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**An overview of Francoprovençal vitality
in Europe and North America**

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Abstract: We review the current status of Francoprovençal (FP) in all regions where it is spoken. This article is the first of its kind, in that it reports on FP in both Europe and North America (for the latter this is the first demographic report). Figures cited for speaker numbers are therefore speculative. For each region, we present an overview of the linguistic history, current glottopolitical status of FP and demographic information. We describe each variety's vitality, using Brenzinger et al.'s (2003, *Language vitality and endangerment*. Paris: UNESCO Expert Meeting on Safeguarding Endangered Languages) UNESCO scale.

Keywords: Francoprovençal, ethnolinguistic vitality, UNESCO, language endangerment, revitalization

1 Introduction

Francoprovençal (FP) is endangered everywhere it is spoken. It has always shared sociolinguistic repertoires with more prestigious languages, which has, over time, undermined its vitality. In Italy, it has been subordinated to official languages, as well as to other vernacular varieties such as Piedmontese (see Regis, this issue). Where FP is spoken in France and Switzerland, the superordinate language has always been French, and in North America, its status has been undermined by English. Its native speakers increasingly shift to their state's national language. Speaker numbers have been dwindling for some time: e.g. Martin (1990) reports that between 120,000 and 200,000 FP speakers remain in Europe; Salminen (2007) has classified FP collectively as “severely

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endangered”.¹ However, FP’s vitality varies considerably across the regions in which it is spoken (see Kasstan and Nagy, this issue).

After introducing FP’s history and geography in each region where it is used, we discuss language practices and policies to maintain and revitalize it. We examine the vitality of FP by drawing on recent research to present an overview of the current vitality of FP in Europe and North America by applying the UNESCO vitality scale (Brenzinger et al. 2003). This approach provides a rounded perspective that integrates diverse types of information.

2 Measuring vitality

The language-endangerment literature has a long tradition of using classifications to rank a given variety’s degree of obsolescence (e.g. Bauman 1980; Tsunoda 2005). In 2003, UNESCO’s ad hoc expert group on endangered languages published a comprehensive scale for assessing the status and vitality of languages, in order to raise awareness about the reduction of the world’s linguistic diversity (Brenzinger et al. 2003). Their scale draws on several frameworks in the field of the sociology of language, such as Fishman’s (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), which provided the theoretical underpinnings for most practitioners in language revitalization. UNESCO’s model consists of nine criteria, eight of which are assessed on scales, like that in Table 1 (Brenzinger et al. 2003: 17). The final criterion is the absolute number of speakers which, as UNESCO points out, cannot be easily integrated into the score. This sums to 40 possible points, against which the level of vitality or

Table 1: Degrees of endangerment determined by intergenerational language transmission (Brenzinger et al. 2003: 7–8).

safe	5 (high vitality)
stable yet threatened	5-
unsafe	4
definitively endangered	3
severely endangered	2
critically endangered	1
extinct	0 (complete shift to the majority language)

¹ Little comparison of the structures or lexicons of FP spoken in different countries exists. We are aware of Hinzelin (this issue), Nagy et al. (this issue), and Nagy (2011). Recent studies are listed at: http://projects.chass.utoronto.ca/ngn/HLVC/1_8_refs_FP.php.

endangerment of a language – its vitality index – can be established. Brenzinger et al. (2003: 17) suggest that summing scores is not appropriate and that “a language that is ranked highly according to one criterion may deserve immediate and urgent attention due to other factors”. We provide sums only to allow comparison of how FP has fared in its different homes. Readers may consider the scores for each category independently or weight them differently.

We operationalized this model to assess the vitality of FP in regions demarcated by different contact languages. A summary of our findings is presented in Table 2. The following sections provide supporting details.

Brenzinger et al. note that “[n]o single factor alone can assess a language’s vitality or its need for documentation” (2003: 7). Rather, we must consider all these

Table 2: Cross-regional FP endangerment/vitality.

Criteria	Aosta ^a	Piemonte, Italy	Apulia, Italy	France	Switz.	Canada & USA
1) Intergenerational transmission	4	2	4	1	4	2
2) Number of speakers	21–70,000	14,000	700	60,000	16,000	600
3) Proportion of speakers to total population	4	1	5	1	3	1
4) Shifts in domains of use	3	1	4	1	3	1
5) Response to new domains and media	2	0	1	1	2	0
6) Materials for language education and literacy	4	2	2	2	2	0
7) Governmental and institutional attitudes and policies; official status and use	3	3	3	2	3	1
8) Community members’ attitudes	4	<i>no data</i>	4	1	3	4
9) Type and quality of documentation	3	1	2	2	3	1
Overall vitality score	3.5	1.4	3.1	1.4	2.9	1.3

^aWe thank Riccardo Regis for noting that Berruto (2009) provides similar scores for Aosta and Piemonte. “4 – unsafe” is assigned for Intergenerational Transmission in the Aosta Valley since the Chanoux (2003) survey data show that FP is still used by children in many villages (see Section 3). However, almost complete shift to Italian took place in the 1960s in the regional center Aosta/Aoste, where FP transmission can be assessed on a grade of “1 – critically endangered”. Local varieties of Piedmontese have prevailed over local FP dialects since the end of the nineteenth century in southeast villages bordering the Piemonte region. Therefore, the Aosta Valley would receive a score of “0” for FP intergenerational transmission.

factors. Compared to earlier scales, the UNESCO scale expands the scope of a community's social life that is analyzed to assess the language's vitality by including, beyond the fundamental criteria of intergenerational transmission and shifts in domains of use, factors pertaining to the speakers' numerical strength, and the community's attitudes towards the minority language. The latter, in particular, plays a fundamental role in language maintenance and shift (Fishman 1991: 174; Trudgill 1983: 129). The UNESCO experts group have warned not to simply add the scores for the nine criteria in order to create a language vitality assessment, as “[t]he vitality of languages varies widely depending on the different situations of speech communities” and an overall vitality index might hide such complex diversity (Brenzinger et al. 2003: 17). Lee and Van Way have criticized the UNESCO framework precisely because of its inability to “determine the overall vitality of a language by combining the factors” (2016: 7). While we are aware of these shortcomings, the UNESCO scale appears to constitute the most accurate tool to document the vitality of a (minority) language as it includes an array of quantitative *and* qualitative socio-historical criteria. The inclusion of qualitative data such as the role of language attitudes is, as highlighted by Grenoble (2016: 4), important when comparing vitality across regions: while an overall score helps in providing an overview of the vitality in a specific area, the analysis of socio-historical dynamics and other qualitative vitality factors valuably complements the vitality assessment. Our goal in this article is to implement such a cross-community documentation of vitality for FP. We thus incorporate the spirit of Lee and Van Way's (2016) proposal to provide overall vitality scores that can be compared across varieties of FP. As we are working in a language domain in which virtually all of the necessary information is available for each variety, we do so via the more inclusive UNESCO scale.

3 FP in Italy

FP is spoken in several regions of Italy, including the western Alpine valleys between the Susa and Gressoney Rivers, the town of Carema in the province of Torino, two villages in Apulia, and in the Aosta Valley – a region bordering France and Switzerland.

3.1 Aosta Valley

Linguistically, the Aosta Valley belongs to the Gallo-Romance area. FP varieties constitute the local vernacular varieties that emerged after the Franks took control of the valley from the Lombards in AD 575 (Bétemps 1993). In 1561 a

diglossic situation emerged in the region when French, the language of the local elite (Bruni 1992) was introduced – replacing Latin – as the language of administration, culture, and religion. French, a codified language, was the *high* variety according to Ferguson's (1959) definition of diglossia. FP constituted the *low* variety, as the language of intimacy and informal communication. Although the lower FP-speaking strata of the Aosta Valley's society did not speak French, it is widely held that they understood it (Cavalli 2005: 49; Bruni 1992: 11).

With the region's integration into the Italian Kingdom in 1861, standard Italian – the official language of the new state that was spoken by only about 2.5% of its population (Coluzzi 2009: 40) – entered the regional linguistic repertoire. This ended a relatively stable diglossic phase, adding a layer of minorization to the already low sociolinguistic status of FP. This remained unchanged through the subsequent decades, during which French and Italian became the Aosta Valley's co-official languages. In 1948, the Italian state recognized the region as autonomous.

In the 1970s, FP started gaining official attention when a wave of revitalization culminated in efforts to obtain official recognition for, and support of FP. This was a reaction to Italian dominating the official public sphere. Within this cultural climate characterized by passionate debates regarding the preservation of the Aosta Valley's linguistic distinctiveness and the status-building of the regional linguistic varieties, the regional government started supporting initiatives to meet these goals. In 1980, it financed the founding of the Centre d'Études Francoprovençales René Willien, which has since helped foster research on, and promotion of, many aspects related to the languages and culture of FP-speaking areas. These efforts led to the national law 482/1999 protecting historical linguistic minorities in Italy. This law recognized FP as a historical linguistic minority, providing important financial support to help its preservation and diffusion in the Aosta Valley. Economic support from the state is, for instance, at the origin of the creation and maintenance of the Bureau régional pour l'ethnologie et la linguistique (BREL). BREL is charged with language planning (corpus, status, acquisition) that favors the preservation and diffusion of FP in the region through the work by the Sportello Linguistico (SL). This language documentation office assists regional institutions and citizens with FP translation and redaction and development/reinforcement of oral proficiency, among its many services (www.patoisvda.org). Articles 4–6 of Law 482/1999 indicate that the minority language may serve as a language of instruction through middle school and for the development of activities centered on the regional culture; that schools in Aosta Valley may develop curricula targeting the teaching of the minority language and cultural traditions; and that research on and diffusion of the minority language be promoted. In 2013,

65 optional courses in FP were offered outside the mandatory school hours to about 2,500 pupils, i.e., 20 % of the pupils then attending the region's kindergarten, elementary, and middle schools (www.patoisvda.org). Teacher training and language courses are mainly subsidized by the state, which joins the region in its efforts to maintain the vitality of the local language and cultural practices through the implementation of policies aimed at the acquisition of FP. Articles 7–9 assign to the minority language a place in the administration and in interactions between regional institutions and minority speakers, crucially contributing to FP's visibility in public domains.

According to the largest sociolinguistic survey conducted by the Fondation Emile Chanoux in 2001 on a sample of 7,250 Aosta Valley residents, the number of speakers is between 21,000–70,000 (i.e., 40 % to 56 % of the overall regional population of 128,000 inhabitants). The count depends on whether estimates are inferred from responses to the questions concerning the informants' L1, or the language(s) and dialect(s) known, or the language first learnt (Chanoux 2003). For intergenerational transmission, findings from the Chanoux survey point to an ongoing shift toward Italian, with 40 % of informants reporting that they use Italian when speaking with their children, and only 12 % report using exclusively FP. However, another 12 % use FP along with another language. A shift toward Italian has also taken place in public domains at the community level. For instance, within businesses in the village of residence, the majority of the respondents use Italian (63 %), 21 % use both FP and Italian, and only 10 % reported using just FP. Italian is predominantly used in public administration offices in the villages – by 69 % of the respondents, whereas 21 % use both Italian and FP. Five percent speak only FP when interacting with local civil servants.

As for attitudes, Italian is the language to which the majority of respondents (61 %) feel the most attached, with FP well behind (30 %). Knowing Italian is considered “fundamental” in order to be Valdôtain by 49 % – and for 39 % it is “important” – whereas FP is “fundamental” only for 26 % of the respondents – although 30 % consider it to be “important”, and 21 % “quite important”. In sum, according to the Chanoux survey, despite the presence of quite positive attitudes toward FP, its vitality in the Aosta Valley is dramatically decreasing. Similar conclusions were reached by Josserand (2004) from a 1998 survey on language use. Yet, while both surveys point to an increasingly endangered future for FP in the Aosta Valley, and show (at least linguistic) assimilation of the regional minority group within the Italian majority group, we note that both studies were based on a sample including both Italoophone immigrants and autochthonous inhabitants.

FP's vitality in the Aosta Valley can be assessed in Table 1 at a grade of 3 “definitely endangered”, since it is being learned by fewer and fewer children; its

speaker-population is shrinking; and its role in both private and public domains of language use has been dramatically reduced by the overwhelming presence of Italian. Yet positive attitudes are held towards its maintenance (cf. Section 4, below, on the limits of such attitudes). The visibility it has gained at the official level thanks to the support obtained by Law 482/1999, as well as regional status building and corpus planning efforts over the past two decades,² can lead to hope that its endangered state might change course in the near future.

3.2 Piedmont

In Piedmont (northwestern Italy), FP is spoken in Turin province: Sangone, Susa, Cenischia, Viù, Ala, Grande, Locana, and Soana (total regional population: 68,000, Allasino et al. 2007). Here, FP has been in contact for centuries with local Piedmontese dialects as well as with Italian, the official language of the region since 1561 (Allasino et al. 2007: 101). The Piedmontese spoken in the regional center Turin has exerted its prestigious influence over FP for centuries, supplanting it in most of the alpine valleys, particularly the Susa and the Sangone, due to intense commercial exchange and industrialization which brought heavy immigration to the area from other Piedmontese-speaking towns. Yet, FP has resisted in small remote villages where the population is more sedentary (Allasino et al. 2007: 102–106). FP in Piedmont also benefits from Law 482/1999 and related financial support for revitalization and documentation efforts provided by the SL (www.regione.piemonte.it/cultura/cms/minoranze-linguistiche). Yet FP vitality in Piedmont is severely endangered (see Table 2). One recent survey (Allasino et al. 2007: 63–71) suggests that only 29% of the residents of the FP-speaking valleys reported some knowledge of FP: 14,000 adults reported speaking it, and between 7,000 and 8,000 understand it. This almost complete shift from the minority language is particularly striking compared to results presented in Telmon (1982: 34) for 1974, when 22,000 people reported speaking FP. This severe endangerment can be attributed to twentieth century immigration to Piedmont following its industrialization, and to many locally-born people marrying immigrants. Documentation on and in FP is relatively scarce, although some literary works have been published and some studies on the linguistic aspects of local vernaculars have been conducted (cf. Regis, this issue).

² Examples of corpus planning efforts include the publication of grammar books on Aosta-Valley FP varieties; the development and diffusion of two orthographic systems; the publication of a biannual FP journal (*Nouvelles du Centre d'Etudes Francoprovençales*); and a comprehensive on-line dictionary of regional FP varieties (www.patoisvda.org).

3.3 Apulia

In the southern Italian province of Foggia, in the region of Apulia, high in the Apennines, a variety of FP known as Faetar is spoken in two villages: Faeto and Celle di St Vito. Faetar have been spoken since migration from the FP zone of France in the 14th or fifteenth century. Comparative linguistic analyses (*cf.* Morosi 1988; Gallucci 1988; Nagy 1993), indicate that Faetar most likely comes from the French regions of Ain or Isère.³ The region was under feudal government until 1797 (Gallucci 1979). The isolation from outsiders under this system helped preserve these varieties as distinct from (regional) Italian. Even the unification of Italy did little to increase interaction with the rest of Italy. However, for at least the past century, there has been economic, social, and education-related interaction with non-FP-speaking Italians. Faetar has been in contact with Italian and regional Apulian dialects, and isolated from other FP dialects. There is no evidence of ongoing contact between Faeto and other FP-speaking communities except for an annual elementary school FP competition in the Aosta Valley. Due to this isolation, Faetar is no longer mutually intelligible with Gallic FP but is still known among its speakers as [lu.prowen'zal] 'Provençal' or [lu.fran'ʃaj] 'French'.⁴

Italian-speakers far outnumber Faetar-speakers in the region (though not in the two villages themselves, whose combined population is <1000). Education and economic advancement are tied to Italian. All mass media is in Italian. Thus Faetar should have been overtaken by Italian, yet it has not. All natives of Faeto still speak Faetar on a daily basis, reserving Italian for communication with outsiders, and many emigrants continue to speak Faetar after leaving (see Section 6).

Valente (1973: 39) reported that only the oldest inhabitants were monolingual Faetar speakers, while the younger ones were bilingual. This contradicts an older description, "everyone knows and speaks Apulian-Foggiano, especially in public" (Morosi [1988: 34], cited in; Valente [1973: 40]). Kattenbusch (1979: 142–4; 1980: 146); reported that only speakers older than 70 are monolingually Faetar-speaking and that fewer than 10% of residents reported having trouble speaking Italian. Nagy (2000: 6–7) reported that all Faetar speakers encountered in 1992–94 spoke Italian fluently.

³ See Nagy (1996) and Bitonti (2012) for discussion of competing accounts of the first FP speakers in Apulia.

⁴ Faeto and Celle are 10 kilometers apart by car, but less than 2 kilometers on foot. For convenience, we refer collectively to the varieties spoken in these two villages as Faetar. There is no clear evidence of distinct varieties for the two villages, although they are sometimes referred to by distinct labels (Faetar, Cellese). Other local labels include: Faetano, Francoprovenzale, Patois.

Perhaps due to this increasing bilingualism, Kattenbusch (1979) reported that Faetar was losing its communicative function and would soon exist only as a substratum. He reported that Faeto was monolingually Faetar-speaking until 1870 (with the exception of certain bilinguals among the small educated professional groups who regularly spoke with non-local businessmen and salesmen); bilingual (Faetar and regional dialects) from 1870–1930; and trilingual (Faetar, regional dialects, and Italian) since 1930. He gives no indication of how he determined these dates. Concurring with the majority of his survey respondents, he predicted that Faetar would disappear by 1999 (Kattenbusch 1979: 143). Yet, Nagy (1996) reported that virtually all adults in Faeto, except some recent exogamous spouses, still spoke Faetar on a daily basis. Faetar was spoken by nearly all children in Faeto, particularly teens going to a neighboring non-FP-speaking village for school. Most teenagers, even if they didn't speak Faetar at home, spoke it with friends and understood completely (Nagy 2000: 6). Some children (generally with one non-Faetar parent) understood but did not speak Faetar. Although Faeto now has predominantly bilingual speakers, there is no indication that Faetar is used less on a daily basis.

Supporting this more positive perspective, Perta (2010: 216–8) reports that 92% of the people of Faeto claim active competence in Faetar, while the remainder claim passive competence. In contrast, in Celle, only 56% of her sample claim active competence, 22% claim passive competence and 22% claim no competence. She reports competent speakers of all ages, though, for both towns, fewer in younger ranges. She finds no correlation to sex, level of education or occupation.

Regional contact is with Italian-speaking towns.⁵ A survey of marriage patterns represented in a selection of parish records (for the years 1707–1737, 1929–1956, 1961–1977) suggests little exogamy to bring new speakers into the community: of the 872 marriages reported, 21% include a partner from outside the community.

The population of Faeto dwindled to <1,000 people by 1990, but was as high as 4,500 in the mid 20th-century (Valente 1973: 39; Ercolino 1989; Agresti 2010; Tuttitalia 2015a, 2015b). The decrease is primarily due to the economy-driven exodus from southern Italy. Faeto, the highest town in Apulia, and Celle, the smallest, are 50 kilometers from the closest city (Foggia). In 1861, 90% of the residents of Faeto and Celle were farmers; by 1961, the number had dropped to 20% (Benvenuto 1988: 9). Of the 1,007 people counted in the 1981 census, only 256 were employed (Ercolino 1989: 53). The remaining population is elderly.

5 One exception is Greci, a nearby town which speaks an Albanian variety.

Nagy (1996: 83) and Kattenbusch (1979: 143) noted no evidence of Faetar use correlating with social class; people from every type of employment and income level speak it. Its regular use in many domains is supported by survey data from Faeto's *Sportello Linguistico*, reporting the percent of people who claim to use each language by context (see Table 3).

Table 3: Language use in Faeto (percent per language) (translated from Agresti 2010: 46).

Location	Faetar	Italian	Mixed
Bars	75	15	9
Shops	62	28	10
School: conversations among students	32	35	33
Meetings	30	50	20
Restaurants (likely not dominated by locals)	13	71	16
School: conversations between students and teachers	8	88	4
Church	5	95	0

We see Faetar used in all social contexts and some commercial ones. It is least used in conversations with teachers since they are not from Faeto. Similarly, it's rarely used in Faeto's church (except for some songs) as the priest is from another town. In contrast, Agresti (2010: 46) reports that mass is said in "francoprovenzale" in Celle di San Vito, where multilingual songs booklets have been produced.

Mass media and new media are in Italian. Very occasionally Faetar shows up in email and brief Facebook comments, but these are normally written by relatives living in the diaspora.

An annual school project involves eliciting, transcribing and translating narrations from elderly relatives in Faetar. Ten and 11-year olds take part in a scholastic competition with students in Aosta Valley. The following excerpt explains the purpose of this activity:

I bambini hanno compreso l'importanza culturale della lingua per cui hanno avuto l'opportunità di recuperare e ampliare il loro lessico. Quei bambini, invece, che non avevano l'abitudine di parlare questa lingua hanno avuto modo di apprendere il lessico e di usarlo con gli amici.

[The children learned the cultural importance of the language for which they had the opportunity to improve and expand their vocabulary. Those children, on the other hand, who didn't normally speak this language had the means to learn the vocabulary and use it with friends.]

(Castielli 1992: 3)

As in other parts of Italy, Law 482/1999 led to the development of a local SL with several part-time employees. Perta (2010) lists corpus planning activities in Faeto, particularly the dictionaries published by the SL (2005, 2007a) and their publication of a grammar (2007b, based on Nagy 2000). Recently, there have been other cultural events supporting Faetar, including a series of lectures in 2009, *Le terze Giornate dei diritti linguistici* [The third days of linguistic rights] (SL 2009). This international event, held partly in Faeto, included talks about, and performances and readings in, minority languages, announcement of a section about Faetar on the *Lingue d'Europa e del Mediterraneo (LEM)* portal and the opening of an exhibit about Faeto produced by Faeto children (Agresti 2010).

Law 482/1999 supports some uses of Faetar. There is one nursery and one elementary school in Faeto, serving Celle as well, but after year 5, students must commute to another town where school is taught in Italian. Generally, teachers are not from Faeto and do not speak Faetar although there are reports that teachers sometimes use Faetar (Nagy 1996: 77; Kattenbusch 1979: 142). Recent teachers report that only Italian is spoken in school (Castielli 1992: 10; Pasquale Caccio, personal communication, 7 December 2015) and one speaker, born around 1925, confirmed that Faetar was not spoken at school when she was a student (Nagy 1996: 77).

In spite of the lack of Faetar in school, the isolation of Faeto, coupled with local pride in its distinctive heritage, helps preserve Faetar. Small written elements appear: a few pages of each issue of the local quarterly *Il Provenzale* appear in Faetar with Italian translation; the local choir performs partially in Faetar; the local museum labels objects in Faetar, there are a few bilingual street signs; and the annual school project, described above. Employees sometimes speak Faetar in local government offices.

Speakers of southern varieties of Italian are well-known to suffer from negative stereotypes. Specifically about Faeto and Celle, Valente (1973) wrote,

If in the current phase the possession and use of dialects, especially in southern Italy, and, in general, in the most economically, socially, and culturally depressed zones, is seen by the speakers as [...] almost a mark of an inferior social situation [...] the speech of linguistic islands like Faeto and Celle are considered by their own speakers as a non-exchangeable currency ...

(Valente 1973: 41)

Similarly, Kattenbusch reported findings from two surveys he conducted (25 respondents in 1976; 35 respondents in 1978–1979). His respondents were adults born in Faeto who had lived most of their lives there (Kattenbusch 1979: 141). Kattenbusch (1980) reported that:

Le dialecte, ainsi, est considéré comme l'indice d'appartenance à une classe sociale inférieure, et, comme tel, n'est pas transmis directement aux enfants. Les communautés familiales dont le chef de famille travaille dans une ville relativement importante, s'efforcent, au moins en présence des enfants, de n'employer que la langue officielle.

[Dialects are thus considered as an index of belonging to an inferior social class, and as such, aren't transmitted directly to children. The families in which the head of the family works in a relatively large city force themselves, at least in the presence of their children, to employ only the official language.]

(Kattenbusch 1980: 144)

In contrast, Kattenbusch (1979: 141) also reports that approximately 70% of those surveyed said that the minority language was important to the region. This better coincides with the picture that emerges from data distilled by Nagy 1992–2015, suggesting an attitude change in the intervening years. This more optimistic perspective emerged from interviews with residents of Faeto and their relatives in North America. Indeed, Faetar represents a situation not often mentioned in typologies of contact situations: a minority language with relatively high prestige. Because Faetar's origins differ from those of the surrounding regional dialects, speakers see it as a marker of unique social identity, distinguishing its speakers from other Italians. The minority language's higher than expected prestige is attributed to its Gallic heritage (Nagy 1996: 264–265), of which speakers are aware (Nagy 2000: 7). The activities described above provide evidence of pride in their distinctive language.

Yet, while recognizing that Faetar has a distinctive history, most speakers do not recognize it as a complete linguistic system, mostly due to the lack of standardized orthography, which has impeded progress in documenting Faetar. Speakers' quotes representing the view that the "real" version is no longer spoken, and that the language is dying, are reported in Nagy (2000: 7). Kattenbusch (1979: 142) reported that in 1978/1979, 60% of those surveyed believed they spoke Faetar correctly.

4 Francoprovençal in France

The territory over which FP is traditionally spoken stretches across the *départements* of the Loire, Rhône, Ain, Isère, Savoie, Haute-Savoie, and parts of Jura and Franche-Comté. FP also persists in isolated rural pockets near Lyon, particularly in the western region (known as *les monts du Lyonnais*) and eastward into the Dauphiné region.

There is a range of estimates of remaining speaker numbers in these areas, but no reliable census data. Ball (1997: 68) used figures by Kloss and McConnell

(1984) and Kloss et al. (1989) to suggest that just 30,000 speakers remained in France at that time. However, more recent figures by Moseley (2007: 246) suggest 35,000 speakers in both *départements* of Savoie, plus 25,000 speakers elsewhere in France, converging with Bert and Martin (2013: 494), who estimate 50,000 speakers in the (former) Rhône-Alpes region overall. These numbers are likely to be conservative estimates: as Article 2 of the French Constitution declares that “La langue de la République est le français” [The language of the Republic is French], no data are collected in the French National Census on language use. The National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies has carried out surveys about regional languages (e.g. Clanché 2002). However, no data specific to FP are presented. Based on these observations, we estimate in Table 2 an absolute number of speakers in France to be no greater than 60,000, with the proportion of speakers to the total population at $\ll 1\%$.

There can be no doubt that FP speaker numbers are in terminal decline. No empirical studies have evidenced intergenerational transmission for some time now, and Bert et al. have suggested that, for Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, instances are “almost non-existent” (2009: 75), save for one or two families linked directly with language activism. However, data are self-reported and unverified. This state has been accelerated by FP now being used in only the most intimate (highly limited) domains of language use, if at all. In Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes for instance, FP is now characterized by some as a “post-vernacular” (Pivot 2014: 26–29) context, in that FP continues to form a part of identity construction among some in the community, despite no longer being used in daily communication. Accordingly, community-level response to new domains and media has been largely inactive. Only among so-called “new speakers” (see Bichurina; Dunoyer; Kasstan and Müller, this issue) is FP used in social media.

While FP occupies no status in the national curriculum, there is some provision for optional extra-curricular language education and literacy where support on the ground is strongest, predominantly in both *départements* of Savoie, where there is also a regional orthographical norm. However, calls for FP to be offered as a *baccalauréat* option continue to be ignored (Bron 2011: 7). Elsewhere, teaching in FP is usually conducted within the confines of local associations or so-called “*clubs patois*” (Tuailon 1988: 203), with variable success.

Bert et al. have commented that the number of associations offering classes in FP are increasingly rare (2009: 69). Moreover, they note a general shift in community attitudes towards teaching FP in school in recent years, where support is increasingly thin. This is echoed by an empirical study conducted in 2010 in the Lyonnais region (Hawkey and Kasstan 2015: 104), where some native speakers supported FP introduction into schools at the local level. However, this support stopped short of desire that FP be a mandatory part of

the curriculum. There, the attitudes of speakers towards FP reflect to some extent the attitudes of the state towards regional languages. This should come as no surprise, given that FP was only recognised in 1999 as a “language of France” (Cerquiglini 1999: 6). For more than a century, the idea of linguistic homogeneity has predominated in French-language policy discourse at the expense of France’s regional languages. Such policies have come from decades of centralisation and the growth of a strong national identity. Since the Revolution, language has become a tool of socio-political integration, and an “unusual intolerance” (Grenoble and Whaley 1999: 5) towards regional languages has long been a prominent part of the discourse (but see Diémoz [this issue] on regional glottopolitical undertakings). Such prejudices were reinforced as early as possible, particularly in school, where it was common-place for pupils to be punished if they were overheard speaking a regional language (e.g. McDonald 1989). The impact of these socio-political pressures has resulted in a deep sense of linguistic insecurity amongst largely rural FP speakers.

In spite of its standing among the lesser known regional languages of France (see Kasstan and Nagy, this issue), the quality of documentation is not poor, given the long tradition of regional dialectology in France (e.g. Gilliéron and Edmont 1902–1910; Gardette 1950–1956). There are grammatical sketches and texts (notably Gardette 1983), but with inadequate coverage. Few recordings exist, usually un-annotated.

5 Francoprovençal in Switzerland

In Switzerland, the Cantons of Fribourg, Neuchâtel, Valais, Vaud and isolated parts of peri-urban Geneva are traditionally viewed as FP-speaking. However, some of these regions – Geneva, Neuchâtel and Vaud in particular – have undergone complete language shift (Meune, this issue).

Indications of speaker numbers in Switzerland are unreliable (see Diémoz, this issue). However, the greatest concentration of speakers is in the Canton of Valais, where FP is still very much part of everyday life. Moreover, in one or two isolated mountainous regions of Valais, within the municipality of Évêlène, inter-generational transmission continues (Maître and Matthey 2008: 76). This is a unique case, however, and in the rest of FP-speaking Switzerland, transmission was interrupted from the latter half of the twentieth century (but cf. the new-speaker phenomenon in Diémoz [this issue]). FP is also maintained in Fribourg and isolated parts of Lausanne (Meune 2012). Meune (2009: 1–2) uses census figures from 2000 to illustrate that roughly 16,000 people reported speaking FP in Switzerland overall. This places the proportion of speakers to total population

at <0.2%. For details on language planning and policy, materials for language education and literacy, attitudes and documentation see Diémoz (this issue).

While FP remains confined to highly restricted domains outside the Canton of Valais, within Valais, it is still a language of daily use, particularly in the agricultural sector. There has been some use in new media too. Switzerland has no laws forbidding regional languages such as FP in the public domain or in the media, and television programmes with a component in FP are regularly found on *Canal 9* (programmes such as “*La chronique des patois*” [Chronicle of the patois] feature on a weekly basis). In addition, Radio Suisse Romande produced more than 1500 recordings dedicated to documenting FP for posterity between 1952–1992, all of which are available online.

6 Diasporic communities in North America and Piemonte, Italy

Apart from one report of a 20th-century Aostan FP-speaking family group in Colorado (Dossigny and Bétemps 2009), known FP-speaking communities in North America come from Apulia. Diaspora FP-speaking communities are found in Canada and the United States, as well as a “reverse migration” to Piemonte, where some 3,000 “ex-pats” live (of whom perhaps a third speak FP), according to Silvano Tangi, President of the Associazione Culturale Franco-Provenzale di Puglia in Piemonte.

In communities in Ontario, Canada; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Rochester, New York, immigrants from Faeto and Celle continue to speak Faetar and Italian on a daily basis, as do many of their children. However, intergenerational language transmission succeeded for only one generation. No systematic survey of the absolute number of speakers has been possible, but estimates provided by speakers suggest some 500 speakers in Canada and ~100 in the United States. In all cases, the proportion of speakers to the total population is very small, <<1%. In these diaspora communities, FP is used only in homes and cultural events, sharing space with Italian and English.

Facebook is an active medium for Faetar linguistic documentation and appreciation. It appears that most contributors live in the US and Canada. A recent review of two sites, “Lega Cellesse di Brantford (Canada)” and “I love Faeto,” reveals more appreciation than use of the language. Excerpts of genealogical and migration histories show émigrés from Faeto and Celle to be active in supporting their culture and/or language in Chicago, IL; Ridley Park, PA; Glastonbury, CT: in the US; Brantford, Canada; and Scunthorpe, England. Most

posts were in English; we found only one in Faetar, by Silvano Tangi, a revitalization activist who contributes to the LEM activities described above.

As far as we know, no materials have been developed for language education and literacy in these diaspora communities. FP is not recognized institutionally in the US or Canada and receives no official support. We are aware of no documentation of the ex-pat community, beyond a short video clip posted at Endangered Language Alliance Toronto (<https://youtu.be/xK3YsZrASul>).

In spite of the lack of institutional support and dwindling numbers, community members speak FP when possible and are proud to be part of this minority community. Evidence of this pride comes in their willingness to support research and documentation initiatives, the Facebook commentary mentioned above, and several annual events: a dinner of the Lega Celse in Brantford, Ontario, a picnic for speakers near Rochester, NY and the Feast of San Prospero in Cleveland, Ohio.

7 Conclusion

We have reported the most recently compiled information regarding the quality and quantity of institutional support, demographics and status of FP in its regions of use on two continents, one where it is autochthonous and one where it is a heritage language. The variety of FP with the strongest status is that spoken in the Aosta Valley. Table 2 therefore confirms a number of beliefs surrounding the status of FP in this autonomous region – often referred to as the “El Dorado” (Meune 2009: 2) or “citadel” (Favre 2011: 10) for FP. Switzerland and Apulia follow closely behind the Aosta Valley, while FP in France, Canada and the United States is considerably less vital. Interestingly, there is little correlation between current number of speakers (France has, by far, the most reported) and this calculation of ethnolinguistic vitality. This highlights the importance of employing a comprehensive method of measuring languages’ vitality that takes into account diverse aspects of the language community’s social life and linguistic attitudes, as well as speaker tallies and intergenerational transmission rates.

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