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## Cultural-dependent language use within German-speaking minorities in southern Africa

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Heritage speakers of German living in southern Africa (i.e. South Africa and Namibia) share many similarities, both in terms of the sociolinguistic settings and with regard to linguistic repertoires (see, e.g., Franke 2008, Shah & Zappen-Thomson 2018, Zimmer 2019). Nevertheless, much variation can be observed within (and between) these communities, with several variants conveying social meaning (which is not self-evident in communities with rather small and – at least slightly – decreasing numbers of speakers). In our presentation, we argue that this can be ascribed in large part to cultural-dependent language use. Based on data from semi-structured interviews and questionnaire studies, we examine the impact of cultural practices on a) tendencies of language maintenance and shift; b) linguistic repertoires (with a focus on knowledge of non-Germanic languages, such as isiZulu and Khoekhoegowab), and c) the use of specific linguistic structures such as borrowings with a click sound. It is shown that cultural practices have shaped (and continue to shape) the language use of subgroups and individuals. For example, it is still recognisable linguistically whether someone is a descendant of missionaries (or associated migrants) or not. We therefore consider these communities to be prime examples of the interdependence of culture and language use.

**References.** Franke, K. (2008). *We call it Springbok German!* Melbourne: Monash University Dissertation. • Shah, S. & M. Zappen-Thomson (2019). German in Namibia. In C. Seals & S. Shah (eds), *Heritage language policies around the world*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 128–147. • Zimmer, C. (2019). Deutsch als Minderheitensprache in Afrika. In J. Herrgen & J. Schmidt (eds), *Sprache und Raum – Deutsch. Ein internationales Handbuch der Sprachvariation*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1176–1190.