an astonishing 79 *weil* tokens in the shortest interview. The six speakers who produced the most *weil* clauses had over 40 tokens of *weil* each, a striking comparison to pre-1970 where only one speaker had as many *weil* tokens. In addition to Claudia with 79 tokens, two speakers produced between 40-50, and another three between 50 and 60 *weil* tokens. These last three were speakers who come from the North, South, West and Brandenburg in the East: practically every corner of Germany, *except* for Bavaria. It was also noted that these three speakers produced all of the groups' tokens of 'double-*weil'*. On a final note, three of the four speakers with a higher number *weil* tokens (over 30) produced more V2 than VL *weil* clauses and often produced V2 order after the conjunction *obwohl* (although).[61]

The Later Immigrants: Verb-last Clauses

There was an overall greater number of *weil* VL than V2 clauses in the post-1985 data, which made up 49.57% of the total number of *weil* clauses. Closer investigation

[61] This conjunction has been discusses in the literature to function in a similar way as *weil*, with speakers using both VL and V2 word order, The conjunction *wobei* (whereby) has also been discusses as having variant word order. See Günthner 1996, 2000

revealed that almost half the group (N=6) produced between two to three times more VL than V2 clauses, and another two speakers used it about a third of the time more. Overall, 12 speakers produced VL more often V2 word order after *weil* in causal clauses. This word order, then, continues to express a causal relationship, regardless of the amount of times a speakers uses *weil*. The following excerpt is just one of many examples from the data of a typical propositional causal clause:

Verb-final word order, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from Schleswig-Holstein[62]

(14) Lucas: und dann haben wir nah zu meinem arbeitsplatz
and then we looked for an apartment

eine wohnung gesucht **weil** ich hier kein auto
close to my job ***because*** *I didn't have a car*

hatte
here

In this example, Lucas gives the reason why he looked for an apartment close to where he worked: because he did not have a car. This is a good example of a propositional VL *weil* clause that was prototypical for this group.

The Later Immigrants: Verb-second Clauses

Though there was a greater number of VL *weil* clauses overall, V2 clauses still made up a large number (41.48%) of the data – over 3% more of the group's overall data than pre-1970. A relatively small number of post-1985 speakers (N=4) produced a higher number of V2 than VL clauses, who came from the Hamburg and Berlin areas, and the western and southwestern regions of Germany. These regions, with the possible exception of the southwestern area of Rhineland-Palatinate, have been noted to use VL

[62] Schleswig-Holstein is located in northern Germany, between the North and Baltic Sea coasts.

weil clauses in large numbers rather than V2 (see Scheutz 2001: 116). These four speakers were found not only to use V2 word order more often than VL, but also to use it by a larger margin than the pre-1970 sub-group of speakers who used V2 more often than VL. Some produced as many as 8-14 more V2 tokens, indicating an increase in the use of verb-second or main word order in *weil* clauses. Additionally, the percentage differences between the number of VL to V2 clauses was smaller in the post-1985 group, as V2 clauses were produced only 9% less than VL clauses after *weil*, compared to approximately 21% fewer in the pre-1970 group.

Both propositional (accounting for the proposition leading up to *weil)* and epistemic (supporting the assertion leading up to *weil*) *weil* V2 clauses were found in the post-1985 data. The following is an example of a V2 propositional causal clause:

Verb-second word order, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from Bavaria[63]

(15) Ulrich: und war so sehr (.) überrascht erstaunt und
and I was very surprised astonished and

eigentlich enttäuscht auch (.) **weil** ich hab
*disappointed actually too (.) **because** I*

gedacht das ist commonwealth ist eine ehemalige
though Canada is a commonwealth is a former

englische kolonie und dachte mir das leben ist
british colony and I thought life would be a

eben viel mehr wie in england
lot more like it is in England

Ulrich explains that he was surprised and disappointed when he came to Canada and found out that it wasn't like life in England as he thought it would be. Epistemic clauses also contributed to the number of *weil* clauses, such as this example:

[63] Bavaria is situated in southern Germany.

Verb-second word order, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from Brandenburg[64]

(16) Philipp: die neuankömmlinge die jetzt kommen die kommen
the newcomers who come now do not necessarily

nicht unbedingt so freiwillig **weil** (.) arbeit
*come so voluntarily **because** (.) in there isn't*

gibt's halt in deutschland nicht so opulent
such an abundant amount of work in Germany

Philipp supports his assertion that not all immigrants come freely to Canada by stating that there is not a lot of work in Germany; but lack of work is not the reason that some immigrants come here unwillingly.

As Scheutz (2001: 124) had noted, the data revealed that pauses were not a condition for V2 word order following *weil*, although post-1985 (as did pre-1970 on occasion) speakers did pause at times between pronouncing *weil* and completing a V2 clause. In the post-1985 group, 64 (or 34%) of 187 V2 *weil* clauses were followed by a pause. The data showed that speakers were more likely to pause after *weil* when followed by V2 than VL word order, as only 20 (.08%) of the 229 VL *weil* clauses were followed by a pause. The data also support Scheutz's (2001: 124) argument that pauses are not restricted to epistemic V2 clauses, as in the following example:

V2 word order, Edmonton corpus, pre-1970 speaker from North Rhine-Westphalia[65]

(17) Sopie: fuer's networking gehe ich nicht mehr hin
I don't go there anymore for networking

weil # ich brauch an sich kein mehr arbeit
because # I don't need any more work

[64] Brandenburg is situated in northeastern Germany and surrounds the city-state of Berlin
[65] North Rhine-Westphalia is located in mid-western Germany.

This is an example of propositional causality, as Sophie gives the reason she doesn't go to the German association anymore: because she has enough work. There was also one post-1985 speaker, Kai, who did not use *weil* at all.

The Later Immigrants: *weil* as a Floor-holding Device

The data set showed more tokens of this type of *weil* than in the pre-1970 data, accounting for 9.95% of all *weil*-clauses (N = 46). Although the overall percentage of tokens was twice as high, there were nearly five times as many tokens: 46 compared to 10 from pre-1970. There was also more noticeable variety with this type of *weil*. In addition to V2 clauses, the data revealed pauses after *weil* in almost all cases, when was used as a floor-holding device.[66] The data also showed *weil* used in different ways as a floor holding device. The first type is broken off and just holds the conversational floor so that the speaker may continue:

Floor-holding *weil*, Waterloo corpus, post-1985 speaker from Schleswig-Holstein[67]

(18)	INT:	ehm # wie wirkt das so auf dich dieses clubleben *um # how does this club life or these events*
		oder diese veranstaltungen wirkt [das +/. affect you does it affect +/.
	Claudia:	[find ich schön *they're great*
	INT:	ja? *yes*
	Claudia:	ja, **weil** ehm ## ehm obwohl ich muss sagen ich war *yes **because** um ## um although I have to say I was*
		nie auf dem münchner oktoberfest *at the Oktoberfest in Munich*

[66] The exceptions were in cases of *weil weil* where no there was no pause between the two conjunctions.
[67] The state of Schleswig-Holstein is located in northern Germany.

Here *weil* is broken or cut off and a new, unrelated sentence is begun after a pause.

The second type included floor holding followed by a code-switch to English –then back to German in a restart. Here, as in the above example, *weil* has no semantic value:

Floor-holding *weil*, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from North Rhine-Westphalia[68]

(19) Daniel: dieses unverbindliche so so ein bisschen ne
this non-committal stuff like that a little

oder zusammen ins kino gehen oder wie auch immer
right or to go to the movies together or whatever

weil (.)@EN again @DT das ist wieder meine
because *(.) again this is again just my*

theorie
theory

In this example, Daniel uses the hedge "this is again just my theory..." before continuing with the topic, after switching to English and back into German. In the third type of *weil* FH the syllable(s) of *weil* is (are) dragged out as in the following example:

weil as a floor-holding device, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from Brandenburg[69]

(20) Philipp: bei den jüngeren leuten ist es immer so # die
with the younger people it's always # they

können nicht (.) sa- zusagen **we:il** # ok (.)
they cannot (.) sa- say yes ***bec:ause*** *# ok (.)*

einer kommt (xx) ist das kind da war das
one comes (xx) but then the child was there

In both groups, the data revealed pauses and restarted sentences after *weil* was used as a floor-holding device in almost all instances. In all cases, *weil* FH has no word order which follows it.

[68] North Rhine-Westphalia is found in mid-western Germany.
[69] Brandenburg is located in eastern Germany.

'Double weil'

The data in this study also revealed *weil* used in a different way than is mentioned in Scheutz, which one might call 'double *weil*' as one token of *weil* is followed immediately by another token in the same breath. In these instances, the first *weil* acts as a floor-holding device to keep the speaker's place in the conversation, and the second *weil* functions as a regular causal conjunction. Therefore, the first conjunction was counted as a floor-holding *weil*, and the second one was counted as either *weil* VL, *weil* V2--depending on the word order that followed--or as a broken *weil*.

There were five speakers from both groups who used *weil* in this way, from which two (both post-1985) used several times. In an example of *weil weil*, the first *weil* acts as a floor-holding device, while the second *weil* acts as a normal causal conjunction that may have VL or V2 word order or be broken. It must be noted that there were two types of double *weil* included as examples of this phenomenon. In the first type, *weil* FH was followed immediately by the second *weil*. Only two of the five speakers used *weil* in this way, as in the following example:

Double *weil*, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from North Rhine-Westphalia[70]

(21) Daniel: ja **weil weil** in deutschland das anders ist ja
*yes **because because** it's different in Germany*

Daniel uses the conjunction *weil* in rapid succession in this example, without a short pause or intake of air, and there is no change in the clause's rhythm. It was not possible to attribute this phenomenon to fast talkers only, as the examples came from five

[70] In mid-western Germany.

different speakers in two different groups, from two different generations and two completely different areas of German-speaking Europe.

The second type of double *weil* involves a quick pause between the first and second *weil*. The conjunctions still follow immediately after each other and are good examples of how *weil* is used as a floor-holding device as the speaker holds the floor while collecting his or her next thought. This is made apparent in the next example, in which Janina also restarts original *weil* clause:

Double *weil* with pause, Edmonton corpus, post-1985 speaker from Baden-Württemberg [71]

(22) Janina: schon beendet als wir gegangen war oder sogar
it was already over when we left or maybe even

vorher **weil** (.) **weil** das einfach so # man hat das
*earlier **because** (.) **because** it simply # you had*

gefühl gehabt die halten das nicht länger aus
the feeling that they can't handle being with

sich mit jemandem auszusetzen
someone any longer

Janina uses the first *weil* to hold her turn as she continues on to explain that having company/friendship was not the same in the United States as in Germany, beginning with the second *weil.* In this example, the clause following the second *weil* was considered broken.

The phenomenon of double *weil* was more or less restricted to post-1985 speakers, as only two examples of double *weil* were found in the pre-1970 data set. Further, there were multiple examples from two of the three post-1985 speakers who produced double *weil,* which indicates that this may be a more recent phenomenon. It

[71] The state of Baden-Württemberg is in southwestern Germany.

must be noted, however, that it is not necessarily a brand new or isolated phenomenon, as the three speakers came from three different regions in Germany and were approximately 5-10 years apart in age.[72]

Once again, the analysis of *weil* highlighted individual differences among speakers in the way this conjunction is used. Six speakers did not use *weil* as a floor-holding device at all, for example, whereas three of the remaining 11 speakers used it 15 or more times – two of whom used it in a double *weil* construction. One speaker did not use *weil* at all, and two speakers used *wobei* (whereby) as often as *weil*, which may be a Swiss or Swabian dialectal feature. In addition, almost every speaker in this group used the conjunction *obwohl* (although)--which requires subordinating word order in Standard German--with both VL and V2 word order to varying degrees.

The results of the data analysis in this section have shown how *weil* was used among native speakers of German in Canada. The following section will discuss the significance of these results and what they reveal about the use of *weil* in Canada.

[72] Dr. Dailey-O'Cain (personal communication) attested to this phenomenon among German speakers in Europe.

CONCLUSIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The analysis of interviews with native speakers of German in Canada indicates that the 'spoken *weil'* phenomenon--verb-second word order following the causal conjunction *weil*--is more prevalent among younger generations of speakers. Whether *weil* V2 is indeed a recent phenomenon, or one that has just been more recently noticed, the increased and more varied use of *weil* V2 by younger speakers overall is apparent in this study's data. The post-1985 data contained more tokens of *weil* V2, and V2 word order was shown to be used by a greater V2 to VL margin among these participants than in the pre-1970 data. The use of *weil* as a floor-holding device, which allows speakers to hold their turn and expand on their ideas, was also more prevalent among the post-1985 speakers. This is re-emphasized in the double *weil* phenomenon. Thus, this study presents the first data on how the conjunction *weil* is used by native speakers of German in Canada. More importantly, this study provides real data on speakers who have been isolated from their place of origin and therefore their native language community, to examine the impact of linguistic isolation on native German speakers living in Canada.

Within the sphere of sociolinguistics, this study provides a fresh look the *weil* V2 phenomenon. The data analyzed here is the most recent data on *weil* V2 available, which has not received a great deal of attention in the literature in a number of years. Moreover, this study provides data on a unique group of speakers (German-speaking immigrants in Canada) who have gone previously unstudied and who are important to understanding the history of the use of *weil* among German speakers. There is indeed new evidence to suggest that the use of *weil* V2 enjoyed a function in the German vernacular some time before linguists began to study this phenomenon empirically.

Addressing the Research Questions

This study's first research question asked whether any differences exist in the use of the subordinating conjunction *weil* by native German speakers in Canada who immigrated over 50 years ago compared to those who came in the past 20 years. The data analyzed in this study support claims that younger native speakers of German use the conjunction *weil* more frequently than their older counterparts, and show an increase in the use of *weil* V2 as well. The data from the pre-1970 speakers, however, demonstrate that the older speakers do indeed use *weil* V2 to varying degrees. Analysis showed that post-1985 immigrants had higher count of total *weil*-clauses, indicating a change in the frequency with which this conjunction is used. Of this total, *weil* V2 clauses made up 40.48% of the post-1985 total *weil* clauses--approximately 3.44% more than in the pre-1970 data. Additionally, post-1985 speakers produced a lower number of VL clauses overall, just under half (49.57%) of the group's total *weil* clauses, nearly a full ten percent less than pre-1970 speakers. The data also revealed a clear drop in the amount of causal clauses started by the causal conjunction *denn* (because) by post-1985 speakers: only two speakers used *denn*, whereas over half the pre-1970 speakers produced this conjunction at least once in their conversation. Therefore, *weil* V2 may indeed fill the role in spoken German that the conjunction *denn* plays in written German. This could mean either that speakers did not use V2 word order with such frequency before that time, or that it was simply noticed and analyzed long after it had become a linguistic feature. All in all, it is possible that *weil* V2 is not a completely new phenomenon, as evidenced by the pre-1970 speakers who produced *weil* V2 clauses, some even in higher numbers than VL clauses.

This study attempts to provide data that reflects how German was spoken in the 1950s and 1960s in various areas of Germany and German-speaking Europe, data that has not been found anywhere else in the literature. It is important to note, however, that this group is not necessarily representative of that time frame, as their German may have changed in the meantime living in Canada. It also seeks to provide more recent data on spoken German within Germany's borders, up to 6 years after Scheutz's analysis. This is again an imperfect representation, as this group may not represent German as spoken presently in Germany and Europe, after living in Canada for a period of time.

My second research question asked whether any differences in the use of *weil* among German speakers point to language contact, natural language variation or the loss of the subordinating clause in the language of German-speaking immigrants living in an English language dominant community. In answer to this question, the data suggest that differences are not likely attributable to language contact and the influence of English, or the effect of living in an English dominant community.[73] If that were the case, the number of V2 clauses among the pre-1970 speakers--rather than verb-last clauses--would likely be much higher. Indeed, this group had a higher ratio of VL clauses in addition to a lower number of *weil* V2 clauses. At the same time, it is impossible to draw concrete conclusions about the influence of English on the German of the participants in the present study, as there is no data available on how these participants spoke German

[73] One might assume that if prolonged contact with English would cause V2 word order, this group would have a higher ratio of verb-second clauses rather than verb-last, which is similar to English word order. This was not the case, however, as nearly 60% of *weil* clauses were VL clauses. In terms of the use of *weil*, the data seem to indicate that the German spoken by these participants has not been substantially impacted by their prolonged immersion in English. Further, the pre-1970 speakers have lived in such communities for over 50 years, after which they still demonstrated a good command of the German language and even their regional dialect in some cases. Some participants were still able to speak their regional dialect, such as Transylvania Saxon and a number of dialect-specific expressions were found in the data. E.g. the verb *hutschen* (to rock or sway) in Austrian and Bavarian dialects is *schaukeln* in standard German).

before coming to Canada. Such data would provide a comparison of the speakers' language and illustrate how it may have changed over time while living in Canada.

Despite earlier hypotheses regarding the loss of subordinate word order in German, not all subordinating conjunctions appear to be shifting toward main clause word order. Some do indeed show signs of changing to allow variant word order--for example *obwohl* (although) and *wobei* (whereby)--as evidenced by speakers who used both VL and V2 word order after these conjunctions.[74] The data showed speakers frequently use V2 word order after *obwohl*, and after *wobei* in some instances. In contrast, a number of other subordinate conjunctions such as *dass* (that) and *da* (since, because) functioned throughout the data as they are prescribed in standard German, and do not show signs of adopting a V2 word order. They still commanded a subordinate clause, and did not suggest the loss of their subordinate word order among German speakers. Indeed, verb-last word order has hardly disappeared, especially as it appeared frequently in this data by all speakers who used *weil*, regardless of background. Rather, it appears that the German language has expanded to include *weil* clauses with verb-second word order, to allow for greater communicative possibilities.

Therefore, the differences in the use of the conjunction *weil* between pre-1970 and post-1985 speakers must be attributable to natural language change within German-speaking Europe. The later group of speakers produced a higher number of *weil* tokens overall, as well as a higher percentage of V2 *weil* clauses. There was a difference of only seven percent between the number of V2 and VL clauses overall for this group, compared to fourteen percent in the pre-1970 group, indicating even further the change in language

[74] See Appendix A for this study's data on *obwohl* (although), *wobei* (whereby), and *da* (for, because). See also: Günthner 1996, 2000.

that has taken place between the years of immigration for each group. Finally, *weil* V2 clauses made up less than half of the total *weil* clauses in both groups, showing verb-last word order continues to be used with frequency. There is also a noticeable difference in the use of causal *denn* (because) between the two groups, which could suggest language change: the replacement of *denn* with main clause word order by *weil* V2.[75]

The data presented in this study also indicate that the phenomenon of V2 word order in spoken *weil* clauses is no longer specific to a particular region (if in fact it ever was), and is instead quite diffused throughout Germany. In regards to region, the five speakers in the post-1985 data set with the highest number of *weil* tokens came from 4 different areas in Germany: one from each the North, West, and East of Germany, and two from the South-West. Two of these speakers also produced more V2 than VL *weil* clauses: Claudia from the North and Philipp from the East. In the pre-1970 data, those with the highest number of *weil* tokens came from Lower Silesia, Hungary, Transylvania, Austria and Poland. The data then begs the question as to whether *weil* V2 was in fact a typical variant for native German speakers outside of Germany's present-day borders. Because this study's data comes from a limited number of participants, it is difficult to say more about differences in the use of *weil* based on speaker origin. They do indicate, however, that the use of *weil* V2 is not strictly regionally specific.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Although the data provide evidence for the change in *weil* use among native German speakers, it is difficult to make a clear comparison between the present and earlier studies. Most investigations on the use of *weil* have been restricted to Germany

[75] See Appendix A.

and Austria, as well as to the past thirty years, so that it is almost impossible to compare speakers from before the 1970s. Not only that, but comparison is at best rough between the two groups in terms of origin, as almost all pre-1970 speakers originate from outside Germany's present borders. In addition, Scheutz does not name specific areas in Austria (aside from "upper Austria") and Germany, making comparison again difficult. Southern Germany could mean anywhere from the Austrian to French border in the southern half of the country.

The comparative results from this study might have been more decisive with more comparable speakers, both in terms of origin and in terms of background. Not only were most pre-1970 speakers originally from outside present-day German boundaries, many of the post-1985 speakers had lived a fair amount of time in either a different region of Germany than where they were from or in a different country, in many cases speaking another language that may have influenced their German in some way. Moreover, due to sample size, there are only 1-3 speakers to represent the four areas in Germany (North, East, South, West). This study would be improved by collecting data from two sample groups who share more similar backgrounds in terms of where they grew up, and the kind of language experience they have had. It would also have been helpful to know what children learning German do, when acquiring the language as first-language learners, as a point of comparison with my data. It is quite possible that main clause word order is regularized by children learning German--at least at first--before they master subordinate word order. This study is also limited by the fact that the participants' level of German-language and English-language education was not examined as an independent variable, which could have had a substantial impact on their German language use. This would

perhaps be another relevant variable that would explain more variation than this study has been able to. Two other variables not accounted for in this study are gender (male vs. female) of the participant and the age of participants (at time of data collection as well as when they immigrated). Finally, it would be interesting to take a more comprehensive look at the use of *obwohl* (although) and *wobei* (whereby) as well as *weil,* to see whether or not V2 variation is restricted to *weil* among German-speaking immigrants. Such an analysis would shed more light on the nature and extent of verb-second word order use after subordinate conjunctions.

Implications

In spite of these limitations, this study provides answers to several questions regarding the use of *weil* that had not been discussed previously. Using a variationist methodology, it provides data that was previously unexamined in the literature: the use of *weil* among native speakers of German in Canada, of differing age groups. It allows for the comparison of speaker origin as an independent variable, and confirms that *weil* V2 is indeed a feature in the spoken language of German-speaking immigrants in Canada. Moreover, the data in this study indicate that *weil* V2 may not actually be a recent language phenomenon and that its use is indeed diffused throughout Germany, rather than restricted to southern German and Austrian dialects. In addition to *weil*, this study has also outlined the change in the use of *denn* as a causal conjunction and added new data to the discussion on word order following other subordinating conjunctions such as *da* (because)*, obwohl* (although) and *wobei* (whereby). Finally, it has been demonstrated that German-speaking immigrants have been able to maintain their native language in

English-dominant communities, despite English interference. In the absence of data on the use of *weil* by German-speaking immigrants, this study offers a fresh look at use of German among its native speakers in Canada, and provides a contemporary picture of German diaspora.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Tables for the Causal Conjunctions obwohl, wobei, denn and da

Table 5: Total Numbers of obwohl Tokens and Clauses for both Groups

	Total number of *obwohl* tokens	**VL clauses**	**V2 clauses**
Pre-1970	39	34 (37.2%)	5 (12.8%)
Post-1985	35	26 (74.3%)	9 (25.7%)
Totals	74	60 (81.1%)	14 (18.9%)

Table 6: Total Numbers of wobei Tokens and Clauses for both Groups

	Total number of *wobei* tokens	**VL clauses**	**V2 clauses**
Pre-1970	0	0	0
Post-1985	13	11(84.6%)	2 (15.4%)
Totals	13	11	2

Table 7: Total Numbers for Tokens of denn and da for both Groups

	denn	**da**
Pre-1970	74	2
Post-1985	2	2
Totals	76	4